

Briefing Paper

Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public

Legislative Hearing

April 8, 2003

2:00 p.m. 1334 LHOB

H.R. 272

H.R. 272, to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain land to Lander County, Nevada, and the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain land to Eureka County, Nevada, for continued use as cemeteries.

Summary of Bill:

H.R. 272, introduced by Mr. Gibbons (R-NV), directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to convey lands to Lander and Eureka Counties, Nevada for continued use as cemeteries.

Background and Need for Legislation:

The Town of Kingston, NV, (Lander County) requires an additional 8.75 acres of Forest Service land to supplement the 1.25 acres of Forest Service land conveyed to it in 2000 to ensure that areas of unmarked graves are included in the town's cemetery, and to ensure that space is available for future graves in Kingston Cemetery. The additional land will bring the total acreage to the original ten acres that the town had access to under a Special Use Permit. The town of Kingston wants to continue use of the cemetery through local public ownership rather than through the Federal agency permitting process. Section two of the bill would convey ten acres of BLM land to Eureka County, NV, for continued use of "Maiden's Grave Cemetery." The site continues to receive occasional burials and has been identified by the BLM as suitable for disposal. Eureka County has indicated a strong desire to take responsibility for the parcel. The county also wants to continue use as a cemetery through public local ownership instead of the Federal permitting process.

Witnesses:

The Honorable Jim Gibbons

Bureau of Land Management

Ms. Gloria Manning, U.S. Forest Service

Administration Position:

During the 107th Congress, the Forest Service testified before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee against the Kingston Cemetery (Lander County) conveyance. The Forest Service is willing to meet the needs of the county through continued permitting, fair market value payment or land exchange. During the same hearing the BLM testified in support of the "Maiden's Grave Cemetery" conveyance.

Contact Information: Robert Howarth or Casey Hammond 6-7736

#####