



# Legislative Update

**BDR = Bill Draft Requests**  
**NELIS: Resource for Everything**  
**Happening in the Legislature**

 **Water Strategy Group**  
 Nevada Natural Resource Policy Experts

**SB = Senate Bill | AB = Assembly Bill**  
**Legislative Committees**  
 ➤ [Assembly Natural Resources](#)  
 ➤ [Senate Natural Resources](#)

## About the Legislative Update

This report, compiled by the Water Strategy Group (WSG) and Meridian Nevada, is regularly updated with current and forthcoming legislative proposals in the 2025 Nevada Legislative Session which may impact the businesses and industries we engage with daily.

## Overall Legislative Schedule

Date	Day	Key Legislative Task
22-Apr	Tue	First House (Floor) Passage
1-May	Thu	Economic Forum Report Due
5-May	Mon	Start Resolving Budget Differences
16-May	Fri	Committee Passage (Second House)
17-May	Sat	Finish Budget Differences
23-May	Fri	Second House Passage
28-May	Wed	Budget Bills Introduced and Exempt Bills from Committee

## Select Bill Summaries

This section covers bills of primary interest, as of the date of this report, with a more comprehensive tracking table included in Exhibit 1. **Starting last week (#10), we began listing bills in the following table that failed to pass out of the first house committee, which will continue until the end of week #12 in case any additional bills fail to pass out of their respective (first) house. As of end of week #11 the original 26 tracked bills in Exhibit 1 have been reduced from to 17. Otherwise this section will continue summarizing only the bills that remain active.**

Bill No.	Title - Summary Description	Remarks
<a href="#">AB109</a>	Geothermal water rights and dissolved mineral exploration changes.	Failed to pass out of 1st house committee. Pursuant to Joint Standing Rule No. 14.3.1, no further action allowed.
<a href="#">AB134</a>	Would protect to perfected water rights in a conservation plan from forfeiture.	
<a href="#">AB190</a>	Would create a fund to for hydrologic studies related to certain water right applications	
<a href="#">AB265</a>	Proposed strict time limits on the State Engineer for processing of water right applications, extensions of time, and reports of conveyance.	
<a href="#">AB385</a>	Would prohibit the governing body of certain counties and cities from taking certain actions to prohibit the use of cooling towers which use water for certain projects	
<a href="#">AB485</a>	Would revise certain assessments of water users in use of funds in the NDWR.	
<a href="#">SB342</a>	Proposed eliminating the resetting of priority dates of cancelled water rights when rescinded and would extend timeline for serving the State Engineer with petitions for judicial review.	
<a href="#">AJR12</a>	Proposed declaration in support of certain principles of solar development in Nevada.	
<a href="#">SJR4</a>	Urged the Fed. Gov. to support and recognize certain land use planning principles when conducting multiple use projects in Nevada.	

### [AB9](#)

Under [NRS 533.0243](#), a person is already allowed to temporarily convert agricultural water rights for wildlife purposes or to improve the flow quality of water for up to 3 years, which may be extended in increments of up to 3 years at a time. This bill would allow for temporary conversions of up to 5 years with 5-year extensions. See below and Exhibit 3 for additional information on the version will be sent to the Senate as amended.

### [AB419](#)

As originally introduced, this bill would have, among other things, require State Engineer comply with Administrative Procedures Act for adopting regulations. Other proposals in the original bill include would have required new regulations to establish a pre-application review process, with reductions in the amount of time allowed for approving or rejecting certain applications, and a requirement for the State Engineer to issue preliminary determinations on certain applications. Another proposed change in this bill would have revised provisions relating to judicial review decisions by the State Engineer.



Pitt-Taylor diversion works on the Humboldt River; delivers decreed irrigation to producers such as the Flying M Ranch.

### [SB31](#)

In 2017, [NRS 533.087](#) was adopted to require a date of December 31, 2027 in which a claimant of any vested water right must file proof, otherwise such claim would be considered abandoned. SB31 was proposed by the State Engineer to exempt the Federal Government from the deadline for filing reserved or vested claims before the 2027 cutoff.

### [AB104](#) / [SB36](#)

These are related bills that propose the creation of a 'Nevada Water Buy-Back Initiative' and Advisory Committee for retiring water rights with the program sunset in 2035. As written, these bills would require the State Engineer to reject groundwater right applications if the groundwater has been retired, which may apply to the entire basin. See below for

more details on AB104 and SB36. Also refer to Exhibit 3 for an overview of an apparent (and disturbing) change that occurred on SB36 that was discovered after the amended version that passed out of the Senate Natural Resources Committee, but prior to the anticipated Ways & Means Committee hearing.

