

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 2
INTRODUCED BY S. KITZENBERG

A RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING THE PURCHASE OR ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY AT BRUSH LAKE AND THE CULBERTSON OVERLOOK IN NORTHEASTERN MONTANA AND DESIGNATION OF THOSE PROPERTIES AS REGION 6 STATE PARKS.

WHEREAS, the 2003 Montana Legislature adopted Senate Joint Resolution No. 15 that provided in part that the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks was involved in an effort to acquire property at Brush Lake in region 6 in order to establish the region's first state park, that Brush Lake offers unique natural attributes worthy of preservation for public recreational use and scientific study and interpretation, and that the Legislature considered it an appropriate recognition of the region's unique beauty and a proper expenditure of state funds to establish a state park at Brush Lake in region 6 as soon as funding became available; and

WHEREAS, as some funds became available and circumstances allowed, the state was able to purchase the northern portion of Brush Lake, but purchase of the southern portion has not been accomplished, and the entirety of Brush Lake remains to be designated as a state park, although the natural attributes and unique beauty of Brush Lake and the potential for public recreation and scientific study and interpretation remain; and

WHEREAS, although the 2003 Legislature directed that the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks "consider the establishment of the first state park in region 6 at Brush Lake a top priority", acquisition of the southern Brush Lake property has not been completed, even though designation of the entire Brush Lake property as a state park still constitutes an appropriate recognition of the region's unique beauty and a proper expenditure of state funds; and

WHEREAS, the Missouri River overlook in Roosevelt County south of Culbertson, Montana, known as the Culbertson Overlook, is a vista of exemplary beauty among the finest in eastern Montana and is worthy as preservation as a state park for the perpetual enjoyment of all Montanans and the traveling public; and

WHEREAS, the purchase and proper development of the Culbertson Overlook as a state park, with consideration given to protect the property rights of adjacent landowners, would add another crown jewel to the Montana state park system.

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

That the administrator of the Parks Division of the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, on behalf of

the state, be encouraged to purchase the property consisting of the southern portion of Brush Lake in region 6, including rights-of-way ensuring public access to the property, using any Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks funds available for the purchase of land and access for state parks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if acquisition of the southern portion of Brush Lake cannot be accomplished through direct purchase, the administrator of the Parks Division be encouraged to negotiate for acquisition of the property through a trade agreement for a similarly valued parcel of Department lakefront property in western Montana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the administrator of the Parks Division of the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, on behalf of the state, be encouraged to purchase the northeast corner portion of the Missouri River overlook, south of Culbertson, Montana, and adjacent to Highway 16 in Roosevelt County in northeastern Montana, including necessary rights-of-way to ensure public access to the property, if and when the property is available, using any Department funds available for the purchase of land and access for state parks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the administrator be encouraged to purchase sufficient property at the Culbertson Overlook to provide for an overlook viewing platform and parking for four to six vehicles, to direct the installation of adequate fencing around the property to ensure the privacy of adjoining landowners and to discourage trespass onto adjoining private property, and to ensure the installation of appropriate signage to inform the traveling public of the geological, cultural, and historical significance of the overlook area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if and when the Brush Lake property and the Culbertson Overlook property are acquired for the state, those properties be designated as state parks in region 6.

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