

NEVADA STATE WILDERNESS PROCLAMATION – DRAFT October 2013

WHEREAS, January 1, 1964, marked the beginning of one of the most important and eventful years in the later history of the United States, a time when Americans worked hard to come together and make the positive changes envisioned by a President we had lost just 40 days earlier, with the tragic assassination of President John F. Kennedy; and

WHEREAS, A national purpose emerged in 1964 as our population, particularly our younger citizens, realized that America was not Camelot and the changes and reforms that were needed required the work and support of all of us, and not just our elected leaders; and

WHEREAS, The American people and the leaders of our democracy focused on crucially important issues of the day such as racial equality, environmental protection, and national security; and

WHEREAS, Following many years of segregation, voter suppression, and private acts of violence, all of which degraded the citizenship rights of African Americans, a civil rights movement supported by America's black population, and many white citizens, evolved in the United States using both direct action and forms of nonviolent resistance to accomplish the goal of racial equality; and

WHEREAS, On June 11, 1963, President Kennedy addressed the nation and asked for legislation that would give "all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public," including hotels, restaurants, theaters, retail stores and similar establishments, and the United States Congress and President Lyndon B. Johnson took a major step to achieve racial equality through the passage and signing, on July 2, 1964, of the landmark legislation known as the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and

WHEREAS, The year 1964 was a time of increased political involvement among America's citizens on a number of diverse topics, such as the war on poverty, voting rights, and the need to protect some of the most pristine and environmentally sensitive lands for the enjoyment of generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Following many years of work by citizens involved in conservation and environmental protection, including members of organized groups such as The Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, and National Audubon Society, a bi-partisan Congress passed and President Johnson signed the Wilderness Act on September 3, 1964, which created the National Wilderness Preservation System, initially comprised of 9.1 million acres; and

WHEREAS, The Wilderness System has been enhanced over the years to designate over 106 million acres in the United States, including over three million acres of magnificent wild land in Nevada, of some of the most special and unspoiled lands administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management; now, therefore, be it

PROCLAIMED, That the members of the Senate of the State of Nevada do hereby commend the efforts of so many Nevadans and other Americans that led to the passage of two historic pieces of

federal legislation in 1964, the Civil Rights Act and the Wilderness Act, which were similar in the purpose of promoting the common good; and be it further

PROCLAIMED, That the people of Nevada are urged to conduct public events and inform the public as we recognize and celebrate in 2014 the 50th anniversary of these two monumental laws.

DATED this ___ day of May, 2013.

Aaron D. Ford
Nevada State Senator
Senate District No. 11

Patricia (Pat) Spearman
Nevada State Senator
Senate District No. 1