

1 State of Arkansas  
2 94th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2023

SCR 6

4  
5 By: Senator Rice  
6 By: Representative Beck

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8 **SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

9 TO RECOGNIZE ONE HUNDRED (100) YEARS OF ARKANSAS  
10 STATE PARKS AND PROCLAIM 2023 AS ARKANSAS STATE PARKS  
11 CENTENNIAL YEAR.

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14 **Subtitle**

15 TO RECOGNIZE ONE HUNDRED (100) YEARS OF  
16 ARKANSAS STATE PARKS AND PROCLAIM 2023 AS  
17 ARKANSAS STATE PARKS CENTENNIAL YEAR.

18  
19 WHEREAS, one hundred (100) years ago, Governor Thomas Chipman McRae  
20 signed into law an act authorizing the acceptance of land for parks and state  
21 reservations in Arkansas and through the founding vision of Dr. T.W.  
22 Hardison, House Bill 873 passed without a dissenting vote and was signed into  
23 law as Act 276 of 1923; and

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25 WHEREAS, Act 276 of 1923 designated land for the establishment of Petit  
26 Jean State Park and included Arkansas as a party to the state park movement  
27 in America; and

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29 WHEREAS, later legislation would provide for creation of the initial  
30 State Park Commission, now known as the State Parks, Recreation, and Travel  
31 Commission and charge the commission with the duty to select, acquire, and  
32 oversee lands entrusted to its care; and

33  
34 WHEREAS, through the passion and pursuit of Dr. T.W. Hardison, the  
35 state park idea, originating in the 1920s, is a legacy that Arkansans  
36 appreciate and enjoy today, and in the words of Dr. Hardison "State parks are



1 first and primarily conservation areas. That concept is not in conflict with  
2 their use for recreation, and, properly administered, state parks can provide  
3 the best type of recreation for the population without impairing their  
4 natural beauty”; and

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6 WHEREAS, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the Civilian  
7 Conservation Corps (CCC), and the work of the CCC began in 1933 in Arkansas  
8 with the goal of providing access for all to nature; and

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10 WHEREAS, the investment by the CCC created the following state parks in  
11 Arkansas: Petit Jean State Park; Mount Nebo State Park; Crowley’s Ridge State  
12 Park; Devil’s Den State Park; Lake Catherine State Park; and the Buffalo  
13 River State Park; and

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15 WHEREAS, the enduring works of the CCC, built with dedicated labor and  
16 detailed craftsmanship, using timber and stone that blend perfectly with  
17 their surrounding landscapes, are still a part of the Arkansas State Parks  
18 essential experience, and these legacies can be seen in our parks’ roads,  
19 trails, lakes, beaches, and facilities; and

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21 WHEREAS, Governor Dale Bumpers invested more in Arkansas State Parks  
22 and the number of state parks doubled; and

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24 WHEREAS, the importance of Arkansas State Parks to its citizens was  
25 displayed in 1996, when voters approved an amendment to the State’s  
26 Constitution for the collection of a one-eighth of one cent (\$.00125) tax to  
27 support State Parks, Arkansas Game and Fish, Arkansas Heritage, and Keep  
28 Arkansas Beautiful and this measure was strongly supported by Governor Mike  
29 Huckabee and First Lady Janet Huckabee; and

30  
31 WHEREAS, with fifty-two (52) state parks and fifty-five thousand  
32 (55,000) acres, the various landscapes found in parks in forty-nine (49)  
33 counties are the perfect setting for trails, campsites, cabins, lodges,  
34 recreation areas, where citizens and guests connect with our state’s beauty  
35 and history; and

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1           WHEREAS, each state park is a significant part of the fabric of  
2 Arkansas, and the Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism is charged with  
3 an important role in interpreting, maintaining, and protecting some of the  
4 most cherished natural, historical, and cultural resources found in Arkansas;  
5 and

6  
7           WHEREAS, the state parks of Arkansas have impacted and enhanced the  
8 quality of life of Arkansans and served guests from around the world and  
9 collectively the Arkansas State Park system is one of the state's largest  
10 tourism and economic drivers, adding over one billion dollars  
11 (\$1,000,000,000) each year to the state's economy; and

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13           WHEREAS, last year over eight million (8,000,000) guests visited  
14 Arkansas's parks and museums and support for Arkansas State Parks is at an  
15 all-time high,

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17 NOW THEREFORE,

18 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
19 STATE OF ARKANSAS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

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21           THAT the Senate and the House of Representatives concurring, recognize  
22 and commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Arkansas State Parks and  
23 proclaim 2023 as Arkansas State Parks Centennial Year.