



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA ESTABLISHING THE FIRST WEEK IN APRIL AS MONTANA SOIL HEALTH WEEK AND THE FIRST WEDNESDAY IN APRIL AS SOIL HEALTH DAY.

WHEREAS, recognizing soil as an essential natural resource, and Montana's agricultural producers and professionals as playing a critical role in managing Montana's soil and water resources; and

WHEREAS, Montana is home to more than 27,000 agricultural producers who are reporting less farm-related income; and

WHEREAS, the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture defines soil health as the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans; and

WHEREAS, agriculture is Montana's top industry, generating more than \$3.7 billion in services and products to the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, healthy soil increases nutrient availability and helps capture, retain, and store more water, increasing the economic viability of farms and ranches, the availability of water for municipalities and recreational uses, and in-stream flows for power generation; and

WHEREAS, farming and ranching are vital to economic development for Montana's tribes and rural communities; and

WHEREAS, healthy soils provide productive grazing; bountiful crops; clean air; water free from sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants; and diverse wildlife and landscapes through five basic functions:

- (1) help to control where rainfall, snowmelt, and irrigation water goes as water and dissolved solutions flow over or into and through soil;
- (2) sustain a diverse, productive plant and animal life;

(3) filter and buffer potential pollutants; and

(4) cycle and recycle nutrients of carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, and other nutrients that are stored

and transformed in the soil; and

WHEREAS, Montana has designated the Scobey as its official state soil; and

WHEREAS, forest management and logging play an important role in Montana's soil health, including protecting our streams and rivers from pollution through erosion prevention.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the first week of April be designated as Montana Soil Health Week.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wednesday of the first week of April be designated as Soil Health Day and that the people of Montana, the Montana Department of Agriculture, the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and the Montana Association of Conservation Districts are encouraged to observe the day.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the director of the Department of Agriculture, the Office of the Governor, the director of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, the director of the Montana Association of Conservation Districts, the Office of Public Instruction, and Montana's Congressional Delegation.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
SJ 9, originated in the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9
INTRODUCED BY B. GILLESPIE, J. ELLIS

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