## Weekly Highlights

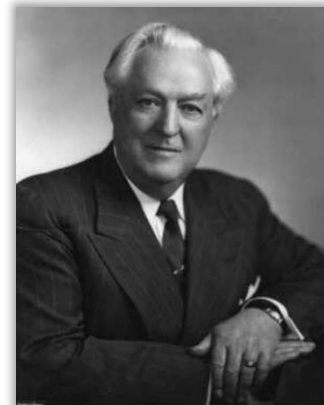
The 83<sup>rd</sup> Nevada Legislative Session began on Monday, February 3, 2025. Each week, WSG will use this section to describe certain developments within and interpretations of select bills that will help each client assess potential implications to their business and to help determine if any WSG client should plan on taking a public position in support of or against a bill and/or proposed amendment.

Despite a ~35% reduction in the number of tracked bills this last week, WSG continues to monitoring and engaging on 17 remaining bills going forward. Over the last week, WSG and Meridian spent most of our time working on SB31 and trying to sort out some confusion with SB36, as explained below.

### [SB31 Background](#)

WSG commented extensively on this bill and our opposition in our March 9<sup>th</sup> (Week 5), April 6<sup>th</sup> (Week 9), and April 13<sup>th</sup> (Week 10) reports. As shown in Exhibits 2 and 3, this bill got a Floor (vote) Session on Tuesday April 15<sup>th</sup>. Before the floor session, WSG and Meridian worked closely with the Nevada Farm Bureau and a group of agricultural stakeholders to advise select Senators on the potential risks to Nevadans if the bill were to pass as introduced. We also discussed opportunities to amend the bill to address those concerns.

Based on that work, WSG was asked to provide an 'opposition' floor statement (see Exhibit 2) that was read by Senator Robin Titus when 6 Republicans voted 'NO' on the bill. While our goal was to get all 8 Republicans to vote 'NO', we now have a solid foundation to work on in the Assembly to help fix this extremely unfair bill.



Senator Patrick A. McCarran, Courtesy: UNLV Edwards Collection

It is also important to note that communications continued last week between WSG and (former Senator) Pete



Goicoechea who’s 2017 bill placed the current 2027 deadline for filing vested claims into statute. While Pete was unable to convince Director Settlemeyer to reconsider SB31, Pete indicated that he would be happy to help support our efforts to address SB31 in the Assembly, including coming to testify, if necessary.

**AB419 Background**

This is another bill in which WSG has been actively engaged and we reported extensively on it last week where it passed out of committee with only Sections 1, 4, and 10 included. It will now head to the Ways and Means Committee, which has not been scheduled a hearing yet.

Below is a summary of the portions of AB419 that passed out of committee based on the published Work Session document, but it is unclear at this point what exactly was included in Section 10. The amendment attached to the Work Session document has Section 10 crossed out entirely. Based on WSG conversations with various stakeholders involved in this bill, the part of Section 10 that may have been left in is language pertaining to precedents in State Engineer decisions. These Sections are summarized below:

- (Section 1): Requirement for State Engineer to establish regulations with requirements for pre-application meetings when requested by the applicant,
- (Section 4): Requiring biennial reporting by the State Engineer to the Legislature on all pending applications, with notation of those that have been pending for 2 or more years, and each ruling pending a final decision by the State Engineer for 2 or more years,
- (Section 10?): Added certainty in State Engineer hearings and rulings with requirements for issuing preliminary determinations and statements explaining why an existing precedent was not followed, when applicable,

Based on the limited scope in what passed in AB419, WSG is now supportive and will continue working to help get this bill passed without placing an unreasonable (increased burden) on the NDWR.

**AB104 / SB36 Background**

During WSG’s participation in a legislative stakeholder group that developed the language for this bill, we expressed concern with language in Section 2 that essentially ties the hands of the State Engineer when considering applications in basins where water rights have been retired. Naturally, the Environmental NGOs in this group supported the language, but those of us who advocate for maximizing beneficial use see a problem. In our opinion, if a previously over-pumped basin is brought back into balance by retirements and water resources are available for appropriation (i.e. due to new science supporting higher water availability), then the State Engineer should be able to process those applications in accordance with [NRS 533.370](#). Fortunately, in both bill

versions that passed their respective committees, Section 2 was revised as recommended by WSG and Section 3 was removed.

However, during the last week, in advance of the anticipated floor votes in their respective houses, an new amendment (#98) to SB36 was prepared by the LCB and distributed by the Nature Conservancy. As shown in Exhibit 3, this mysterious amendment, which is much different than what passed out of the Natural Resources Committee, had limiting language in Sections 2 and 3 placed back into the bill. If this language remains in SB36, WSG will oppose this bill and work to make sure the bill does not pass.

