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Poll Shows Broad Support for Protecting Gold Butte Area
Area residents favor National Conservation Area and wilderness designation

A recent poll of Clark County voters found broad, robust support for permanent protection of public lands in the Gold Butte region, which lies south of I-15 and Mesquite in southern Nevada. The poll was commissioned by the Nevada Wilderness Coalition and Friends of Gold Butte to determine public opinion about conservation of the Gold Butte region.

“This poll shows strong support that should compel the Nevada congressional delegation to move forward with legislation to protect these unique and sensitive wild lands,” said Nancy Hall, President of Mesquite-based Friends of Gold Butte.

In order to preserve these wild places and the incredible opportunities for outdoor activities that so many Nevadans enjoy, the Nevada Wilderness Coalition and Friends of Gold Butte are working on a proposal to protect the Gold Butte region as a National Conservation Area with wilderness. Two-thirds of voters polled favor preserving wilderness in the Gold Butte region, indicating that the current five percent of Nevada lands protected as wilderness is too little. The poll found that both Republicans and Democrats support conservation of the Gold Butte area.

Three-quarters of self-identified off-road vehicle users also support these protections. This is significant because motorized vehicles are not allowed in wilderness and one of the major threats to the Gold Butte region’s habitat and cultural resources.

Nevada’s wild public lands are known for their excellent hiking, camping, fishing and hunting opportunities. The results of this poll indicate that nearly two-thirds of voters take advantage of one or more of these outdoor activities.

Glen Bolger, of Public Opinion Strategies, said, “This poll demonstrates solid support for preserving wilderness lands in the Gold Butte region. A majority of Clark County voters are taking advantage of existing public lands for outdoor activities. They want to see those lands protected and preserved for future generations to enjoy.”

“This poll confirms that the Gold Butte region needs the protection afforded by a National Conservation Area with wilderness,” said John Wallin of the Nevada Wilderness Coalition. “We believe the proposal we’ve submitted to Congress can achieve this protection without closing a single road, and it will help the county meet its legal obligations under the Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan.”

The poll was conducted by Public Opinion Strategies, April 29-May 1, 2008.

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