

H E A R I N G
M I N U T E S -- 57th Session

Assembly

ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC RESOURCES & FISH AND GAME COMMITTEE-Room 214

March 7, 1973

Members Present:	Chairman Bremner	Broadbent
	Vice-Chairman Crawford	Jacobsen
	Ford	Lowman
	Gojack	Smalley
	Banner	

Members Absent: None

Guests: None

Chairman Bremner called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. He had two bills to read for possible introduction by the committee. One of them had to do with the regulating of power-boat operators. Mr. Smalley asked how come this bill* shouldn't go to the Transportation Committee, and Mr. Lowman answered that at this time, boats are taken care of by the Fish and Game Department, so that is why this committee is taking it in stride.

The other Bill^A that the Chairman read was one providing additional regulation and different compensation method for fish and game license agents. Mrs. Ford motioned for introduction of both of these bills, and Dr. Broadbent seconded her motion.

The next discussion was about A.C.R. 17, authorizing an immediate legislative feasibility study of the proposed public operation of the Lee Canyon ski area and authorizing necessary expenditure from the legislative fund for such purposes. (This Assembly Concurrent Resolution is attached as Exhibit I). Mr. Lowman proceeded to discuss the resolution to the committee members. He said that the point of this is that this study is proposed to be made during this session and report back so that this committee would have to act on it full phase or else the legislative session would be over. Mr. Lowman went on in saying that this area is now privately owned and the only skiing area in southern Nevada, otherwise, skiers would have to go to Utah or up her in Northern Nevada. He said that this place may be operated by the county, but he thinks this is a mistake, because the county does not visualize Lee Canyon as a park type operation, but as more of a commercial type operation. Dr. Broadbent asked if he meant the selling and leasing of lots. Mrs. Ford came in and said that it really would be used in putting up cabins, lodge, a building it up for other activities besides skiing.

Mrs. Ford continued in giving information about the owner of this area. Se said that the man who owned and ran this received a substantial loan from the S.B.A., which he has never been able to pay back, but the S.B.A. is holding action at the present time having meetins with the State Park System and the county, and the owner. The S.B.A. has been reluctant to bring action against him because then the area would have to sit alone for a couple of years while bankruptcy proceedings went on. There has been a tremendous effort to find a private operator, but Mrs. Ford explained that there is not enough snow up in Lee Canyon and what-

*A.B. 515 (BDR 23-990)

A A.B. 516 (BDR 45-80)

ever private enterprises that go into it would have to put in snowmaking equipment to stabilize the season and the chance of getting a big profit out of it is not that great. The State can pick up property and would only pay what the appraisal calls for, and sign a new lease with the Forest Service. The lease would not be transferable. And if the funds would allow, the State could buy the necessary equipment for the Canyon, and set up additional environmental controls. Mrs. Ford went on to say that figures show that this place does make the money and receive the public all the time, and pays for itself, but the owner could not get ahead enough to pay off the loans he has. But the S.B.A. is holding off action until after this legislature meets, hoping for some hopeful action.

When the committee members read the resolution, Mrs. Ford commented that they had prepared this resolution word for word for the bill drafter and made no reference for an "onsite investigation" as stated in the resolution that the drafter prepared, and also asked for no money, but again was put in the resolution when it was received back.

Chairman Bremner asked how much property is involved with the Lee Canyon area, and Mrs. Ford answered that several hundred acres are; all blocks of the U.S. Forest Service. She said that the Forest Service has been very helpful and cooperative with the present owner, such as supplying a lower parking lot to relieve the parking congestion in the main area. They are extremely unhappy, though, with the present leasing, because it is heard that the owner is not much of a manager.

Dr. Broadbent questioned the statement in the resolution about the "...budget for the fiscal years 1973-74 and 1974-75 recommends a park project in Lee Canyon..." and Mrs. Ford said that this is not what they had put in the resolution, and explained that the budget is for the money to be acquired for all equipment and necessities; everything but the land. She went on to say that there are a sufficient number of people in the Clark County Delegation who have a lot more confidence for the State Park System to run Lee Canyon, instead of the county. Mrs. Ford said that whatever happens, that it would be a good idea for the Environment Committee here, get together with the Ecology Committee on the Senate and take a look as what is involved in anybody taking over and running it. Also, look at what kind of environmental control the Forest Service is going to require.

A sub-committee was discussed in going and looking at the situation in Lee Canyon, but Mr. Jacobsen frowned on the idea because it would be difficult to get money for expenses, and would never get on as a standing committee.

Chairman Bremner asked Mrs. Ford if she wanted to delete the part in the resolution about the "onsite investigation". Mr. Jacobsen said that if anyone gets something back from the bill drafter that is not right then to take it back to have it corrected. Mr. Lowman asked if it would be better to amend it, because the committee would have to wait two weeks before getting it back from the drafter.

