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ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 21—ASSEMBLYMEN GIUNCHIGLIANI, GEDDES, ANDERSON, ANDONOV, ANGLE, ARBERRY, ATKINSON, BEERS, BROWN, BUCKLEY, CARPENTER, CHOWNING, CHRISTENSEN, CLABORN, COLLINS, CONKLIN, GIBBONS, GOICOECHEA, GOLDWATER, GRIFFIN, GUSTAVSON, HARDY, HETTRICK, HORNE, KNECHT, KOIVISTO, LESLIE, MABEY, MANENDO, MARVEL, MCCLAIN, MCCLEARY, MORTENSON, OCEGUERA, OHRENSCHALL, PARKS, PERKINS, PIERCE, SHERER, WEBER AND WILLIAMS

MAY 6, 2003

JOINT SPONSORS: SENATORS MCGINNESS, AMODEI, CARE, CARLTON, CEGAVSKE, COFFIN, HARDY, MATHEWS, NEAL, NOLAN, O'CONNELL, RAGGIO, RAWSON, RHOADS, SCHNEIDER, SHAFFER, TIFFANY, TITUS, TOWNSEND, WASHINGTON AND WIENER

Referred to Committee on Elections, Procedures, and Ethics

SUMMARY—Declares that preservation of Walker Lake's freshwater ecosystem is ~~in public interest~~ *important to the citizens of Nevada and California.* (BDR R-1302)

EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets [~~omitted material~~] is material to be omitted.

ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION—Declaring that preservation of Walker Lake's freshwater ecosystem is ~~in the public interest~~ *important to the citizens of Nevada and California.*

WHEREAS, Walker Lake is a freshwater lake located in west-central Nevada fed by snowmelt from the Sierra Nevada in California and other mountain ranges in Nevada; and WHEREAS, Walker Lake draws a considerable number of tourists and functions as an economic mainstay for the Mineral County economy; and

WHEREAS, Walker Lake has cultural, historical and spiritual importance to the Walker River Paiute Tribe; and

WHEREAS, Functioning as the terminus of the Walker River System, Walker Lake is one of the few saline lakes that is capable of supporting a freshwater trout fishery; and

WHEREAS, Walker Lake is a major migratory stopover for the largest single inland congregation of common loons west of the Mississippi River as well as other birds such as grebes, cormorants, pelicans and other waterfowl that rely on the Lake for survival; and

WHEREAS, Walker Lake provides habitat for the Lahontan cutthroat trout that has been listed as threatened by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

WHEREAS, The fishery and recreational activities at Walker Lake have been recognized as beneficial uses of water in the Lake; and

WHEREAS, The volume of Walker Lake has diminished by 75 percent since the late 1800s, and this continuing decrease is creating high concentrations of dissolved solids that are extremely detrimental and ultimately toxic to fish; and

WHEREAS, Without an ~~immediate~~ influx of fresh water, the food chain and ecosystem of Walker Lake could be lost in the ~~very near future~~; and

~~Whereas, Without such an influx of fresh water, Walker Lake will be converted into a saltwater lake, requiring either years to stabilize a new ecosystem or extensive scientific research and huge sums of money to restore a freshwater ecosystem supporting Lahontan cutthroat trout; and~~

E1012
ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, PROCEDURES, & ETHICS
DATE: 5/15/03 ROOM: 3132 EXHIBIT E
SUBMITTED BY: Paul-Lynn Weaver

Whereas The United States Bureau of Land Management is preparing an environmental impact statement to assess the feasibility of acquiring additional fresh water for Walker Lake and appropriate actions to be taken to preserve the desired ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, the Walker River system provide significant recreation, ecologic and economic benefits in California in Bridgeport Meadows, Antelope Valley and at Bridgeport and Topaz Reservoirs, and in Nevada, in Topaz Reservoir, in Smith and Mason Valleys, at Weber Reservoir, within the Walker River Paiute Tribe Reservation and at Walker Lake.

WHEREAS, there are a number of interrelated issues on the Walker River system, including claims by the Walker River Paiute Tribe and the United States to surface and underground water for federal property within the Walker River Basin in Nevada and California; claims to adjudicate the water of the Walker River system to preserve minimum water levels in Walker Lake; and the allocation of the Walker River system water between California and Nevada (collectively the Walker River Issues); and

WHEREAS, effective January 14, 2003, the United States; the states of Nevada and California; the Walker River Paiute Tribe; the Walker River Irrigation District; Mono County, Calif.; the Nevada counties of Lyon and Mineral; and the Walker Lake Working Group agreed to attempt to resolve the Walker River Issues through mediation with a third-party, neutral mediator; and

WHEREAS, Through section 2507 of Public Law 107-171, the Farm Bill, 2002, and the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2003, the Federal Government has allocated \$200 million to provide water and assistance for Walker Lake, Pyramid Lake and Summit Lake in the State of Nevada, *but shall not be used to purchase or lease water rights*; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That the Nevada Legislature hereby declares that preservation of Walker Lake's freshwater ecosystem, which supports Lahontan cutthroat trout is in the public interest and that all reasonable actions to sustain this Walker Lake's freshwater ecosystem should be taken; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Nevada Legislature finds and declares that conservation *over the long term* is a reasonable means of acquiring water for Walker Lake and that any acquisition of water or water rights for transfer to Walker Lake should be implemented through an agreement between a willing buyer and a willing seller; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all reasonable actions to resolve the Walker River Issues through ongoing mediation should be taken.

RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to Nevada Governor Kenny C. Guinn; California Governor Gray Davis; the Director of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; the Boards of County Commissioners of Douglas, Lyon and Mineral counties; and the Chairman of the Walker River Paiute Tribal Council; *and all the participants of the ongoing Walker River Basin mediation.*

E2012