SPONSOR: Sen. Hansen & Rep. Heffernan
Sens. Lopez, Townsend; Reps. Baumbach, Lynn, Spiegelman

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
149th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20
AS AMENDED BY
HOUSE AMENDMENT NO. 1

ESTABLISHING THE STATEWIDE ECOLOGICAL EXTINCTION TASK FORCE.

WHEREAS, the sustainability of Delaware's local ecology is important to the quality of life of all Delawareans; and

WHEREAS, Delaware's colleges and universities are home to preeminent research in ecology; and

WHEREAS, research specific to the ecology of Delaware by the University of Delaware has revealed an alarming occurrence of extinction and extirpation of local plants and animals, including Delaware's loss of 78% of its freshwater mussel species, 34% of its dragonflies, 20% of its fish species, and 31% of its reptiles and amphibians; and

WHEREAS, 40% of all native plant species are threatened or already extirpated from the State; and

WHEREAS, 41% of Delaware's bird species that depend on forest cover are now rare or absent from the State; and

WHEREAS, research has revealed a nearly 50% reduction in population sizes for many of our bird species within the span of 50 years; and

WHEREAS, the causes for our loss of local species are varied, including habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, and the proliferation of non-native and invasive species; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly desires to look closely into these issues and set forth solutions for changing the present course of local extinction.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 149th General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force ("Task Force") is established to study the extinction of local plant and animal species and report its findings and recommendations for action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force be composed of the following members:

(1) Two members of the Senate, one from each caucus, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

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(2) Two members of the House of Representatives, one from each caucus, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(3) The Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, or the Secretary's designee who must be familiar with Delaware's ecological systems.

(4) One member representing the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service Section or Plant Industries Section who has knowledge of Delaware's ecological systems, appointed by the Secretary of the Department.

(5) The County Executive for New Castle County, the County Administrator for Kent County, and the County Administrator for Sussex County, or such individual's designee.

(6) One member representing the University of Delaware's Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, appointed by the Chair of the Department.

(7) One member representing the Delaware Nursery and Landscape Association, appointed by the President of the Association.

(8) One member representing the Delaware Nature Society, appointed by the President of the Society.

(9) One member representing the homebuilding industry in Delaware, appointed by the President of the Home Builders Association of Delaware.

(10) One member representing the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, appointed by the President of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce.

(11) The President of the Board of Directors of the Delaware Farm Bureau, or a designee appointed by the President to serve at the President's pleasure.

(12) The President of the Delaware Association of Realtors, or a designee appointed by the President to serve at the President's pleasure.

(13) The President of the Delmarva Ornithological Society, or a designee appointed by the President to serve at the President's pleasure.

(14) The Executive Director of the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays, or a designee appointed by the Executive Director to serve at the Executive Director's pleasure.

(15) The State Director of the Nature Conservancy in Delaware, or a designee appointed by the State Director to serve at the State Director's pleasure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force may request the participation of guests and speakers knowledgeable in the issues under study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all meetings of the Task Force, unless otherwise prohibited by existing law, must be open to the public with notice of the meetings posted in advance and communicated to the media.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall hold its first meeting no later than August 1, 2017.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall develop a report encapsulating its findings and recommendations for action and deliver the report to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives for distribution to all members of the General Assembly, with a copy to the Governor, the Director and the Legislative Librarian of the Division of Research of Legislative Council, and the Delaware Public Archives, no later than December 1, 2017.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate is responsible for providing reasonable and necessary support staff and materials for the Task Force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President Pro Tempore of the Senate appoint the Chair of the Task Force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chair of the Task Force is responsible for guiding the administration of the Task Force by doing at least all of the following:

(1) Setting a date, time, and place for the initial organizational meeting.

(2) Supervising the preparation and distribution of meeting notices, agendas, minutes, correspondence, and reports of the Task Force.

(3) Sending, after the first meeting of the Task Force, a list of the members of the Task Force and the person who appointed them to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Director of the Division of Research of Legislative Council.

(4) Providing meeting notices, agendas, and minutes to the Director of the Division of Research of Legislative Council.

(5) Ensuring that the final report of the Task Force is submitted to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives for distribution to the members of the General Assembly, with a copy to the Governor, the Director and the Legislative Librarian of the Division of Research of Legislative Council, and the Delaware Public Archives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that:

(1) Official action by the Task Force, including making findings and recommendations, requires the approval of a majority of the members of the Task Force.

(2) The Task Force may adopt rules necessary for its operation.