Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife
P. O. Box 70143
Reno, Nevada 89570

Washoe County Planning Commission

1001 E. 9th Street

Reno NV 89512

Re: Iverson Ranch SUP WSUP25-0018

Dear Commissioners:

The Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife (Coalition) hereby expresses our serious concerns over the proposed drone testing and use of explosives associated with the above referenced Special Use Permit. The Coalition is the issue, policy, and lobbying arm of sportsmen in northern Nevada dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the state's wildlife resources. Our directors are typically past and present presidents or directors of the major sportsman/wildlife conservation organizations representing tens of thousands of northern Nevada sportsmen. We represent fishing, big game, waterfowl, upland game, trapping, sporting dog, and predator hunting interests.

The history of wildlife in Nevada is one of decimation through over-exploitation that resulted in the eradication of our big game species. It is only in the past few decades that the partnership of private sportsmen and the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) has reintroduced, augmented, and brought back thriving population of bighorn sheep, antelope, mule deer, and a multitude of smaller species to this region. Sportsmen have contributed tens of millions of dollars and tens of thousands of volunteer man-hours to these efforts across the state, which are recognized as the most ambitious and successful big game reintroduction programs in North America!

Game Management area 014, which encompasses the Iverson Ranch, is a great example of our efforts and success. Bighorn sheep now populate the mountains for the first time in over a century. Antelope, once nearly gone, are numerous. Mule deer and sage grouse have recently declined due to wildfire, drought, and predation, but are now targets of concentrated mitigation measures that are showing success. For example, NDOW is reseeding large areas previously burned just a few miles south of the Iverson ranch; this project will be continued for the next 5 years or so. NDOW has also captured and placed GPS collars on mule deer to study areas of seasonal use, migration corridors, and survival rates. Water resources are being enhanced. Predator control has been initiated to allow bighorn sheep

and mule deer recovery. All the efforts are paid for by sportsmen's dollars. The Granite mountains of Area 014 have for many years been the "Holy Grail" for sportsmen trying to draw a coveted mule deer tag.

Wildlife species such as sage grouse are very sensitive to noise. Recent evidence collected by NDOW in central Nevada has shown that even an audible hum from a recently constructed geothermal power plant has displaced sage grouse populations over 2 miles away. This bird which is on the brink of being listed as "Threatened or Endangered" does not simply relocate, entire populations go away! Big game species make it through the cold winter months using up their fat reserves put on during late summer and fall months; they only have so much energy available. Any stress on these animals decreases their survival rate in harsh winters.

The proposed project flies in the face of our efforts and accomplishments. Five to ten low altitude drone flights per day with added chase aircraft, not just over private property but also over our public lands are being proposed. The noise from drones is an obnoxious buzz that will stress and disrupt wildlife. The ordinance detonation and engine testing are not currently deemed detrimental, if the noise levels stated by the proponents are monitored and verified. Wildfires being started is a very real potential from the inevitable drone crashes so that response planning and funding requirements are necessary. Full restoration costs should be borne by the proponent with appropriate bonding.

The operations proposed in this Special Use Permit are a direct threat to the efforts of Nevadans to restore our wildlife resources. This proposal should either be rejected or heavily conditioned to include at least the following:

1) Drone flights should be restricted to airspace above private property,
2) Drone flights should be prohibited during critical wildlife periods such as sage grouse breeding, and fawning of mule deer, antelope and bighorn sheep,
3) A wildfire protection plan should be formulated for approval with all costs borne by the proponent with adequate assurance bonding for suppression and restoration.

