

**2013 HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES**

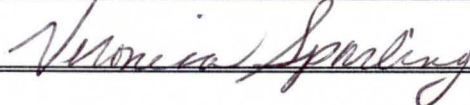
**SCR 4029**

# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Senate Natural Resources Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

SCR 4029  
March 7, 2013  
Job Number 19572

☐ Conference Committee



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to study the economic activity surrounding the three units of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the ND Badlands, including the Little Missouri River, to determine the best practices for sustaining and enhancing this unique and special part of ND

### Minutes:

See attached testimony.

**Chairman Lyson** opened the hearing on SCR 4029.

**Sen. Dotzenrod**, District 26, introduced SCR 4029 to the committee. This is asking for a study to consider if the economic activity going on around the park is affecting it in any way and whether the state needs to develop measures to protect the park resources.

**Sen. Laffen** asked if there is a problem or if this is preventative.

**Sen. Dotzenrod** replied that he did not have any specific data or information. It's more a sense that we are going through what some people call an industrialization of the west. The state is changing and there are economic and demographic impacts. They are going on around an area that part of its value comes from the fact that it is not characterized by a lot of development. That impetus is what caused him to be a sponsor of this.

**Kim Christianson**, Board member of the Friends of Theodore Roosevelt National Park organization, testified in favor of SCR 4029. See attached testimony #1.

**Jan Swenson**, Executive Director of the Badlands Conservation Alliance, spoke in favor of SCR 4029. See attachment #2.

**Sen. Triplett** asked for personal opinions on which items the committee should put most of their efforts into - reducing flaring, reducing noise, reducing truck traffic etc.

**Ms. Swenson** said in her personal view, which is totally separate from Badlands Conservation Alliance, there are 2 things: (1) flaring and (2) protecting the vision that is federal land to the south of the park. (18:40) She gave an explanation of the different views in the park and referred to the maps in her testimony.

**Mike McEnroe**, Wildlife Society, testified in support of SCR 4029. Attachment #3  
He added information that they are seeing a lot of industrial activity on the protected national grasslands in the vicinity of the National Park.

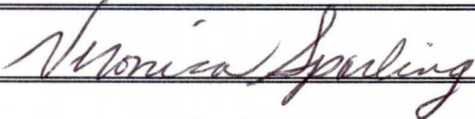
The hearing on SCR 4029 was closed.

# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Senate Natural Resources Committee Fort Lincoln Room, State Capitol

SCR 4029  
March 8, 2013  
Job Number 19655

☐ Conference Committee



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Management to study the economic activity surrounding the three units of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the ND Badlands, including the Little Missouri River, to determine the best practices for sustaining and enhancing this unique and special part of ND

### Minutes:

**Chairman Lyson** opened committee work on SCR 4029.

**Sen. Triplett** moved a **Do Pass on SCR 4029**. Seconded by **Sen. Laffen**.

**Sen. Triplett** said this is a "feel good" resolution. She pointed out that there are many things that cannot be done to interfere with the contractual relationship of people who have land leases in effect. This resolution is one area where the legislature can make a statement to say they care enough about the national park to maybe work on some of the issues around the park. There is nothing that can be done to reduce the activity but reducing the impact of the activities could be accomplished in subtle ways by passing this.

**Sen. Laffen** seconded this in order to have the discussion. He wondered if it is a real issue or not.

**Sen. Triplett** clarified that there are issues in the north unit. She referred to the maps and testimony submitted by Jan Swenson.

Roll call vote 5-2-0. **Do Pass Motion carried. Carrier is Sen. Triplett.**

Date: 3-8-13  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 4029

Senate Natural Resources Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken: ☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Amended ☐ Adopt Amendment  
☐ Rerefer to Appropriations ☐ Reconsider

Motion Made By Triplett Seconded By Laffen

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Lyson	✓		Senator Triplett	✓	
Senator Burckhard		✓	Senator Murphy	✓	
Senator Hogue	✓				
Senator Laffen	✓				
Senator Unruh		✓			

Total (Yes) 5 No 2

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Triplett

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SCR 4029: Natural Resources Committee (Sen. Lyson, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (5 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SCR 4029 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

# /

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR 4029  
FRIENDS OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT NATIONAL PARK**

Mr. Chairman, Committee members, my name is Kim Christianson. I am on the board of the Friends of Theodore Roosevelt National Park organization, and I was asked to appear here today on behalf of our board President, Joe Satrom, who sends his regards but is unable to be here because of travels out of state. The Friends of Theodore Roosevelt National Park organization is pleased to testify in favor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 4029.

