

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 95-4662, by Representatives Quall, Beeksma, Hymes and Sehlin

WHEREAS, The Skagit River is famous as a location to recreationally fish for the sea run rainbow trout, commonly known as steelhead; and

WHEREAS, There is a long tradition of steelhead fishing on the Skagit River, and fishing from a boat is an important part of that tradition; and

WHEREAS, The Skagit River is also a wintering and nesting area for bald eagles, a threatened species; and

WHEREAS, The Skagit River bald eagle population is one of the largest populations of bald eagles in the United States, and the population of bald eagles on the Skagit River has steadily increased over the last twenty years; and

WHEREAS, The bald eagles that make their home on the Skagit River have adapted to the activities of the human population in the area; and

WHEREAS, The human population of the Skagit River valley, and those persons who recreate on the Skagit River, have made great efforts to assure that the bald eagle population will increase, and in fact, the population has increased markedly; and

WHEREAS, The Skagit River bald eagle population has shown that mankind and bald eagles can coexist without extreme restrictions upon mankind's activities; and

WHEREAS, The United States Forest Service has unilaterally decided to place a boating ban on the upper Skagit River ostensibly for the protection of bald eagles; and

WHEREAS, The bald eagle population was flourishing under conditions that allowed free boating access and use of the river; and

WHEREAS, The Forest Service has no scientific proof that the free use of boats on the Skagit River harms the bald eagle population;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives advocate that the United States Forest Service repeal its rules for boating restrictions on the upper Skagit River to allow for steelhead boat fishing.

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