

1. Nevada Association of Conservation Districts has been working hard to make our voice heard. ****

2. And we have been laying the ground work for CDs to play their role in Nevada. Things are always more effective when we prepare! Our preparations and work can be a help for all of you here today and how that can happen is what I am here to talk about. First some groundwork so you understand the basics and some terminology. ***

3. What is a Conservation District?

- Founded in 1937 during the Dust Bowl
- With a philosophy that conservation decisions should be made at the local level
- Focusing on voluntary, incentive-based actions. ****
- **4.** Governmental entities, much like school boards, directed by locally elected Supervisors
- Authority comes from NRS 548
- A vital link to connect private and public land interests in Nevada; they encompass all Nevada

Conservation Districts started because in the 1930s people understood that if you want the government to help; it will work much better if local people guide it. NvACD is part of the movement to make that thought the way we do business in Nevada again. ****

5. I sometimes shake my head at how things are in Nevada; it is as if we want to do things the hard way! I'm thinking we still often live up to our original moniker of "Battle Born." This horse isn't where it wants or needs to be, obviously. I kind of see it as where Nevada is now, lots of good things are happening in the natural resource world, but they aren't linked yet for best effect so we are kind of stuck. When we can get them connected and move them all forward together, then we will really start to see some action. I believe CDs can be catalysts in that movement. Like for this horse, it wasn't as hard to get into this situation, as it will

be to get out. It will require work and commitment and passion. It will require CD Supervisors to think of themselves not just as volunteers but as elected officials with duties and responsibilities, and will require our partners to recognize them as such.

And one other thing, this horse's problem needs to be solved right there in that corral, it needs a locally led solution! ***

6. It says right in state statute that, persons in local communities are best able to provide basic leadership and direction for the planning and accomplishment of conservation through conservation districts." ****

7. I was a CD Supervisor for many years before I understood the differences so I want to quickly review the various **CD ORGANIZATIONS in Nevada:**

State Conservation Commission or (SCC)

- Has seven positions appointed by the Governor; two from each Area, one at large and one each from the College of Ag and the Nevada Department of Ag. Commissioners are nominated by NvACD at our business meeting per our right and responsibility. In other states the Commissioners are political appointees and may not have connection to conservation so we should appreciate what we have.
- The Commission determines CDs "in good standing" to receive the annual grant from the Legislature, administers the Sage grouse Habitat grants and acts as liaison with federal and state agencies and organizations concerned with conservation.

The Conservation District Program in Nevada in the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources or DCNR has a

- CD Program Manager who is the Executive Secretary for the SCC and keeper of CD records. It operates as the connection to the state for Nevada CDs. Their

website has the list of Commissioners on the SCC as well as all the Annual Reports and Annual Work Plans for the CDs which is a wealth of information of the good work being done around the state. Bettina Scherer is the Program Manager.

National Association of Conservation Districts or (NACD – which is why we are insistent on being called NyACD to distinguish)

- Represents America's 3000 CDs in Washington DC and provides training and education for CDs to use.

Nevada Association of Conservation Districts (NvACD)

- Is the non-profit, statewide network, voice, and advocacy association for Nevada CDs. We can lobby and are not subject to the open meeting law like CDs and the SCC.
- We provide forums to train and educate Supervisors and those associated with CDs and recognize outstanding conservation work by Awards given at our Annual Meeting banquet.
- I am the outgoing President, Agee Smith of Cottonwood Ranch in Elko County will take over the presidency in January, Gary McCuin of Cooperative Extension in Eureka will become 1st VP, Doug Martin of Carson City was just elected 2nd VP, and Jake Tibbitts of Eureka is Treasurer and our representative to the National Association. Connie Lee of Spring Creek is our Executive Director. **

8. I looked through your Nevada Farm Bureau policy statements and I find many that support the process I am about to describe. Your policies say such things as:

Nevada Farm Bureau should work together with other livestock production or advocacy groups and other impacted groups to coordinate strategy....

