

## RESOLUTION 02 – 18

### Support for WCFRED Position on Endangered Species

**WHEREAS**, in 1998 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) listed the Preble's meadow jumping mouse (PMJM) as "threatened"; and

**WHEREAS**, the FWS admits in the Proposed Critical Habitat Rule that "much of the biology and ecology of the Preble's is still not well understood"; and

**WHEREAS**, the FWS is still willing to charge ahead with decision making that will bring economic hardship to the region's communities and disrupt the lives of our citizens to protect a species that may or may not currently exist in Wyoming and might not have ever lived in Wyoming; and

**WHEREAS**, the PMJM Critical Habitat Rule will serve as the blueprint for future Endangered Species Act (ESA) actions because it will be the first plan completed in the State of Wyoming whose effects will fall primarily on private property; and

**WHEREAS**, the Proposed Critical Habitat Rule's effects, which will devastate Platte, Laramie, Converse and Albany Counties, their economies and residents by: Decreasing the tax bases; Disrupting the custom and culture of the communities by forcing the liquidation of ranches and farms thus destroying the open spaces and the uniqueness of the region; Accelerating the rural to urban migration by eliminating small farms and ranches that will further open the door to the type of urbanization that has plagued Colorado and the Rockies; and

**WHEREAS**, the harsh ESA restrictions add to the burden on our residents at a time when they are already struggling with the effects of a record setting drought, record low commodity prices and the downturn in the national economy; and

**WHEREAS**, Interior Secretary Gale Norton is required to designate critical habitat "only after taking into consideration the economic impact and any other relevant impact"; and