

10658 Winterhawk
Boise, Idaho 83709
February 8, 1980

Senator,

Bills or resolutions concerning an issue called the "Sagebrush Rebellion" may come before you for action. This issue deals with the conversion of many acres of public lands to state control, with eventual transfer of ownership to private individuals. Most of these public lands are now managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service. Under their management, the lands receive a significant degree of natural resource management, with open access to all the citizens of our country. Conversion of these valuable lands to state or private control would lead to abusive land management practices such as overgrazing and reduction in carrying capacity for both livestock and wildlife. We can also expect a restriction of the land use by the American public.

With regard to wildlife, the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management do recognize this resource value, and wildlife habitat concerns are an integral part of their land management program. These agencies are staffed with professional wildlife scientists who work for the wildlife's welfare. How many wildlife biologists does the State Department of Land have? The State Department of Land's constitutional authority does not even recognize wildlife as a legitimate use of lands they manage.

On behalf of the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society, I strongly urge that you do not support any action or measure that would lead to the transfer of major acreages of public lands to state control. Supporting these types of measure will not be in the best public interest.

Sincerely,

James F. Gore
President

The Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society represents over 200 professionally trained Wildlife Management Scientists.