

HOUSE BILL NO. 491

INTRODUCED BY V. COURT

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT CREATING A PUBLIC LANDS DAY TO BE RECOGNIZED ON THE FIRST DAY OF MARCH."

WHEREAS, Montana's wide boundaries include a bountiful collection of the most outstanding public lands -- incomparable national parks, untouched wilderness areas, pristine rivers and streams, majestic forests, wide open prairies, sagebrush landscapes, and wildlife refuges; and

WHEREAS, Montana recognizes that these public lands are part of our heritage and treasure; and

WHEREAS, Montana has the responsibility to safeguard these irreplaceable natural resources to ensure their continued protection for future generations of residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, Montana's outdoor recreation economy currently generates \$5.8 billion in consumer spending, supporting 64,000 direct jobs and producing \$403 million in state and local tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, Montana has shown the ability to balance the values of recreation, preservation, conservation, and economic productivity; and

WHEREAS, Montana has guaranteed our right to public access to our lands and streams, reflecting our democratic ideals to equality while promoting good stewardship of our lands; and

WHEREAS, Montana contains our crown of the continent, Glacier National Park, and our first national park, Yellowstone; and

WHEREAS, Montana values were born around a campfire at Madison Junction in 1870 when three men realized that this jewel of the Yellowstone should be accessible in perpetuity and recognizing public ownership; and

WHEREAS, Montana designates the first of March as Public Lands Day in honor of our first national park, which was established on March 1, 1872.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Public lands day. (1) To recognize the significant contributions that public lands within Montana make to wildlife, recreation, the economy, and to Montanans' quality of life, March 1 is



1 designated as public lands day.

2 (2) Appropriate observation may be held by the public and in all public schools in tribute to the
3 importance of public lands in Montana.

4 (3) The governor shall issue a proclamation to call the public's attention to the importance of public lands
5 and to encourage celebration of public lands day.

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7 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
8 integral part of Title 1, chapter 1, part 2, and the provisions of Title 1, chapter 1, part 2, apply to [section 1].

9 - END -