The mission of the Friends organization is "to support the natural, cultural, and scenic resources, and the spirit and sense of place of the three units of Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the Little Missouri River that unites them in the badlands of North Dakota." We do this by "advocating for the park, raising public awareness, engaging youth, and raising funds for projects that support the park's mission and Theodore Roosevelt's conservation legacy." ([www.friendsoftr.com](http://www.friendsoftr.com) – About Us)

Like many of you, I'm a native North Dakotan, originally from Jamestown and, since 1982, a resident of Bismarck. I've had many opportunities throughout my lifetime to visit and enjoy both the north and south units of TRNP. As a child, I remember the thrill of our family car slowly driving through a herd of buffalo and hoping that they really were going to let us pass unharmed, or reveling in the antics of hundreds of prairie dogs as we visited their sprawling communities. In my late teens, I joined a group of 8 – 10 others on an amazing canoe trip on the Little Missouri River from Medora to the Long X Bridge at the north unit (if I remember correctly, it was three days canoeing and two nights of camping under the stars). In more recent years, I've enjoyed guided hikes at both the north and south units that opened my eyes to geologic features, plants and wildlife that were always there, but pretty much hidden to my underdeveloped sense of observation. I'm sure many of you have had equally memorable visits and experiences at the Park.

Our organization refers to Theodore Roosevelt National Park as “North Dakota’s Best Idea,” respectfully borrowing from the title of the recent Ken Burns film: *The National Parks – America’s Best Idea*. All of us here recognize that tourism is a major industry and economic force in North Dakota. Theodore Roosevelt National Park is the centerpiece of that industry. A recent study conducted by Michigan State University on behalf of the National Park Service, indicated that in 2011, TRNP had over 560,000 visitors who spent \$28 million in communities surrounding the park. The study also stated that this level of spending supported 451 jobs in the local area.

But there is so much more to the park than the number of visitors and level of spending in any given year. TRNP is a treasure that was established in 1947 to honor a great conservationist President and to preserve the spectacular scenery and unique character of this western North Dakota landmark for the enjoyment and education of past, current and future generations. And while we rightfully claim it as a North Dakota treasure, it really is a national jewel that attracts tourists from all over the country and many international visitors. Just as we relish the opportunities to visit and marvel at the spectacular beauty of Yellowstone, Yosemite, Acadia and many other national parks, Theodore Roosevelt National Park is our state’s contribution to this revered pool of national assets.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 4029 is a modest proposal to more closely examine the economic activity surrounding the three units of the Park and to explore the steps that might be taken to preserve and enhance this valuable state resource, especially in light of the increased oil and gas activity near the Park. Nobody disputes the importance of energy development for North Dakota and the country. But we must be cognizant of how this development might impact the aesthetics and sightseeing experience of those visiting our state’s “best idea.” Are there prudent steps that we can take now to better preserve the natural and cultural history of this unique and wonderful North Dakota resource called Theodore Roosevelt National Park?

We respectfully request your approval of Senate Concurrent Resolution 4029 and thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.



**BADLANDS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE**  
A VOICE FOR WILD NORTH DAKOTA PLACES

**Badlands Conservation Alliance**  
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Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-255-4958 badlandsconservationalliance.org

#2

**RE: Senate Concurrent Resolution 4029**

Testimony of the Badlands Conservation Alliance before the Senate Natural Resources Committee on March 7, 2013.

Chairman Lyson, Members of the Senate Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Jan Swenson. I am speaking as Executive Director of the Badlands Conservation Alliance (BCA), a non-profit public education and conservation organization focused on western North Dakota natural resources and public lands.

I would like to read you our organization's brief Mission Statement.

