

BAHSAHWAHBEE NATIONAL MONUMENT (SWAMP CEDARS)

Information Sheet

Provided by: Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation,
Ely Shoshone Tribe, and Duckwater Shoshone Tribes

BACKGROUND LEADING TO NATIONAL MONUMENT:

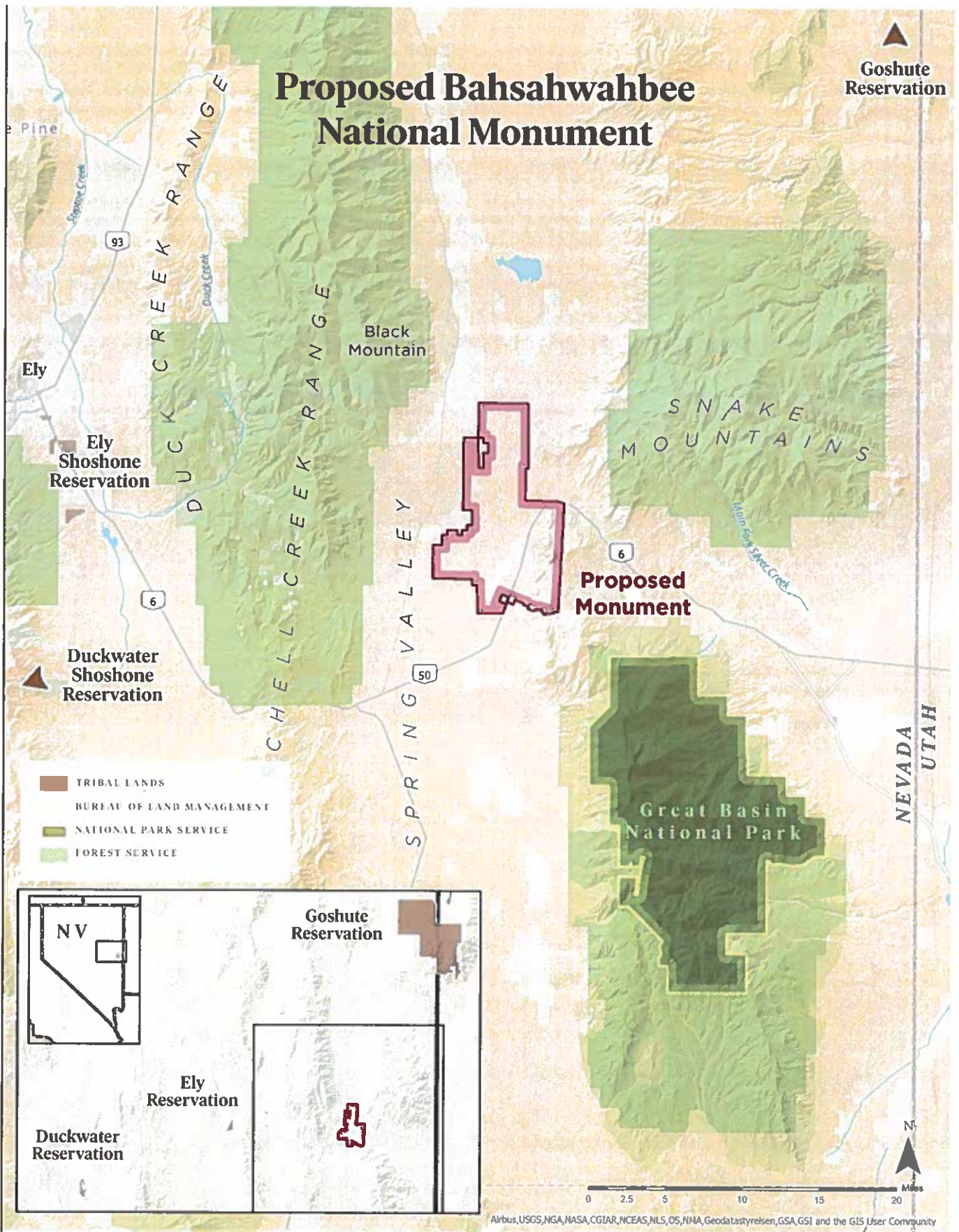
- Decades-long strong partnership between County, Tribes, and Ranchers on efforts to protect local water that sustains multiple important purposes (e.g. ranching, cultural and historic resources, game and non-game wildlife).
- Tribes worked with Nevada State Legislature in 2021 to pass a resolution in support of establishing Bahsahwahbee National Monument. The vote in the Nevada Senate was unanimous, bi-partisan support.
- Three Tribes (Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, the Duckwater Shoshone and Ely Shoshone) developed a national monument proposal.

