

MINUTES
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
68th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION
COMMITTEE ON (H) NATURAL RESOURCES

Call to Order: Chair Rep. Steve Gunderson-R, on February 17, 2023 at 3:01 PM, in 172

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Rep. Steve Gunderson, Chair (R)
Rep. Steve Gist, Vice Chair (R)
Rep. Marilyn Marler, Vice Chair (D)
Rep. Jill Cohenour (D)
Rep. Ross Fitzgerald (R)
Rep. Tom France (D)
Rep. Jedediah Hinkle (R)
Rep. Jonathan Karlen (D)
Rep. Marty Malone (R)
Rep. Russel Miner (R)
Rep. Gary Parry (R)
Rep. Kenneth Walsh (R)

Members Excused: Rep. Rhonda Knudsen (R)
Rep. Sue Vinton (R)
Rep. Marvin Weatherwax (D)

Staff Present: LJ Jennings, Secretary
Joe Kolman, Research Analyst
John Olson, Attorney

Audio Committees: These minutes are in outline form only. They provide a list of participants and a record of official action taken by the committee. The link to the audio recording of the meeting is available on the Legislative Branch website.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted:

HB 438 02/13/2023
HB 521 02/15/2023
SB 207 02/14/2023

Executive Action:

HB 406 TO TABLE
SB 207 TO TABLE
HB 438 DO PASS
HB 418 DO PASS AS AMENDED

HB 431 TO TABLE
HB 435 DO PASS AS AMENDED
HB 460 DO PASS

HEARING ON SB 207 - Clarify final decree process for compacts

Opening Statement:

15:03:35 Sen. Bob Brown (R), SD 13, opened the hearing on SB 207, Clarify final decree process for compacts.

Proponent Testimony:

15:06:29 Denley Loge, Self

Opponent Testimony:

15:07:52 Krista Lee Evans, Senior Water Rights Coalition, (SWRC)

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

15:11:19 Rep. Steve Gist

15:11:43 Krista Lee Evans, SWRC

15:12:29 Rep. Tom France

15:14:35 Rep. Gary Parry

Closing Statement:

15:20:56 Sen. Bob Brown (R), SD 13, closed the hearing on SB 207.

HEARING ON HB 521 - Revising laws related to conservation licenses on state lands

Opening Statement:

15:23:52 Rep. Denley Loge (R), HD 14, opened the hearing on HB 521, Revising laws related to conservation licenses on state lands.

Proponent Testimony:

15:28:49 Quentin Kujala, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP)

[EXHIBIT\(230217NAHa1\)](#)

15:31:23 Shawn Thomas, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
(DNRC)

15:33:12 Colin Cooney, Trout Unlimited

15:34:47 Mike Bias, Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana (FOAM)

15:37:48 Marcus Strange, Montana Wildlife Federation (MWF)

15:38:44 Katjana Stutzer, Montana Chapter of Back Country Hunters and Anglers

15:40:05 Amy Seaman, Montana Audubon

15:41:58 Jocelyn Leroux, Montana Conservation Voters

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

15:43:11 Rep. Marty Malone

15:44:02 Quentin Kujala, FWP

15:44:33 Rep. Kenneth Walsh

15:45:26 Lena Havron, Fish, Wildlife and Parks, (FWP)

15:47:21 Shawn Thomas, DNRC

15:49:59 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle

15:50:30 Rep. Denley Loge-R

15:52:56 Rep. Tom France

15:54:40 Rep. Steve Gunderson

15:55:35 Lena Havron, FWP

15:56:43 Rep. Steve Gunderson

Closing Statement:

15:57:30 Rep. Denley Loge (R), HD 14, closed the hearing on HB 521.
16:01:31 **Recessed**
16:12:17 **Reconvened**

HEARING ON HB 438 - Revise public access agreement laws

Opening Statement:

16:13:52 Rep. Denley Loge (R), HD 14, opened the hearing on HB 438, Revise public access agreement laws.

Proponent Testimony:

16:15:13 Hope Stockwell, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP)
[EXHIBIT\(230217NAHa2\)](#)
[EXHIBIT\(230217NAHa3\)](#)
16:17:27 Raylee Honeycutt, Montana Stockgrowers Association
16:18:03 Katjana Stutzer, Montana Chapter of Back Country Hunters and Anglers
16:18:51 Marcus Strange, Montana Wildlife Federation (MWF)
16:19:10 Jocelyn Leroux, Montana Conservation Voters

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

16:20:16 Rep. Tom France
16:20:36 Hope Stockwell, FWP

Closing Statement:

16:21:17 Rep. Denley Loge (R), HD 14, closed the hearing on HB 438.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 406 - Clarify regulations for ponds

16:56:36 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 406 DO PASS.**

Discussion:

16:57:03 Rep. Marty Malone

16:57:06 Rep. Gary Parry

16:57:28 **Motion:** Rep. Gary Parry moved that **HB 406 BE TABLED.**

Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 207 - Clarify final decree process for compacts

16:58:29 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **SB 207 BE CONCURRED IN.**

Discussion:

16:58:56 Rep. Jill Cohenour

16:59:21 **Motion:** Rep. Jill Cohenour moved that **SB 207 BE TABLED.**

Vote: Motion carried 9 - 6 by roll call vote with Rep. Gist, Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Hinkle, Rep. Knudsen, Rep. Parry, Rep. Vinton, voting no.
Rep. Knudsen, Rep. Vinton, By Proxy

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 438 - Revise public access agreement laws

17:01:26 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 438 DO PASS.**

Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 418 - Revise limitations on irrigable acreage

17:02:30 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 418 DO PASS.**

17:02:47 **Motion:** Rep. Jill Cohenour moved that **HB 418 BE AMENDED.**

Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

17:05:04 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 418 DO PASS AS AMENDED.**

Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 431 - Generally revise laws related to carbon emissions

17:06:01 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 431 DO PASS.**

Discussion:

17:06:29 Rep. Gary Parry

17:06:32 **Motion:** Rep. Gary Parry moved that **HB 431 BE TABLED.**

Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 435 - Revise water right laws related to exempt wells

17:07:14 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 435 DO PASS.**

17:07:23 **Motion:** Rep. Marilyn Marler moved that **HB 435 BE AMENDED.**

17:07:23 **Vote:** Motion carried 13 - 2 by voice vote with Rep. Knudsen, Rep. Vinton,
voting no.
Rep. Knudsen, Rep. Vinton, By Proxy

17:09:52 **Motion:** Rep. Marty Malone moved that **HB 435 BE AMENDED.**

Discussion:

17:12:39 Rep. Jill Cohenour

17:12:41 Rep. Marty Malone

17:13:06 Joe Kolman

17:14:38 Rep. Tom France

17:16:03 Rep. Steve Gunderson

17:22:08 Rep. Tom France

Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

17:22:41 Rep. Marty Malone withdrew the motion to amend.

17:23:13 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 435 DO PASS AS AMENDED.**

Vote: Motion carried 12 - 3 by voice vote with Rep. Knudsen, Rep. Malone,
Rep. Vinton, voting no.
Rep. Knudsen, Rep. Vinton By Proxy

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 460 - Revise transfer of hard rock mining permits

17:24:41 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 460 DO PASS.**

17:24:41 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 17:26:41

LJ Jennings, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230217NAHaad\)](#)