

1 ~~House~~ JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 81  
 2 INTRODUCED BY Shelton, King, Day  
 3 BY REQUEST OF

4 THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION  
 5  
 6 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF  
 7 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING THE  
 8 COMMITTEE ON PRIORITIES TO ASSIGN TO THE APPROPRIATE  
 9 COMMITTEE A STUDY OF THE METHODS AND PROGRESS IN THE  
 10 DETERMINATION OF EXISTING WATER RIGHTS IN MONTANA.  
 11

12 WHEREAS, establishing a centralized record of all water  
 13 rights is essential for the documentation, protection, and  
 14 future beneficial use and development of Montana's water for  
 15 the state and its citizens and for the continued development  
 16 and completion of the comprehensive state water plan; and

17 WHEREAS, according to the report submitted by the  
 18 Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, "The  
 19 Future of the Yellowstone River.....?", the actual amount  
 20 of water available in the Yellowstone Basin for industrial  
 21 or agricultural development or the provisions of instream  
 22 flows cannot be positively quantified. The determination of  
 23 existing water rights in the Yellowstone as well as other  
 24 areas of the state is a necessary prerequisite to the  
 25 quantification of available water for new uses and the

1 effects of the new uses on water rights; and  
 2 WHEREAS, at the present budget allocation of \$180,000  
 3 per year, the determination of existing water rights has  
 4 been projected to take over 100 years to complete the entire  
 5 state.  
 6

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

9 (1) That the Committee on Priorities assign to the  
 10 appropriate interim committee a study of methods for and  
 11 progress in the determination of existing water rights in  
 12 Montana.

13 (2) That the Committee consult with the Department of  
 14 Natural Resources and Conservation and other appropriate  
 15 agencies and persons during the course of the study.

16 (3) That the Committee study the methods for  
 17 determination of existing water rights of other Western  
 18 States.

19 (4) That the Committee report its findings and  
 20 recommendations to the 46th Legislature.

-End-

Approved by Committee on Judiciary

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