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| **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Megan Taylor](mailto:Megan_Taylor@heller.senate.gov) |
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**Heller Continues To Defend Critical Nevada Program**

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) is standing up for a critical Nevada program that is facing cuts from the President’s Budget request that was announced earlier this week. In a letter to Department of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, Heller expressed his strong support for the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) and argued that the program is instrumental for Nevada conservation and economic development efforts.

[On Tuesday, Heller slammed the President’s budget as “anti-Nevada,”](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=BCCC08AB-60C0-4B48-BF82-683F109EE4F8) citing the cuts to SNPLMA among other important Nevada priorities.

Last month, Heller contacted Department of the Interior Secretary (DOI) Ryan Zinke and Senate Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Tom Udall to [express his strong concern that there would be an effort to gut the SNPLMA program](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=99ED6415-4D50-4234-B12C-444467119C8E). Enacted in 1998, SNPLMA is a program that allows the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to sell public land within a specific boundary around Las Vegas, Nevada, and the revenue generated by those sales are invested in important projects that range from wildlife restoration to infrastructure development in Nevada.

**The letter to Secretary Zinke reads in full below:**

The Honorable Ryan Zinke

Secretary

U.S. Department of the Interior

1849 C St. NW

Washington, DC 20240

*Dear Secretary Zinke,*

*I write to express my strong opposition to a proposal in the President’s Fiscal Year 2018 budget request that would gut the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) special account at the Department of the Interior. As we have previously discussed, SNPLMA is vital to my state’s economic growth, and I am urging you to stand with me in support of one of your department’s most successful programs.*

*As you know, SNPLMA allows the Bureau of Land Management to sell certain public land around Las Vegas, Nevada, and most of the revenue from these sales goes into a special account for public works projects, ecological restoration, and conservation efforts. This program has invested over $3.4 billion in over 1200 conservation projects across Nevada. Given the success of this program, I am extremely concerned that the President’s budget request calls for a cancellation of $230 million from SNPLMA’s special account over three years. Not only is this revenue generated specifically by Southern Nevada land sales with the intent to be used by that same local community and not a slush fund for deficit reduction, but any type of cuts of this nature could jeopardize the future of this program.*

*Keeping this program intact is vital to my state’s economic growth and competitiveness, and I am grateful for your willingness to work with me to ensure this program is not used by the Administration for any purposes other than what was authorized by Congress when SNPLMA was signed into law in 1998. Per your letter of May 2, 2017, I appreciated your concern with proposed cuts to this program and your commitment to the success of this program. I also appreciate your due diligence to ensure that as the budget and appropriations process continues for the coming fiscal year, you are moving forward with another round of land sales under SNPLMA. As a fellow westerner, I stand ready to partner with you in this current environment to ensure that this program remains fiscally sound in order to continue prioritizing conservation efforts that otherwise would require appropriations from Congress.*

*I appreciate your attentiveness to this matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to follow up with either me or my staff.*

*Sincerely,*

*DEAN HELLER*

*U.S. Senator*

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