As we have previously reported, most of the testimony for AB104 and SB36 was in support of the bills as amended, with only one testimony in opposition for both. It is interesting to note that the ‘buy-back’ program contemplated in AB104 is being modeled after the [2024 Nevada Water Conservation and Infrastructure Initiative](#), where \$25 million in federal grants were used to fund groundwater retirements from willing parties. However, as shown in a recent [DRI presentation](#) at the 2025 [NWRA Conference](#), only 47% of the groundwater retired as part of the 2024 program was actually ‘wet water’, which means that private entities were paid with federal tax dollars to retire water rights being utilized at less than 50%. This rather embarrassing fact was never mentioned during the AB104 and SB36 hearings.

**Tracking Table**

A detailed (hyperlinked) tracking table is attached to this report ([see Exhibit 1](#)). One of the main objectives for this report is to inform on BDRs initially targeted for review and consideration as to how they may affect WSG clients. As details emerge and hearings are completed, some of these bills will be removed from the tracking table unless a client requests them to remain or be added back. Each week the Exhibit 1 tracking table is highlighted with red text when updates, additions or changes are made.

**Recent Meetings & Hearings**

The following hyperlinked table can be used to quickly access meeting and hearing details from the prior week on the Nevada Legislative website. For a summary of each (tracked) bill hearing, summarized notes are provided in Exhibit 2.

**Upcoming Meetings / Hearings**

None scheduled for upcoming week. Bills that passed out of 1<sup>st</sup> house committees will be scheduled for floor sessions and votes in the coming week.

DATE	DAY	BILL HEARING LINK
24-Apr	Thursday	<a href="#">AB26 – Senate Natural Resources. NDWR bill pertaining to dams</a>

## WSG Clients

WSG strives to avoid conflicts of interest, which requires transparent communications regarding our work in the Legislature and the clients we are representing. Below is a summary of each of the business entities associated with WSG's lobbying activities during the Legislative Session.

### [Gold Standard Ventures \(US\) Inc. \(Orla Mining\)](#)

Gold Standard Ventures (US) Inc. (GSV) was acquired by Orla Mining in 2022. Orla Mining (Orla) is an emerging, growth-oriented, low-cost, mid-tier gold producer. GSV/Orla is in the feasibility and permitting stages of an open pit, heap leach project located on the prolific Carlin trend in Elko County Nevada. Specifically, the GSV/Orla team is pursuing development of the South Railroad Project, which is a low-complexity project with robust economics, situated on a highly prospective land package known as the South Carlin Complex that would support open pit mining and heap leach production from the Dark Star and Pinion deposits over an eight-year mine life.

### [Mason Resources \(Hudbay Minerals Inc\)](#)

The Mason project is a large greenfield copper deposit located in the historic Yerington District of Nevada and is one of the largest undeveloped copper porphyry deposits in North America. The Mason deposit is a large tonnage, copper-molybdenum deposit and is planned to be a traditional open pit shovel/truck operation with a copper sulphide mineral processing plant producing commercial grade copper and molybdenum concentrate. The plant is designed to operate at a throughput rate of 120,000 tonnes per day.

### [Singatse Peak Services \(Lion Copper and Gold\)](#)

Singatse Peak Services (SPS) is a subsidiary of Lion Copper and Gold (LCG) and is in various stages of project exploration, evaluation and permitting a handful of projects within their larger Mason Valley project portfolio, which includes financial backing from Rio Tinto. Mason Valley is the site of a large, historic copper camp in a premier jurisdiction 50 miles southeast of Reno. The MacArthur Project represents the advancement of a large oxide copper deposit. The Yerington Project includes 11 square miles of patented claims and fee mineral properties centered on a former open pit copper mine.

### **BTAZ Nevada LLC**

BTAZ Nevada (BTAZ) is one of the largest agricultural producers in the state, operating within six Nevada counties. BTAZ owns approximately 32,500 acres of private land associated with its farming operations and possesses grazing permits on nearly 3.6 million acres of public (BLM and Forest Service) land. BTAZ manages up to 15,000 head of cattle and maintains nearly 300 active surface and groundwater rights in Nevada.

### **Flying M Ranch (dba The Rose of Snowville)**

The Flying M Ranch is situated in the Lower Humboldt River Region near Imlay. This large ranching operation includes three BLM Grazing Allotments spanning 881 mi<sup>2</sup> and nearly 23,000 acres of private land supporting up to 2,500 head of cattle. The livestock operation is supported by 68 surface water rights and 39 groundwater rights for stockwater. Additionally, the Flying M Ranch owns 3,527 acre-ft of decreed Humboldt River rights for irrigation on 2,410 acres of land, which includes 2,530 acre-ft of some of the most senior decreed rights on the river with 1863 and 1864 priority dates.



### [Dixon Hydrologic, PLLC](#)

## Meridian Nevada

WSG works closely with [Meridian Nevada](#), which specializes in strategic consulting services for businesses, organizations, and agencies that are looking to thrive and make a lasting impact in the upcoming legislative session. Meridian provides robust experience in navigating the complex legislative process at the local, state, and federal levels. Their expertise in forming and maintaining legislative relationships is invaluable.

