

IN THE SENATE

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 129

BY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1
2 STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND DECLARING ITS SUPPORT FOR THE IDAHO
3 DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME AND OTHER AGENCIES TO INCREASE EFFORTS TO
4 BETTER UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES THAT ARE CONTRIBUTING TO THE DECLINE OF
5 IDAHO'S BIRD POPULATIONS AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS DECLINE AND TO
6 IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO RESTORE HEALTHY WILD BIRD POPULATIONS.

7 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

8 WHEREAS, Idaho's state policy is to preserve and perpetuate wildlife
9 for the benefit of current and future generations; and

10 WHEREAS, Idaho has robust bird diversity with over 400 different
11 species of birds; and

12 WHEREAS, recently published research has indicated that overall North
13 American bird populations have declined by 30% since 1970; and

14 WHEREAS, the reasons for this decline are not well understood; and

15 WHEREAS, birds provide ecosystem services, such as pollination and seed
16 dispersal services, insect control, and reduction of rodent populations,
17 and are a vital part of Idaho's ecosystems; and

18 WHEREAS, robust bird populations reduce numbers of crop-harming in-
19 sects that could otherwise threaten Idaho's agricultural economy; and

20 WHEREAS, healthy waterfowl and upland game bird populations contribute
21 to Idaho's hunting heritage, and sportsmen are reliant upon healthy bird
22 populations; and

23 WHEREAS, a 2018 report on economic impacts from bird hunting and bird-
24 watching on lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management found that 172,937
25 upland bird hunters contributed \$18,211,000 to Idaho's economy; 52,950 wa-
26 terfowl hunters contributed \$4,001,000; and 615,495 wildlife watchers con-
27 tributed \$29,296,000; and

28 WHEREAS, the economic benefits from bird-watching and bird hunting sup-
29 port rural economies; and

30 WHEREAS, over 400,000 Idahoans, along with over 79,000 out-of-state
31 visitors, engage in bird-watching and birding tourism and enjoy over 2,000
32 miles of designated birding trails at more than 175 different designated
33 sites in Idaho; and

34 WHEREAS, Idaho has a legacy of being at the forefront of bird research
35 and conservation, including the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey Na-
36 tional Conservation Area, the World Center for Birds of Prey, the Intermoun-
37 tain Bird Observatory, the Boise State University Raptor Research Center,
38 and the University of Idaho's College of Natural Resources; and

39 WHEREAS, population growth in Idaho is continuing to impact natural
40 habitat areas, with a population increase of at least 151% since 1970; and

41 WHEREAS, research has shown that some Idaho wetlands are becoming drier
42 and saltier, making them less conducive habitats for raising and rearing
43 nestlings; and

1 WHEREAS, Chapter 1, Title 36, Idaho Code, ensures the Idaho Department
2 of Fish and Game protects all wild animals, including wild birds, and that
3 these animals are the property of the State of Idaho and will be preserved,
4 protected, perpetuated, and managed for present and future generations.

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Second Regular Ses-
6 sion of the Sixty-fifth Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of Rep-
7 resentatives concurring therein, that the Legislature declares its support
8 for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and other agencies to increase ef-
9 forts to better understand the issues that are contributing to the decline
10 of Idaho's bird populations and the implications of this decline and to iden-
11 tify opportunities to restore healthy wild bird populations.