

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 20

Senators McBroom, Zorn, Daley, Lauwers, Outman, Victory and VanderWall offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to encourage the Natural Resources Commission to
2 add Eastern sandhill cranes to the game species list and seek U.S.
3 Fish and Wildlife Service approval to establish an Eastern sandhill
4 crane hunting season.

5 Whereas, Michigan is home to an ever-increasing population of
6 Eastern sandhill cranes. The 2020 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
7 fall survey of Eastern sandhill cranes estimated 18,874 cranes in
8 Michigan prior to fall migration. An estimated 13,352 were recorded
9 in 2018; and

10 Whereas, The explosion in the Eastern sandhill crane
11 population in the state has caused significant issues for Michigan
12 farmers. Although depredation permits are available, the resource

1 is wasted as farmers are prohibited from possessing or consuming
2 dead birds taken under depredation permits. A hunting season would
3 reduce the number of nuisance birds while utilizing this food
4 resource; and

5 Whereas, Eastern sandhill cranes are already hunted in
6 Minnesota, Tennessee, and Kentucky when they migrate beyond
7 Michigan's borders. They are classified as a game species under the
8 federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1916; and

9 Whereas, Hunting seasons are strictly regulated by the
10 Mississippi Flyway Council and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
11 to ensure that the Eastern sandhill crane population remains
12 robust. Under the Eastern Population Crane Management Plan, states
13 may only receive approval for a hunting season from the U.S. Fish
14 and Wildlife Service after submitting pertinent information to the
15 Mississippi Flyway Council, including an estimate of the peak
16 number of Eastern sandhill cranes and time of migration over a
17 five-year period, proposed number of permits to be issued, and
18 proposed season dates. States with hunting seasons are required to
19 gather information from hunters and track the Eastern sandhill
20 crane population; now, therefore, be it

21 Resolved by the Senate, That we encourage the Natural
22 Resources Commission to add Eastern sandhill cranes to the game
23 species list and seek U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approval to
24 establish an Eastern sandhill crane hunting season; and be it
25 further

26 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
27 members of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission, the Director
28 of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the Governor
29 of Michigan.