### Lobbying Approach

WSG was created to provide a unique option for water resource policy advocacy based on decades of actual technical experience in the application of Nevada water policy in the development and management of water resources throughout the State. WSG's positions are driven by science, not politics. Our overarching goal at WSG is to maximize the beneficial use of Nevada's water resources to maintain and grow Nevada's economy while protecting existing rights and environmental resources.

Water resources play a critical role in all the existing businesses and projects being associated with WSG's clients. Our clients generally share many common objectives, which will guide our lobbying efforts during this Legislative Session. These objectives can be summarized as follows:

1. Maintaining a fair and reliable regulatory framework in Nevada that is supportive of the extractive mineral, agricultural, and energy industries.
2. Help develop and support legislation that provides added efficiencies in Nevada's permitting and regulatory processes.
3. Monitor and participate in select legislative proposals and bills that support the companies' project objectives and help modify or eliminate bills that may conflict with those objectives.
4. Remain actively engaged in legislative processes in the promotion of bills that help ensure timely and reliable access to and beneficial use of Nevada's water resources in support of project exploration, development, and operational objectives.

## WSG Background

While we are considered 'paid lobbyists', this is not our full-time job. Jay Dixon and his associates are Professional Engineers and Water Rights Specialists who make a living designing and permitting water infrastructure with a focus on the sustainable and beneficial use of Nevada's water resources for maximizing economic output.

### Industry Focused



Mining



Agriculture



Energy



Public Works | Municipal

**EXHIBIT 1 -**  
**Weekly Legislative Tracking Table**

**In-Session Tracking (Select Water Bills)**

Updated on 4/18/25

**Bills that were pulled into money committees, or appear likely to be pulled in due to a fiscal not or unfunded mandate.**

**Bills that received a floor vote with 'NO' vote designations.**

BDR	Bill	Sponsor	Bill Description	Overview	Status / Position	BILL STATUS
<b>Water Resources Bills</b>						
17-10	<a href="#">SB143</a>	Senator Nguyen	Provisions relating to water.	AN ACT relating to natural resources; authorizing the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources to evaluate and review issues relating to water conservation; requiring the NDEP and DCNR to conduct an interim study on artificial turf and synthetic grass; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.	Will monitor and consider after first hearing.	Passed Senate 21-0
48-391	<a href="#">AB9</a>	Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources (NRS 218E.320)	Revises provisions governing the temporary conversion of agricultural water.	Under existing law, a person or entity may apply to temporarily convert agricultural water rights for wildlife purposes or to improve the quality or flow of water for a duration not to exceed 3 years and a temporary conversion may be extended in increments not to exceed 3 years in duration each. (NRS 533.0243) This bill instead provides that a temporary conversion of agricultural water rights may not exceed 5 years in duration and may be extended in increments that may not exceed 5 years in duration each.	The bill sponsor has continued working with the Great Basin Water Network and Eureka County to improve what was initially introduced as a 'sloppy' amendment according to the State Engineer. WSG and the State Engineer testified in opposition. WSG recommended a simple alternative based on a proposed amendment to AB90 from the 2023 Session. This bill was amended and passed out of 1st Committee.	Passed Assembly Natural Resources. Referred to Assembly Ways and Means because of fiscal note.
22-407	<a href="#">AB10</a>	Assembly Committee on Government Affairs	Revises provisions relating to local improvement projects.	Related to local improvement projects; authorizing any county, city or town to repair a private water or sewer system that is owned by a common-interest community as part of a neighborhood improvement project; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.	Will continue monitoring; neutral.	Passed Assembly 37-5 (Rs Cole, Dickman, Gallant, Gray, and Hafen NOs)
48-261	<a href="#">AB26</a>	Division of Water Resources	Revises various provisions relating to dams.	Proposes exemption from liability for certain damages, revises provisions relating to construction or alteration of certain dams, exempts certain works under certain Federal jurisdictions, requires certain dam applications be made available to NDOW, authorizes State Engineer to enter certain parcels, revises provisions relating to dam removal and removal of certain animals interfering with flow, provides certain penalties relating thereto.	WSG remains supportive of this bill.	Passed Assembly 42-0. <b>Hearing in Senate Scheduled for Thursday, April 24, 2025</b>



Bills that were pulled into money committees, or appear likely to be pulled in due to a fiscal not or unfunded mandate.

Bills that received a floor vote with 'NO' vote designations.

