

MINUTES

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE - NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE - 58th SESSION

April 2, 1975

The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Mello at 8:00 A.M. in the Ways and Means Committee Room.

PRESENT: Chairman Mello, Mr. Bremner, Mrs. Brookman, Mr. Dreyer, Mr. Glover, Mr. Howard, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Weise and Mr. Wittenberg.

ALSO PRESENT: John Dolan, Bill Bible, Chancellor Neil Humphrey, Senator Blakemore, Assemblyman Moody, Dr. Lloyd Smith, Assemblyman Dini, and Professor Joe Warburton.

Assemblyman Moody stated that the Desert Research Institute is requesting an additional appropriation to continue the Weather Modification Project at Pyramid and Walker Lakes. Both lakes are used for swimming, fishing, water skiing and boating. These lakes need to be conserved and the decrease of water at the lakes is causing a serious problem to the cut-throat fish and the boat launches have to be re-done every year.

Senator Blakemore stated that Walker Lake is an asset to Mineral County and they would be losing one of the most beautiful items in the central part of the State. He felt that cloud-seeding works and the records substantiate this fact as the Pyramid Lake has increased their water supply.

Chancellor Humphrey stated that the Desert Research Institute budget should handle this proposal and could approach both lake problems together.

Dr. Lloyd Smith explained that cloud-seeding in many parts of the United States where increases in water are essential has become important. He felt that everything should be done to increase the water in the Eastern slopes.

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Dr. Joe Warburton stated that cloud-seeding has increased Lake Eleanor 30% and the Colorado Rockies between 10 and 30%. It would cost \$175,000 per year to conduct this project. Both lakes have fallen 100 feet and if Walker Lake falls another 100 feet there will be no lake. Pyramid Lake is now rising 2-3 feet above what it was in 1969, but Walker Lake is still decreasing. This cannot be contributed to an increase in the usage of water. Weather Modification would have a great effect on this problem. Assessments are done by studying precipitation during seeding and during non-seeding. Walker Lake has a potential also for hydro-electric power. This appropriation would support three people in the Walker Lake Catchment study and two people in the Pyramid Lake study. They would request Federal support for this program, but the ability to get these funds depends on Nevada's interest in the problem.

Assemblyman Dini supports the project for Walker Lake. He stated that the people who live around Walker Lake are planning to develop reservoirs to distribute the water, but more water would be of great help. He only asked that nothing be done about cloud-seeding during the harvesting of crops.

Dr. Warburton stated that he was confident that the project was working at Pyramid Lake. Demonstrations have showed 54% success in other states and this would have an important impact in the Sierras.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 A.M. to allow the committee to visit the Maximum Security Prison.