

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 2

Introduced by Cohen

12/29	Introduced
12/29	Referred to Fish and Game
1/07	First Reading
1/22	Hearing
1/29	Tabled in Committee

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2

INTRODUCED BY COHEN

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA DIRECTING THE STATE FORESTER AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS TO WORK COOPERATIVELY TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF STATE FOREST LANDS IN THE DRAINAGES OF THE SWAN RIVER AND THE NORTH FORK OF THE FLATHEAD RIVER TO PROVIDE FOR TIMBER MANAGEMENT CONSISTENT WITH THE LONG-TERM CONSERVATION OF WHITE-TAILED DEER HABITAT.

WHEREAS, white-tailed deer populations in the valleys of the Swan River and the North Fork of the Flathead River and the surrounding mountains are vital to the quality of life of area residents and these areas are renowned statewide and nationwide for their hunting opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the habitat components of these populations are well understood and include significant and crucial acreage on lands comprising the Swan River State Forest in the Swan River Valley and the Coal Creek State Forest in the valley of the North Fork of the Flathead River; and

WHEREAS, the major federal, state, and private landowners in these areas have adjusted some of their timber

harvest plans to maintain and enhance habitat for white-tailed deer; and

WHEREAS, continued care in management is needed to ensure that healthy and productive populations of white-tailed deer and other wildlife species are sustained in the future; and

WHEREAS, profitable timber management in the Swan River State Forest and Coal Creek State Forest can be conducted while retaining significant amounts of crucial habitat components, including old-growth forests; and

WHEREAS, Montana receives substantial economic benefits from hunting, outfitting, tourism, and other activities related to white-tailed deer and other wildlife and these economic benefits, in the form of increased property values and an increased tax base, provide considerable support to public education.

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

That the State Forester and the Director of the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks are urged to work cooperatively to develop and implement standards and guidelines for state forest lands in the drainages of the Swan River and the North Fork of the Flathead River that will provide for timber management consistent with the



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1 long-term conservation of the diverse habitat needed by
2 white-tailed deer.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature finds that
4 management of these lands in a manner that optimizes timber
5 and wildlife goals and provides for productive, long-term
6 management of each resource is the most beneficial way for
7 Montana to meet its constitutional obligations related to
8 school trust revenues and environmental conservation.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the success of such efforts
10 on state forest land in the drainages of the Swan River and
11 the North Fork of the Flathead River should encourage the
12 State Forester and the Director of the Department of Fish,
13 Wildlife, and Parks to undertake similar cooperative efforts
14 for the management of timber and wildlife resources on other
15 state forest lands.

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