BDR	Bill	Sponsor	Bill Description	Overview	Status / Position	BILL STATUS
<b>Water Resources Bills</b>						
48-383	<a href="#">AB104</a>	Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources (NRS 218E.320)	Revises provisions relating to water right retirements.	Would require the State Engineer to retire certain water rights; revising provisions relating temporary permits to appropriate groundwater; creating the Nevada Conservation and Recreation Program; creating the Account for Retiring Water Rights; establishing the Nevada Voluntary Water Rights Retirement Program and the Advisory Committee for the Nevada Voluntary Water Rights Retirement Program.	As explained in earlier reports, WSG was able to broker a major (fix) to this bill with the removal of certain language in Sections 2 and 3. As of right now this bill has a fiscal note so it's fate is uncertain. Passed out of 1st Committee.	Passed Assembly Natural Resources. Likely will be referred to Assembly Ways & Means because it has a fiscal note.
48-586	<a href="#">AB132</a>	Assemblyman Yurek	Revises provisions relating to water.	Proposes to update requirements for wildlife guzzlers to increase capacity (from 20k gal. to 40k gal. and max. allowable pipeline distance from 0.25 to 0.5 miles.	WSG testified in support of this bill.	Passed Assembly Natural Resources. Awaiting Assembly Floor Vote. Will need to pass prior to the First House Passage Deadline on April 22, 2025.
48-385	<a href="#">AB363</a>	Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources (NRS 218E.320)	Revises provisions relating to groundwater boards.	Similar bill that has failed in the prior two Sessions. Under this proposal, a county—or multiple counties sharing a groundwater basin—may request that the State Engineer establish an advisory-only groundwater board tasked with providing written advice and recommendations on reducing over-pumping and managing the basin sustainably. The board's recommendations are not binding on the State Engineer, and any disagreement between the board and the State Engineer does not serve as grounds for legal action.	WSG is neutral, but agrees with the opposition remarks by SNWA; see Exhibit 2 hearing notes	Passed Assembly Natural Resources. Referred to Assembly Ways & Means because of fiscal note.
48-736	<a href="#">AB419</a>	Assemblyman DeLong	Revises provisions relating to applications concerning water rights.	Originally a massive bill that would completely altered the NV Div. of Water Resources by double the size of their staff. A substantially scaled down bill, via a last minute amendment, passed out of a special Work Session. As amended and passed: (Section 1) requiring regulations for the preapplications meetings with State Engineer, (Section 4) biannual reporting to the Leg. by the State Engineer on delayed applications and rulings (more than 2 years), and (Section 10) requires the State Engineer to explain why a decision is made against prior precedent when applicable.	WSG remains neutral but is involved in the ongoing work that remains with this bill.	Referred from Assembly Natural Resources without recommendation to the Assembly Ways & Means Committee.



Bills that were pulled into money committees, or appear likely to be pulled in due to a fiscal not or unfunded mandate.

Bills that received a floor vote with 'NO' vote designations.

BDR	Bill	Sponsor	Bill Description	Overview	Status / Position	BILL STATUS
<b>Water Resources Bills</b>						
S-389	<a href="#">SB6</a>	Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources (NRS 218E.320)	Cloud seeding	Makes an appropriation from the State General Fund to the Desert Research Institute of the Nevada System of Higher Education to support the Nevada State Cloud Seeding Program.	WSG is Neutral.	Passed Senate Natural Resources. Pulled into Senate Finance because of an appropriation.
48-260	<a href="#">SB31</a>	Division of Water Resources	Revises provisions relating to the adjudication of vested water rights	Seeks to exempt federal agencies from filing claims of vested rights from requirement to file proof of the claim on or before a certain date; revising requirements relating to a notice of pending adjudication of certain water rights; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.	WSG met with the Nevada Farm Bureau and the Administrative Law Judge (NDWR) about this bill. The Farm Bureau is preparing to oppose the bill. WSG is studying the legislative history and implications of the McCarran Act on this bill. It appears that the bill may be necessary. WSG testified in opposition to this bill and is currently working with Taggart & Taggart on an amendment that we'll likely try to get introduced in the Assembly.	Passed Senate Floor 15-6 (All Rs NO except Rogich and Steinbeck. *Titus read WSG/Meridian floor statement against SB31.
48-384	<a href="#">SB36</a>	Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources (NRS 218E.320)	Establishes provisions relating to the conservation of groundwater.	Nevada Water Buy-Back Initiative and the Advisory Committee for the Nevada Water Buy-Back Initiative; requiring the Director of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to purchase certain water rights for the purpose of retiring the water rights; creating the Nevada Conservation and Recreation Program; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.	WSG is now opposed to this bill based on an apparent change prior to floor vote that significantly altered the bill from the version that passed out of Committee.	Passed Senate Natural Resources. Referred to Senate Finance because of fiscal note.
40-750	<a href="#">SB276</a>	Numerous Sponsors	Seeks to establish provisions governing the reporting and sharing of water-related information by certain gov. entities and Indian tribes.	Proposes new requirements for any city, county, unincorporated town, district, water authority, and Indian tribes to provide certain notifications to other related entities when applying for a permit to discharge water into a water of the State.	WSG is currently neutral, but will closely monitor. It should be noted that bill has an 'unfunded mandate' on it.	Passed Senate Natural Resources. Has a fiscal note, but fiscal notes are \$0 so it may get a Senate Floor as it was not pulled into Senate Finance on its 2nd Read.