Nevada Farm Bureau favors the concept of coordinated resource management planning at both state and local level

It is essential for state and local governments to have a good working knowledge of their powers and responsibilities in regard to Natural Resource plans in their respective jurisdictions

Nevada Farm Bureau supports the use of the federally-managed lands utilizing a multiple use concept. ***

9. RNA - So let's get to it. NvACD has been making our voice heard by pursuing a Resource Needs Assessment process. First some background, then the process. In January of 2017 NvACD leadership met with Ray Dotson, State Conservationist for USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Ray was willing to sign a funding agreement with NvACD, but he wanted our help to re-energize the NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee which has been languishing in Nevada for many years. To accomplish that, we decided to go back to basics of conservation planning; and we began our Resource Needs Assessment process. Using the NRCS-NV and another funding agreement from the National Association of Conservation Districts, we have selected seven CDs for the initial run-through, hired three contractors to assist them, written a Guide that can be found on our website at nvacd.org, and financed a survey done by UNR that is in the final stages of development. ****

10. Before we get to the NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee or STAC, you need even more background. What we are talking about today is a process that is simple but complex at the same time; I have seen too much misunderstanding from people having only a partial understanding, so I want to make sure this doesn't happen for Farm Bureau. You need to know more about the situation with CDs in Nevada.

Many CDs around the state are doing outstanding work in their areas. What we have not done well in the last decade is lead our Local Work Groups, which is part of the STAC process. Into this void has stepped the Nevada Collaborative Conservation Network. In case you can't read it, the cartoon reads, "The woods were dark and foreboding, and Alice sensed that sinister eyes were watching her every step. Worst of all, she knew that Nature abhorred a vacuum." ***

11. The Nevada Collaborative Conservation Network or NCCN seeks to serve as a bridge between various natural resource collaborative groups that are already operating, to utilize their developed experience, knowledge and passion as a way to enhance, expand and network additional conservation efforts across the state. This will build momentum and ability to lead to more and better conservation on the ground in a triple-bottom-line way. Currently the NCCN Coordinating Group includes 17 groups or agencies, including NvACD. Farm Bureau is also involved. I believe that NvACD and NCCN can work hand in glove to accomplish this commitment of working together for more and better conservation on the ground. ***BACK to 10 (cartoons)

These kinds of things don't just happen, they have to be herded along; we can all help with that. The wife says, "Henry! Our party's total chaos! No one knows when to eat, where to stand, what to.... Oh, thank God! Here comes a border collie!"

I was one of four NCCN presentations to the Nevada Legislative Committee on Public Lands, chaired by Assemblywoman Heidi Swank last summer. I discussed the variety of collaborative groups in Nevada, explained the difference between LAWGs and LWGs, described CDs, and explained our Resource Needs Assessments process. At this point in time the interim committee has submitted Bill Draft Request 510 for a bill to require and fund a competitive grant program for local communities and conservation groups to provide state match for federal funds in the amount of \$500,000. (Recommended by Chairwoman Swank and Senator Ratti.) **** (past 11 to 12 – NCCN letter)

12. The committee also approved a letter to NCCN; Chairwoman Swank sent a letter on October 3 to NCCN which stated, (QUOTE) “This interim, at several of its meetings, the Committee received compelling testimony from various members of the NCCN regarding their community-based conservation efforts throughout Nevada.

The Legislative Committee on Public Lands overwhelmingly supports the efforts of the NCCN and voted unanimously to send this letter to encourage a Nevada policy prioritizing community-based conservation of public lands that integrates local knowledge of natural resources. The purpose of this letter is to underscore that the Committee recognizes the importance of creating groups in collaboration with federal, state, county, local, and private land managers in a shared effort to maintain thriving ecosystems, as well as the associated wildlife, communities, and economies these ecosystems support. Nevada is a beautiful state with vast expanses of public lands where natural resource policy implementation requires diverse local partnerships.” (CLOSE QUOTE)

When NvACD researched the manner by which other western states manage natural resources collaboratively, a certain point always stood out to me from their examples; the state is the driving force and glue that holds all the other entities together for funding and project completion. I hope in the future we will look back to this letter and actions by the Committee on Public Lands and see that 2019 became the turning point where this started to happen in Nevada as well.

