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City Attorney's Office

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER DAN KALB AND COUNCIL PRESIDENT
PATRICIA KERNIGHAN

RESOLUTION HONORING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILDERNESS ACT WHICH ALLOWS FOR PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF AMERICA'S PRECIOUS WILDERNESS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF HUMAN, PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES

WHEREAS, in 1964 the United States Congress passed the Wilderness Act overwhelmingly by a bipartisan vote, which President Lyndon Johnson signed into law on September 3, 1964, bringing into being America's National Wilderness Preservation System, which designated certain wild federal lands "for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness and will provide for the protection of these areas and the preservation of their wilderness character"; and

WHEREAS, the Wilderness Act made it the "policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness...in order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition"; and

WHEREAS, wilderness, "in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape," is recognized as "Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable, and has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation"; and

WHEREAS, in proclaiming September each year during his first term as National Wilderness Month President Barack Obama said, "The mystery and wonder of wilderness is deeply rooted in our national character. For many of the first Americans -- American Indians and Alaska Natives -- the wilderness provided a source of sustenance and a foundation for their ways of life. Later, as explorers and the pioneers of a young country moved west, they found adventure and new beginnings in the landscapes of our

Nation. From our earliest days, America's identity has been tied to the powerful waterfalls, soaring peaks, and vast plains of its land"; and

WHEREAS, President Obama also stated, "...in the 21st century, the importance of maintaining our wilderness heritage has only grown. Protecting our wilderness areas and their riches -- clean water, stretches of undisturbed land, thriving wildlife, and healthy ecosystems -- is critical to the health of our environment and our communities. Today, wilderness areas serve as places for us to roam, hunt, fish, and find solitude. They are also strong engines of local economies, providing tourism and recreation revenue for communities."; and

WHEREAS, today's concern that the nation's youth spend less time outdoors than ever before gives added urgency to setting aside places dedicated to nature and more than ever demonstrate the wisdom of American society in establishing by law a permanent system of places where people can interact with undeveloped, unmechanized nature; and

WHEREAS, California, inspired by the 1964 Wilderness Act, established its own exemplary state wilderness system, which has set aside state lands in a wild condition preserved by law similar to our state's substantial federal wilderness, allowing Californians to take special pride and additional pleasure in enjoying the benefits of wilderness; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council of Oakland does hereby commemorate the 50th anniversary of the landmark federal Wilderness Act by recognizing the significance of our National Wilderness Preservation System to America's cultural, scientific, historical and spiritual heritage. The Wilderness Act marked a fundamental cultural shift from a need to conquer nature to the need to preserve it for future generations. The City Council encourages everyone to embrace our Nation's legacy of protecting and preserving our vast wilderness and invites all Americans to visit and enjoy nature, whether close to home or in national wilderness areas, and to aid in the continuing protection of our precious national treasures.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE

AYES - BROOKS, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, SCHAAF, AND PRESIDENT KERNIGHAN

NOES -

ABSENT -

ABSTENTION -

ATTEST

LATONDA SIMMONS
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the City of
Oakland, California