

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION HIGHLIGHTING UTAH'S
WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH THE FEDERAL
PARTNERS FOR EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE
MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS**

2022 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Ronald M. Winterton

House Sponsor: Keven J. Stratton

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution recognizes the need for and encourages cooperation and coordination between the state of Utah and relevant federal agencies to manage more efficiently the resources and lands of the state of Utah.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ recognizes the goals of the federal government to protect natural resources, lands, and waters of the nation;
- ▶ recognizes that a high percentage of lands in Utah are managed by the federal government;
- ▶ recognizes that Utah has a strong history of responsible stewardship over public lands in Utah;
- ▶ recognizes that the ongoing drought and other conditions in the state of Utah require stronger and more immediate response to properly manage the resources and public lands in the state of Utah;
- ▶ recognizes certain aspects of the management of the resources in the state of Utah have failed to properly preserve the resources and protect the citizens of the state of Utah; and
- ▶ encourages greater cooperation and coordination between the state of Utah and

relevant federal agencies to improve the management and protection of the resources of the state of Utah.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS, President Joseph R. Biden's Executive Order 14008 sets a goal of conserving at least 30% of America's land and water resources by the year 2030;

WHEREAS, the United States Department of the Interior, United States Department of Agriculture, United States Department of Commerce, and the Council on Environmental Quality released the Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful Report on May 6, 2021, that similarly sets a goal of conserving 30% of America's lands and water resources by the year 2030;

WHEREAS, the Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful Report acknowledges that land and water stewardship by private property owners, states, and local governments demonstrates that the most effective and enduring conservation strategies are those that reflect the priorities, needs, and perspectives of the families and communities that know, live, work, and care for the lands and waters;

WHEREAS, approximately 23% of Utah, or 12,628,600 acres, receives the highest level of protection available as national parks, wilderness areas, national monuments, and other highly restricted Federal lands;

WHEREAS, a host of different federal statutes, including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the National Forests Management Act, the National Park Service Organic Act, the Antiquities Act, the Taylor Grazing Act, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Archeological Resources Protection Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and others provide varying layers of protections for America's lands, waters, air, and cultural resources;

WHEREAS, the people of Utah have a long history of successful stewardship over

58 Utah's lands and waters;

59 WHEREAS, Utah is currently suffering from extreme drought through much of the
60 state;

61 WHEREAS, decades of wildfire suppression and a dearth of timber harvest have led to
62 a growing problem of catastrophic wildfires throughout Utah;

63 WHEREAS, bark beetle infestations have caused significant tree mortality in many of
64 Utah's forests;

65 WHEREAS, changes in Utah's vegetation cover, including the encroachment of
66 coniferous trees into aspen forests and sagebrush rangelands, has degraded habitat for wildlife
67 and domestic livestock;

68 WHEREAS, the state of Utah, in cooperation with federal partners, is successfully
69 working to restore sagebrush and aspen habitat through Utah through the Watershed
70 Restoration Initiative;

71 WHEREAS, the state of Utah is actively working with the United States Forest Service,
72 Natural Resources Conservation Service, and other partners through the Shared Stewardship
73 Program to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires and protect Utah's critical water sources;

74 WHEREAS, the state of Utah's Endangered Species Mitigation Fund successfully
75 directs conservation efforts to assist in the recovery of threatened and endangered species
76 leading to the downlisting of species including: June sucker, humpback chub, razorback
77 sucker, Kanab ambersnail, and Deseret milkvetch;

78 WHEREAS, livestock grazing on public lands forms a critical part of Utah's culture and
79 economy, and is a sustainable, renewable form of food and fiber production on public lands;

80 WHEREAS, Utah's domestic livestock provide critical ecosystem services on public
81 lands, including removal of noxious weeds and reduction in wildfire risk;

82 WHEREAS, the state of Utah's Grazing Improvement Program works to improve
83 sustainable grazing operations throughout the state, including the implementation of rotational
84 grazing systems to reduce environmental impacts and installation of water infrastructure to
85 reduce livestock impacts on water sources;

86 WHEREAS, the Utah Division of State History's anti-vandalism campaign actively
87 works to educate the public on the proper stewardship of archeological resources and better
88 protect archeological resources on public lands;

89 WHEREAS, the state of Utah's Utah Migration Initiative currently works to connect
90 wildlife habitats and migration corridors throughout Utah, including the construction of
91 wildlife overpasses, fish passage structures, and other pro-wildlife infrastructure;

92 WHEREAS, federal designations of Utah's lands and waters, such as national
93 monuments and wilderness areas, can impair the ability of the state and federal agencies
94 partners to achieve conservation and stewardship goals within those designated lands; and

95 WHEREAS, federal designations of Utah's lands and waters can hinder the efforts of
96 the State and federal agencies to improve wildlife habitat and promote biodiversity:

97 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
98 Governor concurring therein, supports the conservation and stewardship of Utah's lands and
99 waters through the voluntary efforts of state agencies, local governments, and private
100 landowners.

101 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor oppose the use of
102 federal designations to lock up more federal land in Utah without the consent of the Legislature
103 and demands that the federal government honor the principles of state sovereignty.

104 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor strongly
105 encourage state agencies to work with federal partners to honor the state sovereignty, follow
106 the state's resource management plans, and achieve the goals of the Conserving and Restoring
107 America the Beautiful Report in a manner that does not impair the ability of Utahns to use and
108 benefit from Utah's public lands.