I believe the momentum NCCN is building and the momentum CDs are building with the Resource Needs Assessments will only enhance and utilize each other’s strengths to create a way for better natural resource management in Nevada among all groups, agencies and partners who are involved in the effort. There will be times and places where NvACD and CDs, and I hope Farm Bureau, can be the border collie. **

13. Ray Dotson, State Conservationist for NRCS, and I made a presentation together at the NvACD meeting in Elko two weeks ago; he wanted to be here today, but he is leading another meeting and wanted me to express his regrets. I will offer some of his remarks as we go along when we get to that part. ***

14. Puzzle – there is a process in place in the NRCS Manual that outlines a conservation district – local work group – state technical advisory committee, or STAC, process. It is outlined in the NRCS conservation planning manual which can be found on the NvACD website. What we want to talk about today is what all these terms mean, how the connection works, and how we can make this connection fit Nevada’s needs. Nevada is often unlike other states; this situation is no different. The large amount of federal land, the small amount of private land, the many partners at work, the distances, past history, and often limited staffs; all those considerations and more make natural resource work in Nevada a puzzle. What we want to talk about today is how to solve the puzzle, how to use this NRCS planning tool to help every partner we have to work together by the most effective way possible to solve resource concerns at the local level. I see the possibilities as limitless! ***

15. CDs are important to Nevada as we hold the key to solving the puzzle. This is because we have specific authorities by state statute and a specific role in a federal planning system – the perfect combination to work for Nevada. We can meld funding, work across ownership boundaries, and be a safe place for local people to connect with agencies and groups. NRCS and other agencies are looking for local input. ***

16. One of the authorities given to CDs by NRS is “to develop comprehensive plans for the conservation of renewable natural resources within the district,” and to bring them to people’s attention. Apparently, the practice of writing plans and putting them on the shelf was a problem in 1937 as well as today! Earlier I described the background of the Resource Needs Assessments, the process NvACD is supporting, now we are going to talk about how those Assessments will

lead to conservation action plans and how this process can and should incorporate planning and implementation needs for all entities and individuals working on Nevada landscapes. ***

17. Before we get into the boring, government manual stuff, I want to whet your appetite for where we will get to by the end of this conversation. The boring, government manual stuff is necessary for the framework, but here are the benefits of the process NvACD has embarked on with NRCS help – a process you must always keep in mind is bigger than just NRCS, every agency and group and individual here will benefit by their participation. I cannot emphasize that idea enough and will keep saying it over and over.

I have gone around the state talking about Resource Needs Assessments and locally led conservation; this is how I described the benefits. “It is all about having the information in place to make the best decisions, at the local level, about how best to spend any program dollars available from any source to solve resource concerns, and how to locally lead planning for the future.

This “Locally Led” planning process establishes a foundation upon which the District’s conservation efforts are based. It provides the informational and scientific rigor for planning and project implementation that is on par with other federal agency planning and provides the context to develop collaborative solutions with state and federal partners. It challenges neighbors, both urban and rural, to work together and take responsibility for addressing local resource needs. It involves the community in the assessment of those needs, as well as the solutions and priorities. The approach emphasizes voluntary, non-regulatory, incentive-based actions before use of regulatory measures. It is not driven by any single piece of legislation, any one fiscal year or any individual program; it is an on-going, timeless approach that is not tied to any particular year. As such, it is able to be evaluated regularly to ensure it is effectively meeting the long-term needs of the local community. ***

18. Before we continue, we need to distinguish LAWGs from LWGs. The Local Area Work Groups are sage grouse focused. They have done great work to bring people together to accomplish projects for sage grouse. Relationships have already been built and I certainly hope the LAWGs will bring the expertise they have acquired to the LWG to help them identify resource concerns and possible solutions. A LWG in no way lessens or interferes with the working of a LAWG; they will do the work of a LAWG if there is no LAWG, or they can enhance the work the LAWG is doing by a broader function, additional partners, or pursuing solutions to concerns that will also benefit sage grouse. ***

19. From Ray – This is the framework developed by NRCS. A Resource Needs Assessment is a process that CD's use to understand and document needs and tools to address the needs. Local Workgroups are a broader group that is representative of the local area. State Technical Committees take the reports from the local work groups; they are charged with reviewing local needs and seeing if there are regional or statewide trends and providing recommendations to the state conservationist. The STAC and the Local Work Groups can meet as much as they like and should consider this as an opportunity to understand the options within and outside NRCS to address local needs. NRCS wants feedback but every meeting should not necessarily be about NRCS or our programs. ***

20. Now let's get specific about what a Resource Needs Assessment, or RNA, is. Simply put, it identifies resource concerns and potential solutions to those concerns. It will provide the CD the foundation for their conservation efforts. The reason this is important to all our partners is that every square inch of Nevada is included in a conservation district, so wherever you are working; a CD is there and can work with you. RNAs work across ownership boundaries; therefore, this is not a BLM plan, or an NDF plan, or a USFS plan, or an NDOW plan. It is the one place all those plans can bring their elements together.