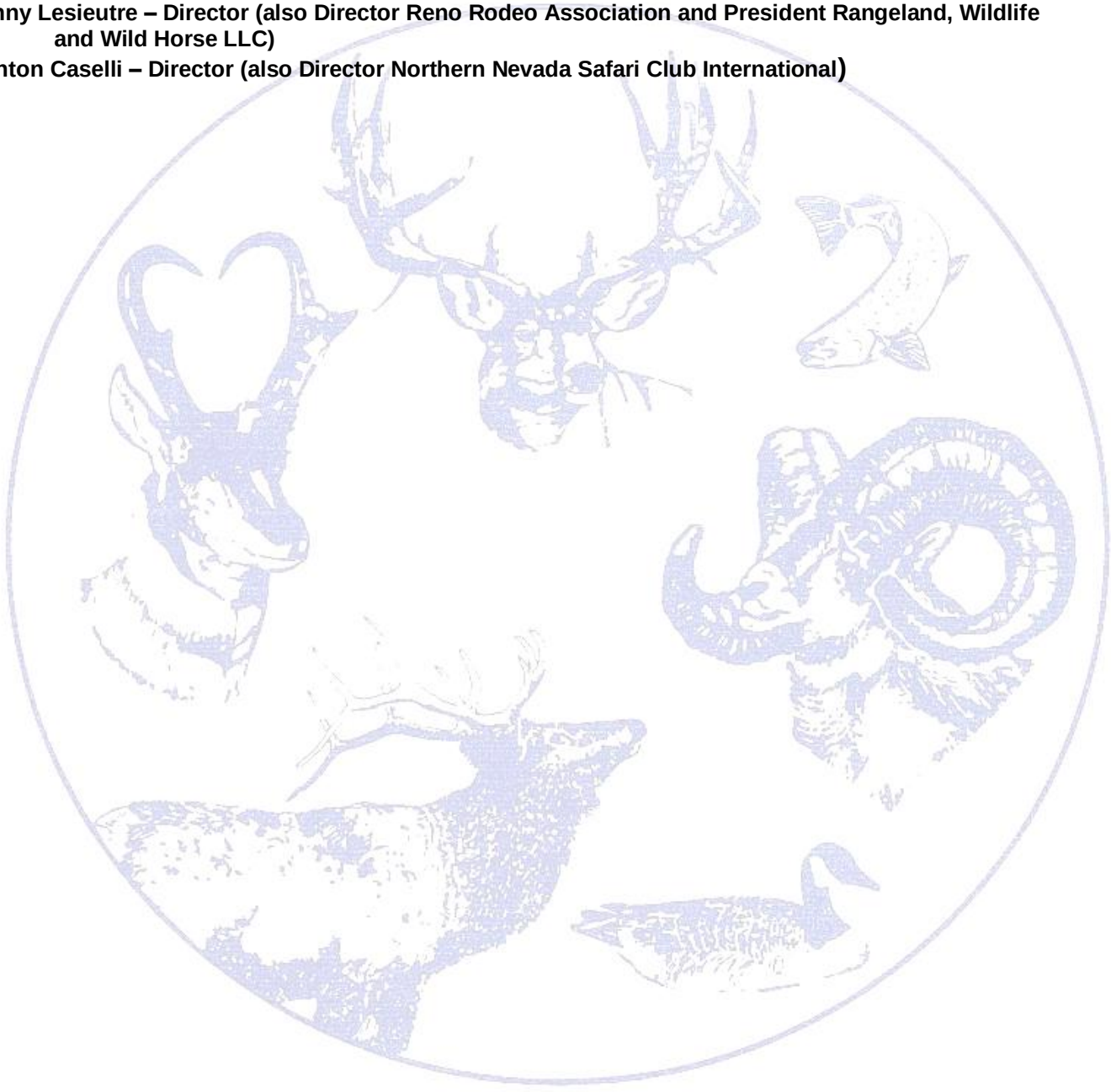
Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

The Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife

Larry J. Johnson – President (also Director of Nevada Outdoorsmen in Wheelchairs, and 30 years past director, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited)
Tom Smith – Vice President (also Director & past President, Truckee River Flyfishers)
Joel Blakeslee – Director (also Director and past President, Nevada Trapper's Association)
Bob Brunner - Director
Willie Molini – Director (also President, Nevada Waterfowl Association)
Karen Boeger – Director (also Director, Back Country Hunters and Anglers)
Judi Caron – Director (also past President, Northern Nevada SCI)

Linda Linton, Esq. - Director
Sean Shea - Director (also member Nevada Outfitters and Guide Association)
Jim Puryear -- Director (also Director, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited–Reno)
Bryce Pollock, (also Director, Back Country Hunters and Anglers)
Tyler Nall – Director
Kris Coston – Director (also President Muley Fanatics)
George Forbush – Director (President Nevada Predator Hunting Associatiion)
Jenny Lesieutre – Director (also Director Reno Rodeo Association and President Rangeland, Wildlife and Wild Horse LLC)
Ashton Caselli – Director (also Director Northern Nevada Safari Club International)



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