**In-Session Tracking (Select Natural Resources Bills)**

Updated on 4/18/25

Bills that were pulled into money committees, or appear likely to be pulled in due to a fiscal not or unfunded mandate.

Bills that received a floor vote with 'NO' vote designations.

BDR	Bill	Sponsor	Bill Description	Overview	Status / Position	BILL STATUS
<b>Select Environmental &amp; Natural Resources Bills</b>						
42-265	<a href="#">AB40</a>	Division of Environmental Protection	Revises various provisions relating to environmental hazards.	Revising provisions governing mining reclamation to include the stabilization of process fluids; revising certain requirements for a permit to engage in a mining operation or exploration project; requiring the State Environmental Commission to adopt regulations relating to the requirements for the owner or operator of a municipal solid waste landfill or solid waste management facility to provide certain evidence of financial responsibility.	Monitoring through NvMA who is working closely with NDEP on language. Seeks to provide NDEP with resources to be proactive in responding to mining emergency situations. Proposes changes to bonding issues relative to bankruptcy courts to ensure the NDEP is first in line to collect. Deals primarily with battery recycling and fluid management.	Passed Asm Natural Resources. Awaiting Assembly Floor Vote - deadline to pass Assembly is April 22, 2025.
18-214	<a href="#">AB242</a>	Assemblyman DeLong	Revises provisions relating to the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council.	Seeks to place existing Sagebrush Ecosystem Council rules pertaining to sage grouse credits/debits into regulation.	WSG met with bill sponsor and is supportive of bill. Opposition groups testified during initial hearing regarding their dislike for the program, which was a waste of time (for them). See Exhibit 3 for hearing notes.	Passed Asm Government Affairs. Awaiting Assembly Floor Vote - deadline to pass Assembly is April 22, 2025 (May get pulled into Ways & Means because of Fiscal Note.)

Bills that were pulled into money committees, or appear likely to be pulled in due to a fiscal not or unfunded mandate.

Bills that received a floor vote with 'NO' vote designations.

BDR	Bill	Sponsor	Bill Description	Overview	Status / Position	BILL STATUS
<b>Select Environmental &amp; Natural Resources Bills</b>						
10-679	<a href="#">AB429</a>	Assembly Committee on Natural Resources	Revises provisions relating to natural resources.	Existing law authorizes, with certain exceptions, an easement for conservation to be created conveyed, recorded, assigned, released, modified, terminated or otherwise altered or affected in the same manner as other easements. (NRS 111.420) This bill instead provides that any person, including a state or local government or any agency or instrumentality thereof, is authorized to create, convey, record, assign, release, modify, terminate or otherwise alter or affect an easement for conservation in the same manner as other easements.	WSG is neutral.	Passed Assembly Floor Vote 42-0
40-264	<a href="#">SB43</a>	Division of Environmental Protection	Revises provisions relating to environmental protection	AN ACT relating to environmental protection. This bill is designed to address delegation of authorities, from the NDEP to local Health Districts. It is related to two programs; specifically, safe drinking water and solid waste management. .	Monitoring, neutral.	Passed Senate Floor Vote 18-3 (Rs Buck, Ellison, Titus NOs)
26-392	<a href="#">SB286</a>	Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources (NRS 218E.320)	Seeks to establish state policy relating to tribal expertise and knowledge of public lands.	AN ACT relating to planning; declaring the importance of tribal knowledge and expertise and consulting tribal governments when engaged in the land use planning process; revising provisions relating to the State and Local Government Cooperation Act to include tribal governments.	WSG is neutral.	Passed Senate Natural Resources. Was pulled into Senate Finance because of fiscal note.



## **EXHIBIT 2 – Hearing & Meeting Notes**

**From:** Eric Roberts <eric@meridiannevada.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 14, 2025 3:18 PM  
**To:** jon.staab@lcb.state.nv.us; nick.lewis@sen.state.nv.us  
**Cc:** jdixon@dixonhydro.com  
**Subject:** SB31 Floor Statement  
**Attachments:** SB31 Opposition Floor Statement.docx

Jon,

Thanks for getting me in with Dr. Titus to have her give the floor statement against SB31. Attached is a Word document with the statement that I gave to her.

Let us know if you have any questions about anything in the statement. I have Jay Dixon cc'd on this email. He and Paul Taggart, a water attorney here in Nevada, came up with the statement and if you have any questions or concerns on the subject matter, he can address them.

Thanks (and let me know what the NV SOS says about the IRS stuff).

