Montana House Conservation Hot List Week 5: February 4th, 2019

Please Support:

**HB 193, Establish a carbon tax and distribute revenue,** Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell (D-Helena), House Taxation; Support. Bill would require large sources of greenhouse gases (i.e., coal-fired power plants and refineries) to pay $10 per ton of greenhouse gases that they emit. It also would require the state to develop and implement a modest plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This bill would require industrial polluters to incorporate climate risks caused by greenhouse gases into the cost of doing business. The revenue generated by HB 193 would go toward coal community transition, remediation of contaminated sites, economic development, infrastructure and the state general fund. Contact Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.461.9546, ahedges@meic.org.

**HB 241, Require public utilities to report a plan for 100% renewable use,** Rep. Andrea Olsen (D-Missoula) H-Energy, Technology, and Federal Relations, Support. Throughout the country 100% clean energy goals are becoming mainstream. California and Hawaii both passed state laws to achieve 100% carbon-free electricity by 2045. In Washington state, legislation has been introduced to require them to achieve 100% clean energy also by 2045. Additionally, over 100 cities around the country have committed to clean energy goals. Mapping out the options, timelines, challenges, and benefits for Montana public utilities to reach 100% clean energy would be a prudent step forward. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.210.7591, bfadie@meic.org.

**HB 271 Revise laws related to siting pipeline,** Rep. Bridget Smith (D-Wolf Point) House Natural Resources Committee; Support. Requires that new pipelines, such as the Keystone XL Pipeline, be located within the footprint of existing pipeline infrastructure and that the pipeline avoid sensitive areas such as state parks, federal Wilderness areas, and tribally recognized cultural sites. It also requires installation of shut-off valves to protect freshwater resources, and a more thorough analysis of a proposed pipeline’s impacts to Montana heritage properties. The bill also requires that the pipeline be constructed within seven years of permit approval. Contact Derf Johnson, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.581.4634, djohnson@meic.org.

**HB 292, Extend Funding to Coal Board,** Rep. Barry Usher (R - Billings), House Taxation, Hearing 02/05/19 9am, Rm. 152; Support. would extend the increased share of revenue going to the coal board to 2023. The money could be used by local governments to deal with the impacts caused by increased or decreased coal production. Contact Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.461.9546. ahedges@meic.org.

**HB 314, Require certain utilities to file general rate cases,** Rep. Tom Woods (D - Bozeman); House Energy, Technology and Federal Relations, Hearing 02/04/19 3pm, Rm. 472; Support. Allows the Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) to initiate a “rate case” every three years. The bill does not require a rate case every three years, but it grants the PSC the option to do so. Rate cases are
important because they make sure the rates utility customer pay are not higher than necessary. NorthWestern Energy is currently undergoing a rate case, however it’s previous rate case was 10 years ago. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.210.7591, bfadie@meic.org.

Please Oppose:

HB 161, Establish requirements for fish and wildlife decision making processes, Rep. Brad Tschida (R-Missoula); House Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Oppose. This bill seeks to limit public input in decisions on fish and wildlife management. It would narrow the people the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission to only landowners and take the public out of wildlife. It seeks to remove social science and people's opinions. Contact Nick Gevock, Montana Wildlife Federation, 406.533.9432, ngevock@mtwf.org.

HB 265, Revise laws related to approval of FWP easements, Rep. Kerry White (R-Bozeman); House Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Hearing 02/05/19 3 p.m. Rm. 172 Oppose. This bill would add an unnecessary layer of government to conservation easements for fish and wildlife habitat conservation and public hunting access. It would require state Land Board approval for conservation easements under the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Habitat Montana program. It would nullify a 2018 state Supreme Court ruling that found easements were not intended to go through the Land Board, and are final, once approved by the state Fish and Wildlife Commission. Contact Nick Gevock, Montana Wildlife Federation, 406.533.9432, ngevock@mtwf.org.

HB 279, Allow for wolf trapper expense reimbursement, Rep. Bob Brown (R-Thompson Falls); House Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Oppose. This bill would allow an Idaho-based group to pay trappers for wolves killed. It amounts to a bounty on wolves, and would violate Montana’s long standing tradition of not paying people for the killing of game animals. Montana has a healthy ethical, fair chase hunting and trapping heritage and that includes gray wolves and bounties are unnecessary to meet our wildlife management objectives. Contact Nick Gevock, Montana Wildlife Federation, 406.533.9432, ngevock@mtwf.org.

The Weekly Hotlist is published as an educational service to lawmakers and citizens by the Conservation Working Group, comprised of the organizations listed below. Contact Alex Rich, Montana Conservation Voters at 406.254.1593 ext. 2.
