



Basin and Range Watch



FRIENDS of NEVADA WILDERNESS



**SIERRA CLUB**



**Western Watersheds Project**



**THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY**

## Save 680,000 Acres of Public Access!

### Oppose Military Takeover of our Fallon Wildlands

The 116<sup>th</sup> Congress will decide the future of 680,000 acres of wildlands in Northern Nevada, an area of over 1,000 square miles—the size of the State of Rhode Island. The U.S. Navy proposes to **quadruple** the size of existing Naval Air Station Fallon (NAS Fallon) to envelop vital wildlife habitat and treasured scenic, recreational and cultural landscapes for war training activities. The military’s proposal would damage important Tribal cultural sites and end long-standing public use on these lands, including traditional practices by local Tribes that have persisted for at least 10,000 years. This is unacceptable.

**Congress must preserve public access and Tribal use of these wildlands by rejecting the Navy’s proposal to close off additional public lands for war training.** The military has already excluded the public from 230,000 acres, on which the Navy has destroyed important cultural sites and wildlife habitat. The Navy’s proposal would expand NAS Fallon onto more than 600,000 additional acres, and completely lock out the public to more than 350,000 of those acres. The result would be a loss of hunting, wildlife watching, hiking, rockhounding and other public and Tribal uses of culturally and ecologically significant lands. No additional lands should be put off-limits to the American public.

**Congress must not accept the Navy’s massive land grab at the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and diverse neighboring ecosystems.** This unique American landscape includes mountain ranges, expansive valleys, diverse wetlands, high desert, important wildlife areas, and precious geothermic and geologic features. It is home to abundant wildlife, including migrating birds, bighorn sheep and other large game animals that would be threatened by both the expanded bombing ranges and development as well as the increase in noise. Nearby Tribes (e.g., the Fallon Paiute Shoshone and Walker River Paiute Tribes) have resided and practiced their ways of life in the Western Great Basin for at least 10,000 years and rely on it for their subsistence and cultural practices. Important Tribal ceremonial sites and countless burials dot the area. Critical habitat is at risk from the Monte Cristo Mountains to Dixie Valley, and the National Wildlife Refuge system itself is under attack with the proposed reduction at Fallon Refuge.

**The Navy must consult with Tribal governments and perform a full inventory of cultural resources before an expansion of the existing NAS Fallon is considered.** The Navy has inaccurately determined that the National Historic Preservation Act and its important consultation procedures under Section 106 do not apply to the proposed expansion. They have not performed a cultural resources inventory of the vast majority of lands proposed for withdrawal and have no meaningful plan in place to identify, protect, and safeguard Tribal access to important cultural sites. Consultation and impact review are particularly vital given the Navy's history of destroying Tribal sacred and cultural sites (e.g., Fox Peak, Lone Rock, Fairview Mountain) and elimination of Tribal access to sites that Tribes had continuously used for thousands of years.

**Congress must listen to the voices of Nevada and Tribal governments.** In 2019, the Nevada Legislature passed Assembly Joint Resolution 7 by an overwhelming and bipartisan majority. The resolution opposed the proposed expansion for its conversion of land in the Fallon Refuge and Fox Peak Area of Critical Environmental Concern, elimination of public access, restriction on grazing and mineral exploration, closure or reduction of a state route, and general detriment to the people and natural resources of the state. In addition, the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada passed Resolution No 06-ITCSN-19 opposing the expansion and supporting Tribal requests for consultation and a full cultural resource inventory, and the National Congress of American Indians approved Resolution ABQ-19-006 expressing the same opinion on NAS Fallon and any other military expansion affecting Tribal nations. The Navy has not taken action to address these concerns.

**Congress must continue to review lands withdrawn for military purposes every twenty years.** Military needs change over time. Americans' expectations for their public lands also evolve. The currently required twenty-year legislative review is an important, regular opportunity for Congress and the public to determine the best use of public lands withdrawn for military purposes and make necessary adjustments.

**Basin and Range Watch**

**Center for Biological Diversity**

**Defenders of Wildlife**

**Friends of Nevada Wilderness**

**Sierra Club**

**Veterans For Peace**

**Western Watersheds Project**

**The Wilderness Society**