*Badlands Conservation Alliance is dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the badlands and rolling prairie ecosystem comprising western North Dakota's public lands, both state and federal. We provide an independent voice for conservation-minded western North Dakotans and others who are appreciative of this unique Great Plains landscape.*

*It is also our mission to ensure that the public lands management agencies adhere to the principles of the laws that guide them and provide for wise stewardship of the natural landscapes with which the citizens of the United States have entrusted them – for this and future generations.*

We speak in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 4029.

Badlands Conservation Alliance is author of Prairie Legacy Wilderness, a proposal to permanently protect the few remaining acres in the Little Missouri National Grassland managed by the US Forest Service as "suitable for wilderness." Of the 1 million acres that make up the Little Missouri National Grassland, the Forest Service claims less than 40,000 acres under that management prescription.

We speak in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 4029.

We also offer a warning from outside the boundaries of North Dakota; one that threw us off balance, as it may you. It is a recent flyer put out by the Norbeck Society, a conservation organization from our sister state of South Dakota, and specifically the Black Hills. It is the announcement of a cancellation of a scheduled outing to the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

No matter how true to reality either you or I may take the reasoning for this cancellation, it is the estimation of our neighbors, and it is a disconcerting assessment out on the public airways.

Find it attached, and let me read the text here:

***Norbeck Society Outings***

*Theodore Roosevelt National Park*

*~ backpacking the North Dakota Badlands ~*

*June 15-19*

***~ CANCELED ~***

*It is my sad duty to report that the North Unit, where we planned to backpack, has been so adversely impacted by oil exploration in the area that I deem it unfit for our enjoyment. The reports are that there is no place in the national park, including the wilderness area, where the sound of oil wells pumping and Jake-brakes blatting can be escaped, that the night skies never darken due to burning gas flares, and that a noxious chemical smell from a heavy gas fills the entire Little Missouri River Valley at all times and is frequently noticeable even on the uplands.*

*Theodore Roosevelt National Park has been seminal in my life, I have spent over two months in its backcountry; I feel as though I have lost a friend.*

*I cannot imagine a replacement for this outing.*

Badlands Conservation Alliance cannot imagine a replacement for this outing either. We ask this committee that this described scenario not become a reality. We ask this committee for a Do Pass recommendation on Senate Concurrent Resolution 4029.

# **Norbeck Society Outings**

## **Theodore Roosevelt National Park**

~ backpacking the North Dakota Badlands ~

June 15-19

~ **CANCELED** ~

~ ~ ~



It is my sad duty to report that the North Unit, where we planned to backpack, has been so adversely impacted by oil exploration in the area that I deem it unfit for our enjoyment. The reports are that there is no place in the national park, including the wilderness area, where the sound of oil wells pumping and Jake-brakes blatting can be escaped, that the night skies never darken due to burning gas flares, and that a noxious chemical smell from a heavy gas fills the entire Little Missouri River Valley at all times and is frequently noticeable even on the uplands.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park has been seminal in my life, I have spent over two months in its backcountry; I feel as though I have lost a friend.

I cannot imagine a replacement for this outing.



The lone outing left on the schedule is slated for **May 25**

Join us then for the **Annual Elaine Ebbert Botanical Wonder-  
Crawl**

a celebration of a wonder-filled life, of incredible people (that's you),  
and the wonders of nature, great and small

in **Wind Cave National Park** this year (sign-up announcement out in  
**May**)



