

One of the best legacies we can leave to our children is a clean environment and a history of preservation of our natural beauty and wilderness. We always will need clean water to drink and safe air to breathe. While we have made much progress over the last thirty years, it is critical that we maintain our strong commitment to safeguarding our nation's natural heritage and protecting our environment.

We must not choose between the environment and the economy because both are crucial to our nation. Without a strong economy, it is impossible to protect our environment adequately. Without a healthy environment, our economy cannot thrive. Our nation's environmental laws must incorporate common-sense reforms that allow technological innovation and market forces to determine least-cost solutions. This always has been my approach and will continue to be in the future.

Clean Air

I am pleased that while our nation's population has grown, our air, in most instances, has started to get cleaner. This is largely due to the protections of the Clean Air Act that have significantly reduced air pollution from carbon monoxide, lead, particulates, and sulfur dioxide. I am disappointed that the Administration has sought to weaken rather than strengthen this important legislation.

I have fought the Administration's effort to repeal the Clean Air Act's new source review provision. This provision embodies the common sense notion that as our utilities upgrade their power plants, they should install the most modern pollution controls available. This is no arcane matter: whether those upgrades are clean or dirty means the difference between a healthy future or chronic disease and death for many Americans.

I also have encouraged the Administration to take stronger action in reducing mercury pollution from power plants. The Administration's current proposals on mercury fall far short of what the Clean Air Act requires and fails to protect the health of our children and our environment. Mercury reduction efforts have proven effective in states such as Florida and Wisconsin and should be strongly implemented at the federal level.

Clean Water

I have been a strong supporter of the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts. These cornerstones of environmental protection have implemented pollution control programs, set water quality standards, and funded sewage

treatment plants. Over the last thirty years, these landmark laws have helped make two-thirds of the country's lakes safe again for recreational and commercial uses and provided safer drinking water for communities throughout Nevada and the nation.

As a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, I also have worked hard to fund projects that will improve water quality in Nevada. I have secured millions of dollars to help smaller communities like Fallon and Mesquit, build arsenic treatment facilities. All communities should be able to enjoy clean and healthy water, and I will continue working toward that end.

Brownfields

I was a principal author of the Brownfield Revitalization and Environmental Restoration Act, which provides \$250 million annually for grants to state and local governments to cleanup brownfields sites. There are approximately 500,000 such sites across the nation. The bill also encourages such cleanups by providing hazardous waste cleanup liability protection to innocent purchasers and developers of contaminated land. The fear of such liability has been a major impediment to the reuse and redevelopment of such land.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors estimates that cleaning up polluted sites will not only improve the environment, but will create more than 587,000 jobs nationally and increase annual tax revenues from between \$902 million to \$2.4 billion. Las Vegas alone has 30 brownfields sites that, once cleaned up, can be enjoyed by Nevadans as anything from parks to community

centers. Cleaning up these sites would generate between \$1.6 and \$4 million per year of additional tax revenues and create an estimated 320 jobs.

Preserving Nevada's Natural Heritage

From the majestic Ruby Mountains to the pristine blue waters of Lake Tahoe to the Mojave Desert, our state enjoys a rich natural heritage. Nevada's natural splendor provides tremendous recreational opportunities for Nevadans and provides a boon to our economy by attracting thousands of tourists to our state each year. I have worked to protect and preserve unique areas in Nevada, including Great Basin National Park, the Ruby Mountains, Red Rock Canyon, Walker Lake, and Lake Tahoe. I remain strongly committed to preserving our state's rich natural heritage for the enjoyment of current and future generations of Nevadans.

Lake Tahoe

Lake Tahoe is the jewel of Sierra, a national treasure that must be protected for future generations. That is why I have been working for many years to restore Lake Tahoe to its fabled clarity. I held the first Lake Tahoe Summit in 1997 to draw national attention to the declining health and clarity of the lake. Then-President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore came to Nevada to see first-hand the environmental threats particular to the lake's geography.

In 2000, I strongly supported and Congress passed the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, which authorized \$300 million over ten years for restoration efforts at the Lake. The funding supports land acquisition, erosion control, forest management,

fire suppression, and efforts to improve water quality. This year alone, the federal government will invest more than \$50 million at Lake Tahoe. I'll keep fighting every year to make sure Lake Tahoe gets the funding Congress authorized – the funding it needs and deserves.

