

By: Senators Irvin, Maloch

SENATE RESOLUTION

TO ENCOURAGE THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS AND THE UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TO DEVELOP A LONG-TERM FUNDING SOLUTION FOR THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE NORFORK AND GREERS FERRY NATIONAL FISH HATCHERIES IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF COMMUNITIES DEPENDENT UPON THE COLD WATER FISHERIES THEY PROVIDE AND THE PERPETUATION OF ARKANSAS' WORLD-CLASS FISHERIES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS OF ARKANSANS.

Subtitle

ENCOURAGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS AND THE UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TO FIND A LONG-TERM FUNDING SOLUTION TO SUSTAIN THE ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF ARKANSAS'S FISH HATCHERIES.

WHEREAS, the United States Army Corps of Engineers created large impoundments on many of Arkansas' major rivers and streams decades ago, irreparably harming or displacing native fish stocks downstream of the dams; and

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service constructed the Greers Ferry National Fish Hatchery and the Norfolk National Fish Hatchery to mitigate the loss of pristine rivers and their fish populations for the people of Arkansas by replacing native sport fish with trout, a species more



suitable for the conditions of many of the new reservoir tailwaters; and

WHEREAS, the trout fishery created by, and annually produced from, these mitigation hatcheries has grown into a world-renown sport fishery, annually providing upwards of \$175,000,000 in economic impact to the State of Arkansas from anglers; and

WHEREAS, the Norfolk and Greers Ferry national fish hatcheries return \$89 and \$95 respectively, to the State of Arkansas for every dollar spent to operate the facilities, providing a unique example of government efficiency and return on investment to the taxpayers of Arkansas and the United States; and

WHEREAS, the significance and importance of the Norfolk and Greers Ferry national fish hatcheries continue to be overlooked by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in their efforts to close the hatcheries to sport fish production and divert the operating funds to other programs; and

WHEREAS, the state cannot afford nor should it be expected to take on the statutory responsibilities of the federal government, especially responsibilities related to mitigation for water development projects, and is concerned with the closed process used by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Directorate to conduct their comprehensive hatchery and workforce analysis; and

WHEREAS, the State of Arkansas and its 160,000 trout anglers, who spend 1,900,000 hours annually pursuing trout in the state's rivers and streams, are in perpetual danger of losing this incredible fishing asset,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the Senate urges the United States Congress to direct the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, working cooperatively with state agencies, federal water management agencies, federal land management agencies, anglers,

the angling industry, and local chambers of commerce, to determine the viability of each fish hatchery owned and operated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that for the hatcheries determined to be economically, recreationally, and culturally significant, including Greers Ferry and Norfolk national fish hatcheries, the United States Congress and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service develop a sustainable federal funding source to keep the hatcheries operating and providing in sport fish production for future generations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate urges the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to keep the mitigation hatcheries open and funded at levels equal to or greater than Fiscal Year 2014 until such time as a study of the solvency of the mitigation hatcheries is completed and future funding needs are resolved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon adoption of this resolution, the Secretary of the Senate send a certified copy to each member of the Arkansas congressional delegation and Daniel M. Ashe, Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.