MONUMENT PROPOSAL DETAILS:

- A national monument to be managed by the National Park Service, commemorating a massacre site and protecting water and wildlife. Current federal manager of the land is Bureau of Land Management.
- Boundary includes about 25,600 acres of federal public land and 1,640 acres of private land owned by the Southern Nevada Water Authority.
- A national monument only applies to federal public land—not any non-federal land such as private land—that may be within the boundary.
 - NOTE: The only non-federal land within the proposed monument boundary is owned by Southern Nevada Water Authority. Including those lands within the boundary opens up the potential for the SNWA to donate or sell it to the federal government, making this land public.
- A national monument is subject to all valid existing rights (e.g. grazing, mining claims, rights-of-way, etc).
 - NOTE: BLM has stated that there are no active mines or mining leases within the proposed monument boundary.
- The National Park Service permits grazing, just like Bureau of Land Management. There are lots of Park Service national monuments that continue grazing practices.
- Significant historic values in and around the national monument. The monument is an important part of the heritage, history, and culture within White Pine County.
- Commemoration of this nationally significant site by the NPS is important to the County and Tribes' shared economic and heritage interests.

Proposed Bahsahwahbee National Monument

Goshute Reservation



**Assembly Joint Resolution No. 4—
Committee on Natural Resources**

FILE NUMBER.....

**ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging the Congress of the
United States and the President of the United States to protect
certain land containing swamp cedars in Spring Valley.**

WHEREAS, Spring Valley, located in White Pine County, Nevada, has been a central part of the traditional homelands of certain indigenous Newe peoples, including the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, the Ely Shoshone, the Duckwater Shoshone and certain Paiute peoples, since time immemorial and remains a place of current cultural uses for these peoples; and

WHEREAS, The indigenous Newe peoples continue to use an area in Spring Valley known as Bahsahwahbee, locally known as Swamp Cedars but traditionally known as the Sacred Water Valley, to hold religious and ceremonial gatherings, pass down traditional knowledge, honor their ancestors and mourn for their relatives; and

WHEREAS, A massacre of indigenous people occurred at Bahsahwahbee in the Spring Valley Massacre of 1859 and was committed during a religious and ceremonial gathering; and

WHEREAS, Two subsequent massacres occurred at Bahsahwahbee at times of religious and ceremonial gatherings, the Swamp Cedars Massacre of 1863 and the Swamp Cedars Massacre of 1897; and

WHEREAS, The Rocky Mountain juniper trees, locally known as swamp cedars, that grow on the valley floor in Spring Valley are believed by the Newe peoples to embody the spirits of the indigenous Newe who were killed during those massacres; and

WHEREAS, The Swamp Cedars is a globally and nationally unique grove of Rocky Mountain juniper trees that exists at the valley bottom, unlike Rocky Mountain juniper trees elsewhere in the western United States, which largely grow in the mountains; and

WHEREAS, A large portion of Bahsahwahbee is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural Property and a much smaller portion lies within the boundaries of an Area of Critical Environmental Concern administered by the Bureau of Land Management; and

WHEREAS, Bahsahwahbee, and the swamp cedar trees therein, faces threats from climate change and development; and

WHEREAS, Neither being listed on the National Register of Historic Places nor being designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern provides legal protections to ensure the



survival of Bahsahwahbee and the indigenous Newe peoples' continued religious and ceremonial use of the site; and

WHEREAS, The Federal Government has a fiduciary relationship with all federally recognized Indian tribes, including tribes of the indigenous Newe peoples; and

WHEREAS, Federal protection of Bahsahwahbee would be strengthened by collaborative management with the sovereign tribal nations that share ancestral and ongoing ties to the site; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, JOINTLY, That members of the 81st Session of the Nevada Legislature hereby urge the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States to take action to further protect Bahsahwahbee, including, without limitation, designating Bahsahwahbee as a National Monument or expanding Great Basin National Park to include Bahsahwahbee; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States as the presiding officer of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon passage.



Richard Howe, Chairman
Travis Godon, Vice Chairman
Commissioner Shane Bybee
Commissioner Ian Bullis
Commissioner Laurie L. Carson

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White Pine County
Board of County Commissioners

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June 22, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

White Pine County, Nevada, offers this letter of support for the designation of Bahsahwahbee (Swamp Cedars) as a National Monument in Spring Valley. Swamp Cedars is located on Bureau of Land Management lands, and this designation is being proposed by three local tribal governments—Ely Shoshone Tribe, Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation—to be managed by the National Park Service to commemorate its nationally significant history.

Swamp Cedars is a nationally significant site in American history. It represents an educational opportunity for all Americans, rich in the historical and cultural heritage of our County. Several famous explorers like Jedediah Smith and James H. Simpson visited Swamp Cedars in the early to mid 1800's. But even before then, Swamp Cedars was one of the Great Basin's largest religious gathering sites for Native American people. During the time of westward expansion, it became the site of the largest massacre of Native Americans in U.S. history, scales of magnitude greater than Wounded Knee or Sand Creek massacres.

The designation of Swamp Cedars has been previously supported by the Nevada Legislature. On May 14, 2021, the Nevada Senate passed Assembly Joint Resolution 4 (AJR4) with unanimous bipartisan support, urging Congress and the President to designate the Swamp Cedars area via a National Monument. Similarly, White Pine County also supports this designation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chairman
White Pine County Commission