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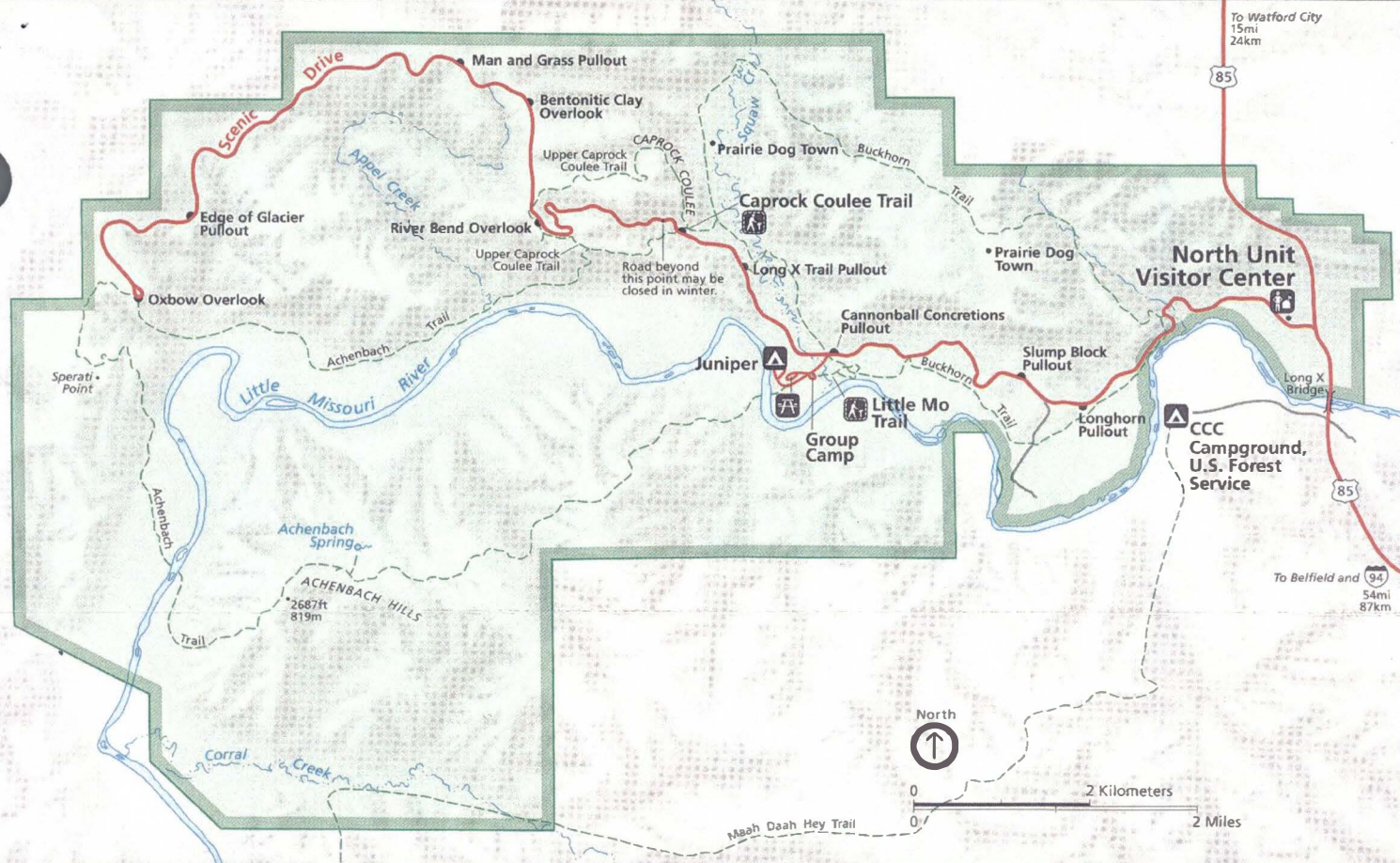
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*North Dakota Chapter*

## THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1442 • BISMARCK, ND 58502



**TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL R. McENROE  
NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER, THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY  
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 4029  
SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
MARCH 7, 2013**

**Chairman Lyson and members of Committee:**

**For the record; Mike McEnroe, representing the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The Chapter supports Senate Concurrent Resolution 4029 directing Legislative Management to study the economic activity surrounding Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the Badlands in order to sustain the related tourism, recreation, energy, agriculture, wildlife, historic attractions, and quality of life in western North Dakota.**

**The “whereas” in the resolution speak for themselves. The Badlands, the Little Missouri River, Theodore Roosevelt National Park, several State Parks, the livestock industry, and the oil and gas development all make western North Dakota a special place for all North Dakotans. SCR 4029 would determine how to keep western North Dakota, western North Dakota.**

**The Wildlife Society urges support for SCR 4029.**

**Thank you. I will try to answer any questions that the Committee may have.**