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

**Please Support:**

**SB 24, Increase optional light motor vehicle registration fee for parks and recreation,** Sen. Terry Gauthier (R-Helena) Senate Fish and Game Committee, Support. This bill would increase funding for trails and outdoor recreation by increasing the voluntary motor vehicle registration donation from six to nine dollars to generate an additional estimated $1.8 million for trails, State Parks, and fishing access sites. **Contact Noah Marion, Montana Wilderness Association, 406.624.9622, nmarion@wildmontana.org**

**SB 97, Generally revising laws related to common carrier pipelines,** Sen. Frank Smith (D-Poplar); Senate Natural Resources; Support. Requires pipeline permit applicants to complete construction within seven years of their application approval. Applicants who fail to meet this deadline will have to reapply. It will also require that agencies evaluate the impacts to cultural resources, such as important Native American sites, when conducting an environmental impact statement for a pipeline application. SB 97 also requires installation of shut-off valves to protect critical freshwater resources, leak detection equipment to improve response times for pipeline bursts, and siting requirements to avoid “sensitive” areas. **Contact Derf Johnson, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.581.4634**

**SB 120, Limiting restaurant distribution of plastic straws unless requested,** Sen. Malek (D-Missoula) S-Business, Labor & Economic Affairs, Support. This bill would limit retail food establishments from providing single-use plastic straws unless they were requested by the consumer. This bill is a sensible step forward in reducing the estimated 500 million straws used daily in the US. **Contact Wyatt Smith, MT Audubon, 406.241.7897.**

**SB 121, Establish a fee for disposable carryout bags,** Sen. Malek (D-Missoula) S-Business, Labor & Economic Affairs, Support. This bill would require disposable plastic or paper bags be 100% recyclable, contain a minimum of 40% post-consumer recycled content (if paper), be made of high-density polyethylene film marked with the SP resin ID codes #2 or #4 (if plastic), display the phrase “Please Recycle This Bag”, in a “highly visible manner on the bag exterior,” and add a 4-cent fee onto disposable carryout bags for business owners. **Contact Wyatt Smith, MT Audubon, 406.241.7897.**

**SB 188, Revise electricity supply resource planning and acquisition.** Sen. Sue Malek (D-Missoula), Senate Energy and Telecommunications, 2/7/19, 3pm, Support. This bill protects utility customers by reducing the likelihood of for-profit utilities making unnecessary investments. It makes the long-term electricity resource planning process open to all parties (not just those invited by the utility), it requires a competitive bidding process for new resources, and it requires a draft and
public comment on Requests for Proposals for new resources. This increased transparency will protect customers from for-profit utilities making investments that help the company's bottom line more than consumers. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406-210-7591, bfadie@meic.org.

SB 189, Establish a carbon tax and distribute revenue, Sen. Barrett (D-Missoula) S-Energy. Hearing 2/07/19 3pm SB 189 would establish a tax on greenhouse gas emissions from electric generation facilities. The bill also directs the Montana Board of Environmental Review to adopt rules governing emission reporting, a carbon offset program, and carbon fees to fund the state program. The bill also institutes a $10 carbon tax less any carbon offsets that are authorized by rule. Sources can reduce their carbon emissions obligations by 50% using carbon offsets. Contact Malcolm Gilbert, with MEIC, at 406-443-2520.

SB 190, Establish targets, reporting, and monitoring for CO2 emissions, Sen. Phillips (D-Bozeman) S-Energy, Hearing 2/07/19 3pm SB 190 would require the state to develop a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions below 2010 levels by the following timeframe: 25% reduction by 2022; 50% reduction by 2030; and 100% reduction by 2050. The state must also develop a monitoring and reporting program and track progress toward the reduction goals. Contact Malcolm Gilbert, with MEIC, at 406-443-2520.

Please Oppose:

SB 102, Revise motor vehicle registration fees, Sen. Roger Webb (R-Billings), S- Fish and Game: Oppose. This bill would change the $6 motor vehicle registration fee from an opt-out to an opt-in fee. It would blow a nearly $2 million hole in the State Parks budget at a time when the parks are going through a big push to make targeted improvements. Vote NO on this bad bill for our state park system. 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.