

Senator Ananich offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 132.

A resolution to support the designation of the Flint River Water Trail and the Shiawassee River Water Trail as national water trails by the National Park Service.

Whereas, Michigan has over 4,700 miles of water trails, traversing remote, natural, industrial, and urban environments. These water trails meander through the heart of both the Lower and Upper Peninsulas and along Michigan's Great Lakes coastline; and

Whereas, The National Water Trails System brings together into one cohesive, first-class network, water trails across the nation. The system provides the public with access to outdoor recreation along shorelines and on waterways to explore and enjoy. Further, the system protects and restores America's rivers and shorelines and conserves natural areas along waterways. The U.S. Secretary of the Interior may designate exemplary trails of local and regional significance as national water trails; and

Whereas, The Flint River Watershed Coalition and the Shiawassee River Water Trail Coalition applied for national water trail designation in spring 2017 for the Flint River Water Trail and the Shiawassee River Water Trail, respectively; and

Whereas, The Flint River is a principal tributary of the Shiawassee River which flows into the Saginaw River and Saginaw Bay of Lake Huron. The river is home to bald eagles, ospreys, frogs, turtles, muskrats, and a wide variety of fish. Used as a main method of transportation for Native Americans and early European settlers and later supporting the city of Flint as a major hub for fur-trading, lumber milling, and agriculture, the river has a rich cultural history; and

Whereas, The Flint River Water Trail encompasses 73 miles through natural environments, small towns, and urban areas. Twenty-four access sites have been established to provide paddlers with a variety of distances and experiences on the water. The water trail travels through two counties and is accessible to 500,000 residents in Genesee and Lapeer counties and hundreds of thousands more within an hour's drive; and

Whereas, The Shiawassee River Water Trail begins in Holly, Michigan, and continues 88 miles to Chesaning. Multiple access sites are currently available and the water trail coalition is working to create several more sites. The river supports many species of fish, rare plants, and animals, and traverses through several communities, parks, playground areas, and historic sites; and

Whereas, Designation as a national water trail will provide numerous benefits to the communities located along the rivers. A national water trail designation can be used to promote recreation and tourism, enhancing economic benefits for communities. The program also opens opportunities to access technical assistance and funding for planning and implementing water trail projects and improving existing river water trails; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we support the designation of the Flint River Water Trail and the Shiawassee River Water Trail as national water trails by the National Park Service; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the members of the Michigan congressional delegation; the program leader of the National Trails System, National Park Service; and the program manager of the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, National Park Service, Midwest Region.