

Resolution by the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission in support of the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act:

WHEREAS: The Rocky Mountain Front offers some of the best wildlife habitat in Montana and is a land where the plains meet the mountains in abrupt, dramatic fashion, and

WHEREAS: the Front is home to numerous native species of Montana wildlife, including big game species such as elk, mule deer, wolves, bighorn sheep, grizzly bears, black bears and moose, and

WHEREAS: one of the main threats to wildlife habitat along the Front is the spread of noxious weeds, and combating the spread of these invasives is crucial to maintaining healthy populations of game species, and

WHEREAS: the area is also home to working cattle ranches that have been actively involved in conservation including numerous ranches with large conservation easements that maintain these working lands in perpetuity, benefiting our state's agricultural economy and wildlife, and

WHEREAS: hunter use of the Front region has remained steady over the past five years, despite a difficult economy, demonstrating that the area is a valued destination for hunters throughout Montana, and

WHEREAS: the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act doesn't impede existing access to lands along the Front, and would not change wildlife management practices in the area, and

WHEREAS: the Heritage Act is a collaborative, made-in-Montana effort to protect this landscape that brought together landowners, hunters, conservationists and others to consider multiple stakeholders' interests, and

WHEREAS: the combination of conservation management area and wilderness designations within the Heritage Act strikes the balance between the needs of existing recreational and agricultural uses of the public lands in a way that protects critical wildlife habitat.

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission supports the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act and urges its passage to protect our state's incredible, valued public wildlife resources, remarkable habitat, and our rich history of fair chase, ethical hunting.