These are the CDs involved in the initial Agreement; my hope is eventually all 28 Nevada CDs will develop Resource Needs Assessments. NvACD has written a

Guide that is available on our website at nvacd.org. It outlines the process and gives many links to further information. The Agreement with NRCS-NV has funded time and travel for NvACD to write the Guide and do outreach, and \$4000 will be paid to each CD that completes the RNA, organizes a LWG, and submits recommendations to the State Technical Advisory Committee by November 2019.

Our in-state Agreement with NRCS has provided the tools and understanding for how to complete a RNA, and our national Agreement with NACD the means to hire the contractors to help the seven initial CDs work through the Resource Concerns Checklist and complete the Conservation Practices Physical Effects matrix, or CPPE. ***

21. These two NRCS farm planning tools form the foundation of the Resource Needs Assessment and they identify soil, air, water, plant and animal resource concerns with energy added in later. The Resource Concerns Checklist is actually 7 pages long, I just combined most of the titles onto this slide; the rest of each page is designed for the more detailed farm planning NRCS does. That is the beauty of this system; it can be scaled up or down depending on what intensity of detail is required for the job at hand. I have some copies of the Checklist with me if anyone would like to see them or it is on our website. ***

22. The CPPE is a detailed tool developed over years of research, testing, and implementation by NRCS that links NRCS conservation practices to identified resource concerns. A Practice is an NRCS term for such things as a head gate for an irrigation diversion, a pasture improvement or a grazing rotation system; there are about 180 practices described. Here is the part of the definition of a Practice that gives the RNA/CPPE the equal footing with other federal planning: (QUOTE) “for which standards and specification have been developed and are found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide.” (CLOSE QUOTE) They are rooted in all the information in the National Ag Library in Maryland.

To describe the process in common terms, this is some of the direction we have given to the contractors:

The NRCS Planning Manual offers several levels of SCOPE or DETAIL for completing a conservation plan. The needed analysis to meet the terms of NvACD's agreement requires only the simplest of detail at a broad scale, much less than what would be conducted for any area, regional, or farm plan. ***

23. These are the questions to answer as a CD and committee use the Resource Concerns Checklist. For example: the category is soil erosion; you identify that there is significant wind erosion on cultivated fields in X valley during the spring and that last year's flood has left some gully erosion along two miles of "test creek" in Y valley. It is likely that you would not need to be any more detailed at this point other than to try to identify some of the causes for these issues. A CPPE review will identify what practices could be applied that would be beneficial for addressing these concerns for soil erosion. You do not need to carry the analysis any farther as this information allows you to complete a summary of how the CD would like to see funds and programs or priorities directed, which is the actual needs assessment. ***

24. The Resource Needs Assessment report will compile:

- The resource concerns identified,
- the list of possible conservation practices to address each concern,
- prioritization of the most frequently occurring concerns and the CD's 1 to 5 priority order for working on them,
- where within the CD boundary to concentrate efforts to address these top concerns and
- if any of these concerns need further research, investigation, or focus of resources to address because we don't know what to do about it at this point.

Remember, the intent is to conduct this at the simplest level that will comply with the agreement NvACD has with NRCS regarding informing the STAC process.

These two tools allow adequate opportunity for a CD to do more detailed analysis on any specific issue at any time in the future. The work will lead to a conservation action plan on any issue. What I just read, you can find in Appendix B of the RNA Guide found on the NvACD website. ***

25. Of KEY importance to all this is to constantly remember that this process is effective because it is driven by resource concerns, not programs. It answers the question of what the resource concerns are BEFORE human traditions, wants, needs, values, biases, emotions or political position can cloud the issue. When the resource concerns are identified first, it keeps the human part from inadvertently dominating. The resource concerns are factual not emotional, is there or is there not livestock forage available, is or is not soil compaction occurring? It makes the focus be how to solve the resource issue at hand. This method will seek the most appropriate outcome, even if that may not appear to be the most desired at first blush. ***

