

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17

INTRODUCED BY D. SANDS

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A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA EMPHASIZING THE VALUE OF PUBLIC LANDS IN MONTANA TO THE STATE'S ECONOMY, RECREATION, HERITAGE, AND QUALITY OF LIFE; AND OPPOSING ANY EFFORT TO CLAIM, TAKE OVER, LITIGATE FOR, OR SELL OFF FEDERAL LANDS WITHIN THE STATE OF MONTANA.

WHEREAS, Montana has some of the most beautiful landscapes on earth, including mountains, rivers, forests, foothills, prairies, sagebrush steppes, and badlands and many of those places are found on federal public lands; and

WHEREAS, Montana's wide boundaries include a bountiful collection of the most outstanding public lands and contain the crown of the continent and the incomparable national parks of Glacier and Yellowstone, our nation's first national park; and

WHEREAS, Montana's federal public lands consist of national parks, wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, Indian reservations, national monuments, national forests, historic sites, recreation areas, and wild and scenic rivers, which constitute more than 28% of the land in Montana; and

WHEREAS, Montana's federal public lands are managed for multiple uses including timber, range, water, recreation, and wildlife and provide Montanans with opportunities to engage in land management planning; and

WHEREAS, access to these federal public lands is essential to the quality of life in Montana, providing all Montanans with world-class opportunities for hunting and angling, hiking, backpacking, snowmobiling, riding all-terrain vehicles, wildlife watching, skiing, cycling, sightseeing, and numerous other recreational activities; and

WHEREAS, Montana's federal public lands are incredibly rich in wildlife, are essential for the preservation of our native fish and wildlife, and provide some of the best hunting and angling opportunities in the world; and

WHEREAS, our public lands contain places of cultural and religious significance to Native Americans, such as ancestral burial grounds, fishing sites, and lands that supply traditional foods and medicines; and

WHEREAS, Montana's federal public lands provide important resources for the timber industry; and

WHEREAS, Montana's agricultural industry includes numerous ranchers who depend on grazing federal public lands to sustain their operations; and

WHEREAS, Montana's diverse communities rely on clean and reliable sources of water that originate



1 on federal public lands; and

2 WHEREAS, federal public lands contribute significantly to Montana's tourism and outdoor recreation
3 economies, creating jobs and generating important tax revenue throughout the state; and

4 WHEREAS, Montana's outdoor recreation is a major draw to businesses to recruit employees and to
5 establish new businesses; and

6 WHEREAS, Montanans with diverse interests are actively collaborating with federal land managers to
7 move good forest management projects forward; and

8 WHEREAS, federal public lands belong to all Americans and reflect many of our country's most noble
9 democratic ideals relating to freedom, equality, and preservation of our natural heritage for our children and future
10 generations.

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

14 That the Montana Legislature oppose any effort to claim, take over, litigate for, or sell off federal lands
15 within the State of Montana.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature strongly support federal land management in Montana
17 and the incredible value they bring to our state's economy, recreation, heritage, and quality of life.

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