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Senate

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the 12th annual National Public Lands Day that is set to take place on Saturday, September 24, 2005. Across the Nation, nearly 100,000 people will come together on this day to get their hands dirty while protecting and improving our Nation's public lands. And today I would like to offer my heartfelt appreciation to every man, woman, and child that contributes to this vital campaign.

In Nevada, where nearly 87 percent of our lands are managed by Federal agencies, the relationship between the people and our public lands is tangible and real. For ranchers, hunters, farmers, hikers, miners, and every Nevadan that has driven a lonely dirt road in search of solitude, our public lands represent an irreplaceable resource. That is why programs like National Public Lands Day--that remind us that we all reap the rewards of good

stewardship, and that we suffer together when our lands are mismanaged or abused--are so important.

Those individuals that will rise early in the morning on the 24th of this month to help with one of the more than 650 National Public Lands Day projects will be giving a gift of service to the local landscapes, to the local communities, and to people of the United States at large. I thank these volunteers, and the staff of the land management agencies who are tasked with the responsibility of protecting, managing, and maintaining these lands each and every day. Our public lands are one of the most important national legacies that we leave behind for future generations. Working together--at places like Lake Mead, Mount Charleston, Red Rock Canyon, Lake Tahoe, the Ruby Mountains, and the Black Rock Desert--we can make sure that this legacy is a strong one.