Eric Roberts, Managing Partner  
Meridian Nevada  
702-479-8615  
[Eric@MeridianNevada.com](mailto:Eric@MeridianNevada.com)  
[www.MeridianNevada.com](http://www.MeridianNevada.com)

**ATTENTION**

The information contained in this message is a confidential communication from Meridian Nevada. It is intended to be read only by the person or entity to whom it is addressed or by the designee of such person or entity. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are on notice that distribution of this message in any form is strictly prohibited.

If you have received this message in error, please immediately notify the sender and/or the Managing Partner of Meridian Nevada by telephone at 702-479-8615 and delete or destroy any copy of this message as well as any attachments.

## Two-Minute Floor Statement Opposing Senate Bill 31 (2025)

Thank you.

I rise today in opposition to Senate Bill 31—not because I believe the federal government should be treated more harshly, but because I believe *Nevadans deserve to be treated more fairly*.

In 2017, this Legislature imposed a hard deadline—December 31, 2027—for all claimants of vested water rights to file proof of their claims. That may have seemed like plenty of time back then. But as we sit here today, less than three years from that cutoff, it has become clear that the process is complex, resource-intensive, and in many cases, simply not feasible for many of our ranchers, farmers, small water users, and rural communities who lack the legal and technical support to comply.

SB31, as drafted, doesn't address *their* concerns. Instead, it exempts the *federal government*—the largest and most powerful landholder in Nevada—from this deadline, while leaving our own citizens to struggle under the weight of compliance.

That is simply not fair.

If the 2027 deadline is unreasonable for the federal government, then it is certainly unreasonable for thousands of Nevadans who are being told: “comply or forfeit your rights.” We should not be creating carve-outs for Washington DC while turning a blind eye to the practical burdens we've placed on our own people.

Rather than creating exemptions, this body should be discussing whether the 2027 deadline should be pushed back—or removed altogether. A ten-year extension to 2037 would give everyone—state, federal, and private parties alike—a more realistic opportunity to comply without the risk of losing what may be generations-old water rights.

Let's not double down on an arbitrary deadline that benefits the most powerful player while punishing the average Nevadan. I urge my colleagues to oppose SB31 in its current form and to reconsider whether the 2027 cutoff serves the interests of fairness, equity, or sound water policy.

Thank you.



## **EXHIBIT 3 – Legislative Reviews**

**From:** Nevada Farm Bureau Federation <brittney-nvfb.org@shared1.ccsend.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 18, 2025 5:03 AM  
**To:** dixonjm@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Nevada Farm Bureau Weekly Newsletter

April 18, 2025



**Newsletter for April 18, 2025**

[Share This Email](#)

[Share This Email](#)

[Visit our Website](#)

### **This Issue:**

- **Senate Passes Unfair Bill Allowing Federal Government Agencies A Break On Filing Their Proofs For Vested Water Right Claims**
- **Bills That Aren't Going Forward Because Of April 11<sup>th</sup> Deadline**
- **There Are Bills We Wished Wouldn't Still Be In The Mix...**
- **National Law Center's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference Set For June 19 & 20 - Reno Peppermill**
- **Thank You For Following Farm Bureau Through This Newsletter**
- **Plan To Join Us! Farm Bureau ACES Baseball Outing**

## Senate Passes Unfair Bill Allowing Federal Government Agencies A Break On Filing Their Proofs For Vested Water Right Claims



The Nevada Senate passed **SB 31** on a 15-6 vote on Tuesday, April 15. Nevada Farm Bureau has opposed the passage of the bill, as it is written, noting the unfairness of the exemption that the bill seeks to grant Federal agencies. Prior to the proposal that the Division of Water Resources submitted in SB 31, proof for claims of vested water rights needed to be submitted to the Division by the deadline of December 31, 2027. Those claims which are not submitted by this deadline are considered to be abandoned. If the bill passes, and becomes law, the Federal agencies won't need to submit anything and private sector vested water right claims must meet the requirement of submitting their paperwork or their rights are abandoned.

Thank you to these six Senators Carrie Ann Buck, John Ellison, Ira Hansen, Lisa Krasner, Jeff Stone and Robin Titus for their votes in opposition to SB 31.

← **WSG/Meridian Floor Statement!**

Senate Minority Leader Titus **offered this overview** of why SB 31 should not pass, as introduced. From here the battle ~~moves to the~~ Assembly where it has been referred to the Assembly Natural Resources Committee. The objective will be correcting the treatment of the inequity for how the federal government is being treated or working to prevent the legislation from passage.

There have been requests to change the bill to either delete the deadline or extend it for everyone (since it is asserted that Federal agencies can't be required to do anything that they don't want). The only response from the State Engineer has been to keep the legislation the way it was written – exempting the Federal agencies from needing to file their claims and requiring the private sector to meet the obligation or have their claims for vested water rights abandoned.

