



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Michigan Audubon Opposes SR 20, Urges Michigan Senate to Maintain Sandhill Crane Status as Non-Game Species in Michigan

LANSING, MI — Michigan Audubon is speaking out against the introduction of state [Senate Resolution 20](#) (SR 20), a resolution “to encourage the Natural Resources Commission to add Eastern sandhill cranes to the game species list and seek U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approval to establish an Eastern sandhill crane hunting season.” **SR 20 was introduced on Feb. 25, 2021, by Sen. Edward McBroom (R-38th District) and is scheduled for immediate hearing before the Senate Natural Resources Committee on March 3 at 8:30 a.m.**

“This leaves very little time for public input on the issue,” said Michigan Audubon Executive Director Heather Good. “We encourage Michigan residents to follow the instructions on contacting your representative and make your voice heard.”

As an organization and collaborative network of chapters, members, volunteers, and advocates for birds and their habitats, Michigan Audubon opposes proposed Senate Resolution 20 to designate the Sandhill Crane a game species and to open a hunting season of the Sandhill Crane in Michigan. Michigan Audubon has helped protect the Sandhill Crane for 117 years, from establishing and overseeing annual crane counts to preserving suitable habitat for cranes to hosting the annual “CraneFest” outdoor festival in southwest Michigan from 1994 to 2019.

Michigan Audubon finds that the claims made in SR 20 are not scientifically accurate and do not reflect an accurate scientific depiction of this species or its life history, conservation status, numbers, or population dynamics. SR 20 does not offer a review or understanding of the various risks associated with a potential open

hunting season. Claims made by supporters of a proposed crane hunt fail to understand key differences and data as they relate to how migratory populations differ from resident populations of cranes.

“What’s ironic is that the Sandhill Crane’s population in Michigan today doesn’t reflect a problem, ecologically speaking. The Sandhill Crane’s recently stabilized numbers actually tell a Michigan conservation success story,” said Good. “This is a bird that wows and delights people, that brings them together; it’s widely depicted in art and celebrated as the largest and oldest avian species we enjoy in our state.”

Sandhill Cranes are believed to be the oldest living bird species, having existed for more than 2.5 million years in their present form. Michigan’s Sandhill Crane is considered a vulnerable and recovering sub-species of the Greater Sandhill Crane and is still considered at risk from several factors, including continued loss of wetland habitats. Michigan Audubon advocates for permanent full protection to the Sandhill Crane under the MBTA as a non-game species and has urged the Senate Natural Resources Committee to oppose SR 20.

For more information, please visit michiganaudubon.org.

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About Michigan Audubon

Michigan Audubon connects birds and people for the benefit of both through conservation, education, and research efforts in the state of Michigan. Michigan Audubon has 18 bird sanctuaries, a bird observatory, and more than 30 local chapters distributed throughout the Upper and Lower peninsulas. Formed as a 501(c)(3) in 1904 and established in 1905, Michigan Audubon is the state’s oldest statewide conservation organization. Visit www.michiganaudubon.org for more information.