

1 A RESOLUTION proclaiming March 3, 2020, as Kentucky Natural Lands
2 Awareness Day.

3 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has funded the conservation of nearly 95,000 acres
4 in 165 projects statewide through the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund since
5 1994, consisting of areas to be preserved in their natural state for the protection of our
6 state's natural heritage, public enjoyment, outdoor recreation and education; and

7 WHEREAS, Kentucky's natural lands protect important water resources across the
8 state that rank fourth nationally in aquatic biodiversity, including approximately 245
9 native fishes, over 100 different kinds of freshwater mussels, and nearly 60 species of
10 crayfish, all of which provide important healthy-stream functions such as water
11 purification and flood control buffers; and

12 WHEREAS, Kentucky's natural lands are critical to support healthy and diverse
13 forests and habitat for our most rare and endangered species, as well as the state's most
14 natural scenic wonders from Blanton Forest State Nature Preserve in Harlan County to
15 the Audubon State Park in Henderson County; and

16 WHEREAS, Kentucky's natural lands enhance important historical landmarks such
17 as the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park in Larue County, visited by
18 over 260,000 tourists in the past year and providing over \$20 million in benefits and 227
19 jobs to the local economy, and includes 225 acres funded by the Kentucky Heritage Land
20 Fund at Lincoln's Boyhood home; and

21 WHEREAS, Mammoth Cave National Park visitors spent \$45 million in 2018,
22 helping support nearly 600 local jobs and generate \$61.6 million into nearby economies,
23 including the Green River protected by the Kentucky Wild Rivers program; and

24 WHEREAS, Kentucky's natural lands are an important corridor for migratory birds,
25 bringing in an estimated 827,000 birdwatchers to our rural communities; and

26 WHEREAS, Kentucky's natural lands provide non-consumptive wildlife-watching
27 recreation for 1.3 million people in the Commonwealth, providing an estimated \$773

1 million to local economies; and

2 WHEREAS, Kentucky's natural lands are important components for tourism
3 initiatives that bring national recognition to Kentucky, including the Pine Mountain State
4 Scenic Trail and Bernheim/Fort Knox Wildlands Corridor, as well as providing thousands
5 of miles of passive recreational trails; and

6 WHEREAS, the 2019 Kentucky Outdoor Recreation Economy Report indicates that
7 Kentucky generates a total of \$12.8 billion in consumer spending, 120,000 in direct jobs,
8 \$3.6 billion in wages, and \$756 million in taxes annually from outdoor recreation;

9 NOW, THEREFORE,

10 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
11 *Kentucky:*

12 ➔Section 1. This honorable body acknowledges the significant contribution of
13 Kentucky's Natural Lands and proclaims March 3, 2020, as Kentucky Natural Lands
14 Awareness Day.

15 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to send a copy of this Resolution
16 and notification of its adoption to Lane Boldman, executive director of the Kentucky
17 Conservation Committee, PO Box 1152, Frankfort, KY 40602, and Zeb Weese, chair of
18 the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Board, 300 Sower Boulevard, 4th Floor,
19 Frankfort, KY 40601.