26. The identification of resource concerns is done by CD Supervisors and committees organized by the CD; additional public input will be provided by the survey instrument being developed by UNR and funded by Cooperative Extension in Clark County, USFWS Partners Program both south and north and Nevada Department of Wildlife through partnership with NvACD. You can respond and help distribute and encourage survey response when it comes to your area.***

27. This process will help us reach our goals and meet our expectations that CDs and all our partners, not just NRCS, I am going to say it again, not just NRCS but all our partners, can use this system to accomplish their work, and figure out what is best for Nevada. In the past NRCS did NRCS, BLM did BLM, USFS did USFS, NDF did NDF, CDs did CDs and so on. Sage grouse taught us that partnerships are the best way to go. Nevada is different than anywhere else; programs designed elsewhere don't work well here, we have to labor together locally to make them productive to solve our resource challenges, of which we all know we have many. This answers the oft-asked question, how can efforts be coordinated and

synchronized in Nevada to prevent duplication of effort and accomplish the best effect for the resource? Whatever the need, no one can work alone any more.

It is a matter of choice for you to participate in the Resource Needs Assessment. If you have resource concerns on your property, I am sure you seek solutions. This process may broaden the sources of assistance available, whether it be financial or informational. You, of course, would choose on matters concerning your property. Within the NRCS funding process privacy protections are built in; other sources might have different rules. A CD is subject to the Open Meeting Law; but remember I stated that the RNA step is to identify generalized concerns. The specifics come in the conservation action plans. At that step in the process, you would want to be involved in the action items planned; it would be your choice how things proceed. ***

28. Part of the Agreement NvACD made with NRCS is to find members for the STAC and have CDs activate their LWG to provide recommendations for the STAC. That is very important, but I am most grateful that NRCS recognizes the larger impact of the LWG; I really like this second paragraph that states that an integrated solution is the way to go. ***

29. The process starts with the conservation district, they are elected or appointed officials, responsible for knowing the resource concerns in their area. When we took on the Agreement with Ray to re-energize the STAC, we had to decide how to do that. We decided to go back to basics as outlined in the NRCS Manual. The basics are answered by the RNA. The process puts the CD in a lead role to convene and lead the LWG and then bring the LWG's recommendations to the STAC. Ray Dotson said in his notes for this slide, "If you build it they will come" What movie is this from? Field of Dreams. We all have something in common, but when you start having the meetings locally the response may be poor. Don't stop-- people tend to respond when we show we mean business. So, like field of dreams If you build it, they will come!" I hope that you will choose to participate and bring your thoughts and information into the mix. ***

30. As I said earlier, right now the CD-LWG-STAC connection is in a rebuilding phase. The only sort-of functioning LWG in the state is the Elko/Eureka LWG. I look forward to having all these people represented at LWG meetings all around the state. It will take time to develop these relationships. NvACD has been working to get the buy-in at the state level for agencies and groups by building relationships at NCCN and directly going to agency leadership and discussing the benefits for the agency or the group with them. The CD will need to do this as well with the local offices. To make this all work it will require both levels – the local to participate and the upper to support what the local is doing and participate at the STAC level. Both have to understand and be on board. Obviously, we will need your voice as producers. **

31. Ray said, when the LWGs and the STAC meet, these are the things NRCS wants feedback on in addition to your wants and needs. This helps with the statewide perspective. But it is more than that; other agencies need input; other groups have problems to be solved or resources to offer to solve problems. ***

32. NRCS can't address every issue, but a LWG with a completed Resource Needs Assessment to know where the problems are, can utilize the resources of other agencies or groups to solve a problem. This makes the ways and means of the LWG far bigger than what just NRCS can provide. Say a wildfire occurs after NRCS funding cycles are over and rehabilitation needs to happen across ownership boundaries and it needs to happen now. BLM and NDOW funds are immediately available. A LWG can be the forum to respond immediately; if an RNA is in place it makes it even more informed. This LWG forum is a good place for others to state what resources they might have to assist with the local need. ***

33. This is the exciting part, to work together across ownership boundaries and leverage other non-NRCS dollars. ***

34. The STAC is the extension of the LWG at the state level. They came out of the 1985 Farm Bill and their recommendations are given strong consideration by USDA. ***

