

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 103

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 121

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 103—Relative to wildlife resources.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 10, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 103, Berryhill. Wildlife resources: federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.

This measure would acknowledge the 75th anniversary of the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program and recognize, among others, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for its leading role in restoring healthy populations of fish, wildlife, and other natural resources throughout the nation.

WHEREAS, More than a century ago, hunters and anglers were among the first conservationists who realized America's fish and wildlife resources and their habitats were in peril and could not sustain unregulated harvest and further habitat destruction; and

WHEREAS, Hunters and anglers took it upon themselves to support laws that stopped excessive harvest of fish and wildlife, established game and fish agencies to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitats, and supported special fishing and hunting license fees to help fund the new agencies' efforts to provide for healthy natural resources for future generations; and

WHEREAS, The State of California then and now recognizes that the primary authority to protect and manage fish and resident wildlife within the state's borders resides in the state fish and wildlife agencies; and

WHEREAS, Upon realizing that license fees alone were insufficient to restore and sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations, hunters and anglers supported excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, hunting equipment, and fishing equipment to raise additional funds to support restoration and enhancement efforts of the state agencies; and

WHEREAS, These efforts became known as the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program that began 75 years ago with the passage of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, and then in 1950, was bolstered with the passage of the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, which was further expanded with the Wallop-Breaux amendment to the Sport Fish Restoration Act in 1984; and

WHEREAS, The passage of each federal act was predicated on the knowledge that hunters and anglers have a vested interest in the conservation of fish and wildlife and in the healthy sustainability of wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, The combined contribution of the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program to state fish and wildlife agencies exceeds \$13

billion since 1939, more than any other single conservation effort in American history; and

WHEREAS, The funds raised under the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program have helped conserve our fish and wildlife resources and provide opportunities for outdoor recreation for more than half a century. These investments, which help create jobs while protecting California's natural treasures, are particularly important in these tough economic times; and

WHEREAS, The cooperative partnership among industry, hunters, anglers, boaters, recreational shooters, hunting and fishing organizations, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and California's Department of Fish and Game has resulted in a successful model of fish and wildlife management that includes the conservation of land, wildlife, fish, and better opportunities for hunters, fishermen, and others to enjoy California's fish and wildlife resources; and

WHEREAS, In California, the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, as amended, has been a stable source of funding that has been instrumental in the efforts to reestablish elk in suitable habitat that has resulted in a statewide population of about 3,900 Tule elk in 21 separate herds throughout California; the annual Central Valley Angler Survey, funded by \$1,120,000 from the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, which leads to scientifically set harvest quotas, ensuring the conservation of salmon while supporting the \$167,000,000 economic contribution from the annual salmon fishery enjoyed by 500,000 anglers; and

WHEREAS, Successful wildlife restoration projects in California have included the protection and maintenance of over 285,000 acres of wildlife areas with the annual support of \$9,000,000 from the federal Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, as amended, that create public access for hunting and fishing and for wildlife surveillance and reporting; and

WHEREAS, The annual support from the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program in California has provided the foundation for conservation over 75 years. These investments have proven to be the example of conservation in the great State of California and have directly resulted in the increased awareness of conservation needs; and

WHEREAS, Habitat stewardship and the actions of conservation organizations combined with the annual funding generated by hunting and fishing have become the cornerstone of our nation's fish and wildlife conservation model; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature of the State of California acknowledges the 75th anniversary of the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program and recognizes the many hunters, anglers, boaters, recreational shooters, as well as state fish and wildlife agencies and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for their leading role in restoring healthy populations of fish, wildlife, and other natural resources, both game and nongame, to the abundance we see today; and

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Director of Fish and Game, the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, and to the author for distribution, so that all may know and appreciate the foresight and contributions from anglers, hunters, recreational shooters, industry, state fish and wildlife agencies, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on behalf of our nation's natural resources.

O