Great Basin National Park

I authored the law creating the Great Basin National Park – the first national park in Nevada. The park spans 76,000 acres of eastern Nevada and features dramatic mountain ranges, semi-arid basins, and thousand-year-old bristlecone pine forests. I have introduced legislation to highlight the area's rich cultural history and stunning landscapes by designating the Great Basin National Heritage Route. A corridor of land that follows the historical Pony Express and Overland Trails, the Route will celebrate and conserve the region's archaeological and historic resources as well as its wide array of natural resources.

Walker Lake

Over the past century, Walker Lake has lost three-fourths of its volume, and its water level has fallen by 140 feet. The increased salinity of the Lake also threatens the ability of the Lahontan cutthroat trout to survive there. I organized a Walker Lake Summit to discuss the dire state of the Lake and what actions might help restore it. The Summit helped bring people together to talk about how to save the Lake. The federal government and the State of Nevada are in the process of crafting a solution which takes into account the interests of those who want to save Walker Lake and those who fear that such a project will significantly affect local agriculture. Preliminary studies suggest that the Lake can be saved with only a marginal impact on the agricultural economies of the Smith and Mason Valleys.

At the Summit, we also focused on how to finance the different measures we believe will be required to save Walker Lake. I secured over \$200 million in the 2002 Farm Bill (P.L. 107-171) for a variety of measures that would provide water to the Lake and may also help restore Pyramid Lake. A portion of that money is being spent on measures to get more water to Walker Lake, but far more needs to be done. I

also secured additional funds this past year to facilitate the ongoing negotiations among the various interested parties. I am strongly committed to saving Walker Lake.

Clark County Public Lands Bill

In 2002, I authored legislation with Senator Ensign to provide a comprehensive public lands management plan for Clark County. This strong bipartisan legislation released wilderness study areas to enhance economic opportunities in Clark County while adding 440,000 acres to the national wilderness system. The measure preserved the beautiful areas that bless southern Nevada by creating the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area and expanding the existing Red Rock National Conservation Area. It also will help ensure a clean future for Clark County by establishing the Southern Nevada Litter Cleanup Campaign. The legislation will serve as a model for future public lands legislation.

Truckee River Operating Agreement

I authored this comprehensive water rights settlement, which helped preserve and expand the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge near Fallon. In fact, the Stillwater wetlands have been designated a site of international importance by the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network because of the hundreds of thousands of shorebirds, such as Long-billed dowitcher, Black-necked stilt, and American avocet that pass through during migration. This area also provides some of the best waterfowl hunting opportunities in Nevada.

Additionally, the legislation provided water resources and funding to help restore Pyramid Lake. In 2002, I secured additional funds in the Farm Bill to bolster the projects authorized by the Truckee River Operating Agreement. I remain strongly committed to ensuring the success of the ongoing effort to restore Pyramid Lake.

Fighting Threats

We must be vigilant in protecting Nevada's natural heritage from Mormon crickets, invasive species, and other threats. We have accomplished a great deal in protecting our state's natural splendor, and it is critical that we

take the necessary steps to preserve this progress. I have been working hard to garner federal support for state and local efforts to protect our communities and preserve our environment.

Eradicating Mormon Crickets

I have been working to help our state end the worst infestation of Mormon crickets in 40 years. Over the last several years, I have won hundreds of thousands of dollars for Nevada to deal with the cricket infestation. When it became clear that was not enough and that crickets don't respect borders, I established a three-state \$20 million fund to eradicate crickets in Nevada, Utah and Idaho. This money will give the hard-working people who have been fighting this threat the support they need to protect our communities from future infestations.

Fighting Invasive Species

I have been a strong supporter of measures designed to control invasive species in Nevada. Over the last four years, I have secured significant resources to deal with these problems, increasing funding from \$300,000 to over \$900,000 last year. And these increases are showing results. Research and trials have now yielded an important weapon against tamarisk – the China beetle, which has been shown to eradicate tamarisk and leave native vegetation and wildlife unharmed. Funding through the \$200 million Desert Terminal Lakes Program that I was able to include in the 2002 Farm Bill also will help control invasives in the Walker River Basin.

Several years ago, I helped establish the Nevada Arid Rangelands Initiative through the University of Nevada, Reno, to continue research and trials in eradicating cheatgrass and other invasives from our rural landscapes. I also secured funding last year to begin the operation of a native plant center in Fallon. This center will help generate native plants to rehabilitate damaged rangeland and other restoration work throughout Nevada.