Mrs. Ford suggested that they could have people come in and show films and booklets and visual aids, instead of the committee going down there, and then they could vote on it. But Mr. Jacobsen said that someone will have to go down there, because it would very hard to judge from

visual aids only. He brought up about Spring Mountain where 1/2 million dollars were lost, when camps for youths were built. Just did not come through very well. It would be very hard to determine such a project such as Lee Canyon without onsite inspection, and Mr. Lowman said he had no objection, if only they would get it on as soon as possible.

The members seemed quite agreeable with this, and thought maybe, to save expenses, to drive down in a car--about three of them-- and while they are down there, they could check out other projects, such as Red Rock Mountain.

Dr. Broadbent asked how is it that the county really did not want to get Lee Canyon, and Mr. Lowman answered that it is not that the county does not want it, but the matter of the county having a different concept. He went on and said that the County Commissioners that have been talked to, foresee this project as a commercial type venture.

Mrs. Gojack asked about the date that this would be in action, and said that the sooner the possible, the better. Mr. Lowman said he agreed, but still thought that the State ought to pay for the expenses.

Mrs. Ford said that why doesn't the committee pass this resolution as it is, and then come up with a minimum amount for expenses, such as plane tickets and then such, and then take it to the Ways and Means Committee. But Mr. Jacobsen said that this would not be a very good idea, because the Ways and Means Committee would probably send out their own sub-committee, instead of any of our members.

Mr. Lowman moved for a "do pass" with the amendment of deleting the last paragraph and Mrs. Gojack seconded it. All committee members un-
aminously concurred.

Chairman Bremner announced that he will be changing the schedule for A.B. 197 and other Game Board reorganization bills for March 23, instead of March 16; and will be held in room 131 at 8:00 a.m.

Mr. Jacobsen offered explanation of his bill* that has not been received yet. He said that it leaves the present commission as statured nine members; takes it from the appointed power of the Governor, and back to the elective situation with nine districts. In these districts, Clark County is one, Storey and Washoe as one together, and all other counties will be put together, also, with one commissioner to be elected per county. Main concern was to give a better voice for the smaller counties.

Jean Ford announced that at 9:00 a.m. today, there will be a hearing provided by the Finance Committee on the Senate side, with Eric Cronkhite speaking. She said that this hearing will be about state park budgets, in case any of the members were interested in attending.

Chairman Bremner announced that a joint hearing will be held today at Senate Adjournment concerning the Land Use Bill.^A Mr. Jacobsen complained that they should figure something out, because he has had to wait almost an hour over in the room waiting for the Senate to get out of session. Mrs. Ford said that they ought to have their joint hearings set at 8:00 a.m., which would not conflict with anybody's schedule.

* A.B. 678 (BDR 45-1658)

Δ S.B. 131 and S.B. 333

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The members seemed to be agreeable with Mrs. Ford's suggestion.

Chairman Bremner called the meeting to a close, and the next meeting will be scheduled for Friday, March 9th, at 8:00 in room 214.

Respectfully Submitted,

Geanie Armstrong

Geanie Armstrong
Assembly Attache

SUMMARY--Authorizes an immediate legislative feasibility study of public ski operation in Lee Canyon. (BDR 1210)

Exhibit 180

ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION--Authorizing an immediate legislative feasibility study of the proposed public operation of the Lee Canyon ski area and authorizing necessary expenditure from the legislative fund for such purpose.

WHEREAS, Skiing on the snow laden sides of Lee Canyon in southern Nevada's Spring Mountains is a popular recreation activity; and

WHEREAS, The executive budget for the fiscal years 1973-1974 and 1974-1975 recommends a park project in Lee Canyon to insure that the residents of southern Nevada will not be deprived of this healthful and invigorating sport, unique in a desert environment and only 60 miles from metropolitan Las Vegas; and

WHEREAS, Once the ski facility is purchased by the state, consideration is being given to its transfer to Clark County for operation and maintenance; and

WHEREAS, A successful ski complex requires the employment of competent personnel who are conversant with the technical and administrative needs of such a specialized recreation facility; and

WHEREAS, The ecological and environmental problems associated with the area are not now fully known but must be fully understood by the management if the requirements of the United States Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture are to be met; and

WHEREAS, The purchase of a recreation area and immediate transfer by the state to a unit of local government is without precedent; and

WHEREAS, Before the state makes any commitment, it seems desirable and prudent to evaluate operational needs, ecological concerns, capital improvements, land lease requirements and environmental standards of the United States Forest Service of the United States

Department of Agriculture and state or county management considerations; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That a feasibility study be jointly undertaken by the Committee on Environment and Public Resources of the Assembly and the Committee on Ecology and Public Resources of the Senate, to conduct an onsite investigation of the various problems associated with the prospective management of the Lee Canyon Ski Area and to make recommendations for its operation and development; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this study be undertaken at once, enabling an appropriation to be made and the establishment of mangement authority to be determined at this 57th session of the Nevada legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, That expenditure of necessary moneys from the legislative fund is hereby authorized to pay the costs of travel, lodging and other incidentals to be incurred by the committee members in making the inspection trip to Lee Canyon.