

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
FINANCE

BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

April 4, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to focus our limited public resources on the nation's top investment priorities. I write to express my concern about the proposed rescissions of \$230 million from the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act special account at the Department of the Interior, established under Public Law 105-263, laid out in a document provided to Congressional Appropriators by the Administration. As you work to develop a final FY2017 Interior and Environment appropriations bill, I respectfully request that this rescission proposal not be included.

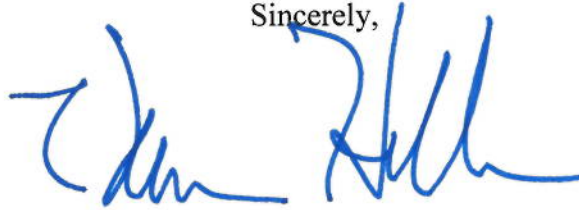
The Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) became law in October 1998, and it allows the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to sell public land within a specific boundary around Las Vegas, Nevada. The revenue derived from those sales is split between the State of Nevada General Education Fund (5%), the Southern Nevada Water Authority (10%), a government agency tasked with the regional water management, and a special account available to the Secretary of the Interior for public works projects, ecological restoration, and conservation efforts. It is one of the Department's most successful programs, authorizing land sales that played an integral role in the Las Vegas region's growth into one of the largest metropolitan areas in the west, while investing over \$3.4 billion in over 1,200 conservation projects that would otherwise require significant Congressional appropriations or would not occur at all.

Not only would a rescission usurp important economic growth and conservation initiatives, it would undermine important agreements that local communities, tribal governments, and the federal government formed in good faith. These resources are obligated for important wildlife restoration, conservation, outdoor recreation, and infrastructure development projects in the State of Nevada, and are an important component of carefully negotiated public land legislation enacted

by the Nevada Congressional Delegation over the past two decades. As Senators representing western states who have advocated for similar public lands legislative proposal, you understand the importance of these bills and the importance of developing compromise to garner widespread support.

I respectfully request that any final appropriations deal keep the SNPLMA program intact. This program will help spur economic development in the private sector and provide the necessary resources for conservation and habitat restoration to reduce the risk of wildfires. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dean Heller", with a stylized flourish at the end.

DEAN HELLER
U.S. Senator

cc: Michael Nedd, Acting Director of the Bureau of Land Management