

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 39

INTRODUCED BY J. SECKINGER, P. FLOWERS, J. KASSMIER, G. LAMMERS, L. SMITH, E. BOLDMAN, J. COHENOUR, J. DARLING, J. ISALY, M. MARLER, T. RUNNING WOLF, C. SCHOMER, C. SPRUNGER

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA SUPPORTING THE PROTECTION AND RETENTION OF NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS.

WHEREAS, Montanans have a deep love and affection for our shared national public lands and the innumerable benefits they provide; and

WHEREAS, Montana and the American West contain a variety of national public lands, including national parks, national forests, wildlife refuges, national monuments, wilderness areas, and other public lands; and

WHEREAS, Montanans' affection for public lands extends to protected areas from the Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park to the Capitol Rock Natural Landmark in the Custer Gallatin National Forest and all of the acres of public lands in between managed by federal agencies that feature iconic working ranches, mountain bike trail systems, world-class climbing, outstanding whitewater rafting, historical centers, museums, and incredible hunting and angling opportunities; and

WHEREAS, our public lands reflect many of our most noble democratic ideals because public lands offer valuable recreational, economic, cultural, and spiritual opportunities for everyone, regardless of one's socioeconomic status, race, or gender or whether one lives in an urban or rural area; and

WHEREAS, our public lands provide defining features of Montana and the foundation for our quality of life by supporting the vitality of our communities, as well as representing Montana's common heritage.

WHEREAS, our national public lands in Montana feature an amazingly diverse range of landscapes, from the snowcapped peaks of the Rocky Mountains down to rushing rivers, from canyons to sagebrush seas, and the tree-lined mountain valleys that are treasured by Montanans for outdoor recreation, such as hunting, angling, downhill and cross country skiing, and snowmobiling; and

WHEREAS, our public lands provide important wildlife habitats, clean water, clean air, and natural amenities that contribute to Montanans' quality of life and Montana's climate resiliency; and

Amendment - 1st Reading-white - Requested by: Joshua Seckinger - (H) Natural Resources

69th Legislature - 2025

Drafter: Maxwell Parson,

HJ0039.001.001

WHEREAS, according to the 2024 Voter Survey on Public Lands conducted by the University of Montana, 95% of Montanans visited national public lands in the previous year, 83% believe national public lands help the state economy, and 82% want presidents to continue protecting national public lands by designating them as national monuments; and

WHEREAS, our shared public lands have a substantial impact on economic development and jobs through mineral extraction, timber sales, ranching, grazing, and the outdoor recreation and tourism industry, which alone accounted for over \$5.8 billion dollars spent in the state in 2022 and 2023 by nonresidents; and

WHEREAS, misguided attempts to seize control of vast acreage of national public lands from the American public and to force their disposal through litigation and legislation, supported by a multimillion-dollar ad campaign, are inconsistent with the values and interests of Montanans; and

WHEREAS, public land managers, federal funding, and federal staffing are integral to the protection of public lands so they may be enjoyed by Montanans.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the 69th Legislature of the State of Montana:

(1) supports keeping our national public lands in public hands through the stewardship of the United States government and the federal land management agencies dedicated to their protection and access;

(2) opposes efforts to sell, transfer, or dispose of ~~either our national public lands or state public lands~~; and

(3) encourages Montana's Governor, Attorney General, and the members of Montana's Congressional Delegation to take actions that may be necessary to oppose future attempts to sell, transfer, or dispose of our national public lands to either private buyers or the states themselves.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to Governor Greg Gianforte, the Montana Congressional Delegation, Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum, and President Donald J. Trump.

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