### Bills That Aren't Going Forward Because Of April 11<sup>th</sup> Deadline

The list of bills that Nevada Farm Bureau is watching shrunk by a few bills last Friday (April 11<sup>th</sup>) when the deadline for reporting bills from the committees of the First House moved them into the legislative wastebasket. Perhaps some of the concepts might be able to be grafted into other bills that are still moving, but only time will tell.

**AB 485** – is one of the bills that we had hoped we would be able to testify in support of, but it never received a hearing. AB 485 covered the topic of assessments that the State Engineer charges to some designated basins in the state. As proposed, the bill was seeking to strengthen the limitations on how the funds raised by such levies can be spent. Nevada Farm Bureau policy also says that there should be annual reports to provide water right owners who have paid assessment



## SB36 (SECTIONS 2 & 3) COMPARISON

### VERSION THAT PASSED SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE THAT SHOULD BE SENT FOR FLOOR VOTE

**Sec. 2.** NRS 533.370 is hereby amended to read as follows:

533.370 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section and NRS 533.0241, 533.345, 533.371, 533.372 and 533.503, ~~and section 4 of this act~~, the State Engineer shall approve an application submitted in proper form which contemplates the application of water to beneficial use if:

(a) The application is accompanied by the prescribed fees;

(b) The proposed use or change, if within an irrigation district, does not adversely affect the cost of water for other holders of water rights in the district or lessen the efficiency of the district in its delivery or use of water; and

(c) The applicant provides proof satisfactory to the State Engineer of the applicant's:

(1) Intention in good faith to construct any work necessary to apply the water to the intended beneficial use with reasonable diligence; and

(2) Financial ability and reasonable expectation actually to construct the work and apply the water to the intended beneficial use with reasonable diligence.

2. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 10, ~~[where there]~~ the State Engineer shall reject an application and refuse to issue the requested permit if:

(a) ~~There~~ is no unappropriated water in the proposed source of supply ~~[where the]~~;

(b) ~~The~~ groundwater that has not been committed for use has been reserved pursuant to NRS 533.0241; ~~or~~

(c) ~~The groundwater rights have been retired pursuant to section 4 of this act or [where its]~~

~~(d) The proposed use or change conflicts with existing rights or with protectable interests in existing domestic wells as set forth in NRS 533.024 [.] or threatens to prove detrimental to the public interest. [the State Engineer shall reject the application and refuse to issue the requested permit.]~~

☐ If a previous application for a similar use of water within the same basin has been rejected on those grounds, the new application may be denied without publication.

**Sec. 3.** Deleted by amendment.

### MYSTERIOUS "LCB AMENDMENT 98" VERSION SHARED BY NATURE CONSERVANCY IN ADVANCE OF SENATE FLOOR VOTE

**Sec. 2.** NRS 533.370 is hereby amended to read as follows:

533.370 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section and NRS 533.0241, 533.345, 533.371, 533.372 and 533.503, ~~and section 4 of this act~~, the State Engineer shall approve an application submitted in proper form which contemplates the application of water to beneficial use if:

(a) The application is accompanied by the prescribed fees;

(b) The proposed use or change, if within an irrigation district, does not adversely affect the cost of water for other holders of water rights in the district or lessen the efficiency of the district in its delivery or use of water; and

(c) The applicant provides proof satisfactory to the State Engineer of the applicant's:

(1) Intention in good faith to construct any work necessary to apply the water to the intended beneficial use with reasonable diligence; and

(2) Financial ability and reasonable expectation actually to construct the work and apply the water to the intended beneficial use with reasonable diligence.

2. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 10, ~~[where there]~~ the State Engineer shall reject an application and refuse to issue the requested permit if:

(a) ~~There~~ is no unappropriated water in the proposed source of supply ~~[where the]~~;

(b) ~~The~~ groundwater that has not been committed for use has been reserved pursuant to NRS 533.0241;

(c) ~~The groundwater rights have been retired pursuant to section 4 of this act; or [where its]~~

(d) ~~The proposed use or change conflicts with existing rights or with protectable interests in existing domestic wells as set forth in NRS 533.024, or threatens to prove detrimental to the public interest. [the State Engineer shall reject the application and refuse to issue the requested permit.]~~

☐ If a previous application for a similar use of water within the same basin has been rejected on those grounds, the new application may be denied without publication.

**Sec. 3.** NRS 533.371 is hereby amended to read as follows:

533.371 The State Engineer shall reject the application and refuse to issue a permit to appropriate water for a specified period if the State Engineer determines that:

1. The application is incomplete;

2. The prescribed fees have not been paid;

3. The proposed use is not temporary;

4. There is no water available from the proposed source of supply without exceeding the perennial yield or safe yield of that source;

5. The groundwater that has not been committed for use from the proposed source of supply has been reserved pursuant to NRS 533.0241;

6. ~~The groundwater rights have been retired pursuant to section 4 of this act;~~