35. Membership in the STAC is the same as a LWG only they are the state-level counterparts and producers with an interest at this level. Ray says, “the LWG is local farmers and ranchers and local state and federal staff. The STAC is middle level and state level staff, for example the president of Farm Bureau or Cattlemen’s, the State Forester; these should be in the individuals making up the STAC.” ***

36. Ray said, “The STAC reviews reports from the local work group meetings to gain the statewide perspective and gives me guidance as the State Conservationist. For example, we have funds given to us that are earmarked for certain groups such as (Organics); NRCS struggles to identify and enhance awareness about NRCS technical and financial assistance with this ag group. The LWG and STAC can help NRCS outreach to them. ***

37. I have been living, eating, sleeping and breathing RNAs for the last two years. And I am still learning about them. Maybe I am slow, but don’t beat yourself up if you can’t realize all the possibilities at this moment. Just the other day I was still concerned that we weren’t getting enough detail into our discussions for the RNA in Lincoln County. Then, an epiphany struck! I finally grasped for myself the thought that Rick had been saying all along – the detail comes in the conservation action plans. This will happen for most of us about different aspects of this. For some it will be the role of the CD – what can they really do to be helpful? ***

38. For you, I would suggest a quiet afternoon reading of NRS 548, an astonishing array of authority from conducting surveys and research, demonstration projects, repair and restoration of wetlands and stream corridors, to administering any project and cost-share on federally financed projects, among many other authorities just as striking. I would venture to say that should the CD Law be

written today, we would not be given this breadth of opportunity. CDs themselves, and their partners, need to come to an understanding of what CDs can do. The common situation in Nevada is a CD has no staff, therefore their capacity is limited. NvACD and the CD Program are trying to get that changed, but as I said earlier, I hope the Legislature's Interim Public Lands Committee's response to the NCCN presentations will be the turning point where the State of Nevada gets fully behind locally led conservation with funding and staffing. Until then, and continuing after, the partner agencies and groups can bring their resources to a shared work environment. ***

39. Some of you may struggle with the NRCS terms in the Resource Concerns checklist; NRCS has politely explained each of those in great detail which can be found on our website under the RNA tab and this is why we hired previous NRCS folks who were already familiar with the terms and process as the contractors assisting the CDs completing RNAs. Some of you may wonder why we are using the Resource Concerns Checklist at all? ***

40. Remember I said before that this process answers the question of what the resource concerns are BEFORE any human considerations can cloud the issue and inadvertently dominate. Think of any contentious issue you have dealt with in your area – this method can get you past the emotions hurdle and on the way to actually solve the problem with buy-in of people focused on the problem, not their previous assumptions. Then we will ultimately get to what we truly want, a solved problem.

Some may be concerned about their own authorities being compromised in this process. A LWG and STAC are advisory only; it is there to assist, not to take over anyone else's territory. Their authority comes from the willingness of partners to work together but each partner maintains its own roles and responsibilities. ***

41. It is like when various components of Emergency Management Services come together on a car accident scene. The highway patrol controls the scene, the fire department puts the fire out and uses the jaws of life to open the car door, the ambulance service provides the medical assistance and transport of those injured, the Trauma Intervention Program volunteers assist the victims not needing a ride to the hospital, and the highway department ultimately clears the debris off the road. Each entity brings their training and skills to the scene and work together to solve the problems they find there but they don't do each other's jobs. They are there to do THEIR role and responsibility. Maybe even more importantly to what we are talking about here – they practice on a regular basis, so when the emergency happens, they are ready to know how to work together and they have relationships built. I see a conservation district as the Incident Command; where would you see yourself or your agency?

A LWG and a STAC needs to meet more than once a year to maintain relationships or bring new staff or partners into the fold, to keep each other apprised of opportunities or constraints within their own systems, to identify and respond to a new problem, to evaluate results of work on an action item from a conservation action plan, or just to practice working together like the EMS folks do. Maybe the EMS example here is more than a just a good way to illustrate how this works. We are in an emergency situation in Nevada – wild horses, too much and not enough wildfire, too much and not enough water, invasives, T&E species, lesser functioning riparian systems, a difficult national conversation or the lack thereof, all make it harder for us to do our jobs. We have to work together and this process provides a roadmap to find the way. A roadmap has many routes, but at least we are all going the same direction. Each CD area will be different, but this process gets us following a common means, and if we all follow it, it will reduce the number of efforts to support. We can accomplish much work for multiple purposes at one gathering. ***

