

## 1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 7

2 INTRODUCED BY P. CONNELL

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF  
5 MONTANA URGING THE GOVERNOR AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF MONTANA TO  
6 INITIATE LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO RECOVER DAMAGES TO  
7 MONTANA'S WATER USERS CAUSED BY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON FEDERAL LANDS.

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9 WHEREAS, Article IX, section 3, of the Montana Constitution clearly provides that all waters, from  
10 atmospheric vapor to surface waters, are the property of the State of Montana for the use of its people; and

11 WHEREAS, federal wildfire suppression policies on federal lands in headwater areas are impacting the  
12 quality of Montana's waters and the timing and volume of downstream flows available to Montana's water users;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, these federal policies are impacting municipal watersheds and the quality of the clean water  
15 that Montanans rely upon, raising significant public health and safety concerns and putting many communities'  
16 water systems at risk; and

17 WHEREAS, these federal policies threaten natural ecosystem processes and habitat, resulting in large  
18 burned-over areas that are susceptible to invasive plant species and changes in stream flow and water quality  
19 that affect native fish populations; and

20 WHEREAS, the impacts of these federal policies on Montana's water supply and ecosystem processes  
21 damage key sectors of Montana's economy, including agriculture, recreation, and tourism; and

22 WHEREAS, it is the public policy of the State of Montana to promote the conservation, development, and  
23 beneficial use of the state's water resources to secure maximum economic and social prosperity for its citizens.

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

27 That the Governor and the Attorney General are urged to initiate legal action against the federal  
28 government to recover damages to Montana water users caused by federal land management policies, as well  
29 as wildfire suppression policies in headwater areas.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor and the Attorney General should seek an order from

1 a court directing federal land management agencies to abide by Montana water law in the development and  
2 execution of all land management policies.

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