

Right of Local Self Government

One of the things that is not well understood today, is the founder's disdain for government from afar. It was their concern, and their belief that the King of England had no right to tell them how to govern the affairs of their communities. But that was what was happening. Not only was King George preventing them from passing laws which they found necessary for the governance of their own communities, but he was imposing laws and ordinances applicable to their local communities which were awkward and oppressive. How could the people of England or even their King know anything about the needs for civil government in a land which was thousands of miles away? They could not. But that did not prevent the people of England from thinking they had a right to dictate and enforce laws and policy by which the American colonist were to abide.

In many ways, the situation the founders found themselves in, is not so different from that which persons living within the public land states face today. Think of it, if those living in the various communities in New England needed to put in structures for the purpose of flood control as an example, the local people had no way of collecting taxes or passing laws or policy as a means of accomplishing such an objective – for it was the people of England that had control, and for them such concerns were of no interest.

That's what persons living within the rural areas of Nevada face today. For when it comes to the Public Lands, its not the local people that have the say – rather its people living in New York or Denver or Las Vegas that get to decide just how the majority of lands that lay within our communities are governed, and they certainly aren't going to be effected by wildfire; or because there may be too many predators taking down calves; or that the lack of grazing on the Forest lands is causing reductions in water production, or that ranching families are no longer able to make a living because of some unfair act by the BLM or Forest Service. And so those who live in the rural areas of Nevada go on and on, year after year, facing the fact that they don't really have control over fire policy, or grazing policy or anything else that goes on the public lands upon which they are dependant.

As it stands today, if the Forest Service so chooses, citizens living within the rural areas in Nevada can be denied even the right to go onto the public lands with their tractors or a shovel without agency permission. Issues involving the Public Health and Safety and general well-being of local communities must be decided by those who's lives and property are most effected. To do otherwise runs in direct conflict to the most dear principles of a free and just society – the right of local self government.