

ORIGINAL HOUSE
JOINT RESOLUTION. HJ0001

ENGROSSED

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 1, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WYOMING
2019 GENERAL SESSION

A JOINT RESOLUTION requesting the swift delisting under the Endangered Species Act of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly bear population; requesting a return of the species management to local control; and requesting full federal funding of species management until delisting occurs.

WHEREAS, the grizzly bear population in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE) has been recovered for more than a decade; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that seven hundred (700) grizzly bears roam the GYE, up from one hundred thirty-six (136) in 1975; and

WHEREAS, the GYE grizzly bear population recovery and conservation success can be directly attributed to the support and efforts of the state of Wyoming and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, in June 2017, the United States Secretary of the Interior confirmed that the GYE grizzly bear population was recovered and announced that the overall management should be returned to the states and tribes as applicable; and

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service by rule delisted the GYE grizzly bear under the Endangered Species Act effective July 31, 2017; and

WHEREAS, in September 2018, the United States District Court for the District of Montana vacated the June 2017 Final Rule of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service delisting the GYE grizzly bear population; and

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WHEREAS, the listing of the recovered population of GYE grizzly bears causes great burden and expense to the state of Wyoming; and

WHEREAS, the state of Wyoming and Wyoming sportsmen combined have, on average, contributed more than two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) annually since 2009 to monitor, research and manage grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, the state of Wyoming, on average, spent more than one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) annually from 1990 to 2009 to monitor, research and manage grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, the state of Wyoming has spent more than forty-five million dollars (\$45,000,000.00) from 1990 until 2018 on the management of grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, the state of Wyoming has received approximately one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) in federal funding related to grizzly bear management since 2009; and

WHEREAS, the state of Wyoming has spent approximately nineteen million six hundred thousand dollars (\$19,600,000.00) on grizzly bear management since 2009; and

WHEREAS, in 2016 Wyoming citizens lost approximately one hundred thirty-six (136) calves, yearlings and cows to grizzly bears. Additionally, twenty-four (24) lambs, five (5) ewes, forty-six (46) chickens, thirteen (13) turkeys, three (3) pigs, three (3) ducks and one (1) dog were killed by grizzly bears; and

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WHEREAS, in 2016 the state of Wyoming paid approximately four hundred fifty-five thousand dollars (\$455,000.00) for damage related to grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 Wyoming citizens lost approximately one hundred fifteen (115) calves, yearlings, cows and a bull to grizzly bears. Additionally, fifteen (15) lambs, eight (8) ewes, two (2) goats, and seventy-eight (78) chickens were killed by grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 the state of Wyoming paid approximately two hundred seventy thousand dollars (\$270,000.00) for damage related to grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 Wyoming citizens lost approximately one hundred fifty (150) calves, yearlings and cows to grizzly bears. Additionally, sixty-four (64) lambs, ten (10) ewes, seven (7) chickens, two (2) turkeys, and two (2) ducks were killed or injured by grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 the state of Wyoming paid approximately three hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$380,000.00) for damage related to grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 three (3) people were injured in grizzly bear attacks; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, a hunting guide was killed by a grizzly bear at the site of an elk harvest; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 Wyoming sportsmen indicated an overall increase in interactions with grizzly bears; and

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WHEREAS, since 2009, thirty-one (31) people have been injured by grizzly bears; and

WHEREAS, since 2009 three (3) people have been killed by grizzly bears in the state of Wyoming; and

WHEREAS, since 2009 sixty-eight (68) grizzly bears have been removed due to livestock related conflicts; and

WHEREAS, since 2009, eighty (80) grizzly bears have been removed for reasons such as human safety or property damage; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 the Wyoming game and fish department captured thirty (30) grizzly bears to prevent or resolve conflicts. Of these, in twelve (12) instances, grizzly bears were killing livestock, six (6) were damaging fruit trees, eating pet food or livestock food, and eleven (11) were frequenting developed sites or livestock production areas; and

WHEREAS, after the 2017 delisting of the GYE grizzly bear the state of Wyoming received more than seven thousand (7,000) applications for a grizzly bear hunting license; and

WHEREAS, the state of Wyoming granted only twelve (12) licenses from the seven thousand (7,000) applicants; and

WHEREAS, the ruling of the United States District Court for the District of Montana forced the state of Wyoming to cancel the carefully planned and much anticipated grizzly bear hunt that would have positively contributed to the state's management of the GYE grizzly bear population; and

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WHEREAS, the state of Wyoming bears the cost of grizzly bear management but again lacks any authority to make decisions related to management, conflict resolution or citizen safety related to grizzly bears.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WYOMING:

Section 1. That the Wyoming legislature respectfully requests congressional action to swiftly delist the GYE grizzly bear population to return the management of this recovered species to state and tribal control as provided by the Endangered Species Act.

Section 2. That pending the delisting of the GYE grizzly bear population, the Wyoming legislature requests that the federal government fully fund the cost of management of the species.

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Section 3. That the Secretary of State of Wyoming transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, the United States Secretary of the Interior, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and to the Wyoming Congressional Delegation.

(END)

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Governor

TIME APPROVED: _____

DATE APPROVED: _____

I hereby certify that this act originated in the House.

Chief Clerk