

SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES

Exhibit No. 1
Date 1-25-17
Bill No. SB 109



PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
406.443.3949

www.mtaudubon.org

Testimony on SB 109
Senate Natural Resources
January 25th, 2017

Chairman Vincent and Members of the committee,

My Name is Amy Seaman and I represent over 5,200 members of Montana Audubon in support of SB 109's revisions to Montana's Environmental Policy Act.

We are in support of restoring what we believe to be the ultimate "good neighbor policy" - a policy that directs analysis of state-project impacts beyond Montana's political border.

While the current form of law does allow MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks to consider impacts beyond our borders, it hampers other agencies, like DNRC that permits oil and gas development, and DEQ from considering migration patterns of wildlife or impacts to waterways flowing in and out of the state. This is important when considering state projects in areas where species, like sage-grouse, pronghorn, mule deer, or even paddlefish, are known to migrate across state borders. These are public resources and we need to include impacts beyond our borders. The available science and resources look at species habitats and threats across borders.

The wildlife and diverse habitats in our state (including sagebrush, prairie pothole wetlands, a diversity of forests and valuable river bottoms) have no regard for state boundaries, but are determined by a set of climatic and geological factors. These factors should be allowed to guide our review of potential state project impacts. This initial analysis will provide clarity and avoid future costly litigation.

For these reasons we ask for a do pass on SB109. Thank you.