

2 HJM 4018 - S COMM AMD
3 By Committee on Ecology & Parks

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5 On page 1, after line 9, strike the remainder of the Joint Memorial
6 and insert the following:

7 "WHEREAS, The preservation and enhancement of wetlands is extremely
8 important to the state of Washington to protect wildlife habitat and
9 viable waterfowl nesting areas; and

10 WHEREAS, The Federal Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act
11 both place a high priority on the creation or restoration of wetland
12 areas; and

13 WHEREAS, The Centralia Mining Company is the largest surface coal
14 mining operation in the state and is unique among surface mines because
15 of its location in Western Washington, which incurs a relatively high
16 rainfall and can support healthy rechargeable wetlands; and

17 WHEREAS, The Centralia Mining Company has been diligent in its
18 extraordinary reclamation efforts and concern for the environment as
19 exemplified in their honor of receiving the prestigious directors'
20 award from the Office of Surface Mining, Department of Interior, in
21 1991, and receiving a national award from the Office of Surface Mining
22 for excellence in surface mining reclamation including the
23 environmental benefits their wetlands play in enhancing natural
24 wildlife and waterfowl habitat in 1994; and

25 WHEREAS, Ducks Unlimited, the largest private wetland conservation
26 organization in the world, has affirmed their support for the need for
27 the deep lake-like systems, intermediate-sized marsh areas, smaller
28 seasonal wetlands, riparian stringers and other wetlands which have
29 been created on the Centralia Mining Company property; and

30 WHEREAS, The Centralia Mining Company location is in close
31 proximity to the migration pattern of numerous species of ducks and
32 geese; and

33 WHEREAS, Surface mining creates many opportunities for innovative
34 final land uses during the ongoing reclamation process which could
35 enable the development of new wetlands that can enhance fish and
36 wildlife habitat as well as the development of recreational lakes for
37 the enjoyment of Washington citizens; and

1 WHEREAS, The Centralia Mining Company is regulated by the
2 Department of Interior, Office of Surface Mining, and the provisions of
3 the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act; and

4 WHEREAS, The Office of Surface Mining rules and regulations for
5 land reclamation have been very stringent and restrictive and require
6 former-mined areas to be returned to the same land contours as prior to
7 being mined; and

8 WHEREAS, There were limited wetland areas prior to the commencement
9 of mining at the Centralia mine and if the regulations do not allow for
10 a variance, then the mine would be obligated to eventually destroy
11 certain wetland areas and lakes that have been created in the mining
12 process; and

13 WHEREAS, The Office of Surface Mining has recently been
14 reevaluating their position regarding the retention and creation of
15 wetlands in reclaimed mine areas;

16 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the Office
17 of Surface Mining continue to be encouraged to expand its effort to
18 find ways to preserve wetlands of significant size and value that are
19 created as a result of substantial surface mining activities and to
20 amend its rules and regulations in order to recognize the climatic
21 differences of surface mine operations in differing regions throughout
22 the United States and to allow the states to encourage their local
23 mining industries to take advantage of the unique opportunities to
24 preserve and enhance wetlands for the benefit of wildlife, fisheries,
25 and recreation.

26 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
27 transmitted to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United
28 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
29 House of Representatives, each member of Congress from the State of
30 Washington, the Secretary of the United States Department of Interior,
31 and the Director of the Office of Surface Mining."

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