

Past transfers of federal land to Nevada led to corruption, history suggests

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Some Nevadans are pushing the federal government to transfer more public acreage to state control, but history suggests past management of these lands by those entrusted with their care was mired in corruption.

The current push for a transfer is underway because about 85 percent of Nevada is controlled by various federal agencies, primarily the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, according to the Nevada Legislature.

But if Nevada officials failed before, what guarantee is there that it won't happen again?

The late Republican Gov. Charles Russell, in an oral history recorded in 1965-66, strongly criticized Nevada's management of the lands the state received from the federal government when it became a state in 1864.

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