42. This is the ongoing process that keeps the RNA valid. As Ray said, "This process does not stop. If you are elected or employed or you depend on Nevada's

water and soil and there is an impact to the resource; then you have work to do.” And, as I said before, you have choices you can make. I am here today to encourage you to get involved with your CD; make it stronger, give it your insight; help it do its job. ***

43. It is all balanced on CDs, the blue puzzle piece from a beginning slide. We need to make coordination the way we do business in Nevada. The more we do it, the more we recognize it, the more we fund it, the more practical it becomes to do. It is the only way to find lasting success. The CD – LWG – STAC connection is a means already developed and of good design. It can leverage funding and cooperation to achieve cross-jurisdictional work and is based on longstanding relationships. Ray concluded, “This is a frame work that we believe in and know will work! We have to work it. We must put our money where our mouth is. If we go around the room, we each know someone that is struggling to hang on to a farm or ranch. Many of you know someone who has passed from suicide. We want to be a tool in the tool box that local leaders use to keep people doing what they love and ensure they can give the future generations a bright future.” ***

44. I have found from my wildfire training experience that often it is easier for people to hear an example when it comes from a realm they don't normally move in; it removes any defensive emotional response and allows the lesson to come clearly into mind. I want to tell you two stories.

STORY NUMBER ONE

Many Years ago, Al Capone virtually owned Chicago. Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. He was notorious for enmeshing the windy city in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder.

Capone had a lawyer nicknamed "Easy Eddie." He was Capone's lawyer for a good reason. Eddie was very good! In fact, Eddie's skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time.

To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big,

but Eddie got special dividends, as well. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago City block.

Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocity that went on around him.

Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object.

And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Eddie wanted his son to be a better man than he was.

Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things he couldn't give his son; he couldn't pass on a good name or a good example.

One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Easy Eddie wanted to rectify wrongs he had done.

He decided he would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Al "Scarface" Capone, clean up his tarnished name, and offer his son some resemblance of integrity. To do this, he would have to testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great. Yet, he testified.

Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street. But in his eyes, he had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer, at the greatest price he could ever pay. Police removed from his pockets a rosary, a crucifix, a religious medallion, and a poem clipped from a magazine.

The poem read: "The clock of life is wound but once,
and no man has the power
to tell just when the hands will stop,
at late or early hour.
Now is the only time you own.
Live, love, toil with a will.
Place no faith in time.
For the clock may soon be still."

STORY NUMBER TWO

World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare.

He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific.

One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank.

He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship.

His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly, he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet.

As he was returning to the mother ship, he saw something that turned his blood cold; a squadron of Japanese aircraft was speeding its way toward the American fleet.

The American fighters were gone on a sortie, and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet.

Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 caliber's blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch wove in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until all his ammunition was finally spent.

Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to clip a wing or tail in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible, rendering them unfit to fly. Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction. Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier.

Upon arrival, he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the gun-camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had, in fact, destroyed five enemy aircraft. This took place on February 20, 1942, and for that action Butch became the Navy's first Ace of W.W.II, and the first Naval Aviator to win the Medal of Honor.

A Year later Butch was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29. His hometown would not allow the memory of this WW II hero to fade, and today, O'Hare airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man.

So, the next time you find yourself at O'Hare International, give some thought to visiting Butch's memorial displaying his statue and his Medal of Honor. It's located between Terminals 1 and 2.

WHAT DO THESE TWO STORIES HAVE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER?

Butch O'Hare was "Easy Eddie's" son. ****

45. What we do today and everyday does make a difference, both now and in the future. We reap what we sow, whether good, bad, or indifferent. CDs have the position and authority to be helpful to the movement in Nevada to address resource needs by working together at the local level. Farm Bureau does too. We can work together to provide impetus to forward the momentum that is building from multiple sources on multiple fronts particularly via the Resource Needs Assessment process. We can take it back to basics and create a foundation for all efforts to work from. Every one of us in this room, either CD Supervisor or CD partner can make a difference and push this movement forward. We can find things to say yes to; we can choose to be part of the solution. Now is the time. I hope you will partner with us.