

SCR 23 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 5/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

In memoriam: Thomas Herbert McAllister Jr. (1926-2018).

Senate floor vote: 29-0

No fiscal impact

No revenue impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Thomas McAllister, Jr., was born in Portland on May 6, 1926. His lifelong love affair with nature began at an early age with a class called “Nature Study” in Portland public schools. During high school he was a volunteer naturalist at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and served as a fire lookout on Hager Mountain. He graduated from Grant High School 1943 and served in the United States Navy during World War II, helping set up a naval hospital at Camp Adair, and working as a pharmacist’s mate in the Philippines. After the war, he worked on a 12-mule pack team hauling fingerling trout to stock high lakes in the Cascade Mountains during the summers. In 1948, Tom McAllister married Barbara Lou Butler, and they raised a family of four children and six grandchildren. In 1950, he graduated from Oregon State University, then called Oregon State College, and received one of the first degrees issued in the newly established discipline of fish and wildlife management. He worked for the State Department of Fish and Wildlife, then called the Oregon Game Commission, and in 1953, became employed by the Oregon Journal in a newly created position as outdoor editor. He wrote the popular column “Wide Open Spaces,” along with a winter skiing column, until the paper merged with The Oregonian in 1982. He continued as an outdoor editor and columnist at The Oregonian until retiring in 1992 after 39 years. He worked for 15 years as an historian and naturalist for Lindblad Expeditions cruises in Alaska and on the Columbia River. He first joined the Audubon Society of Portland at the age of 12 years, and continued to be an active member for a remarkable 78 years, becoming the society’s oldest member. He was also a longtime member of the Oregon Historical Society, the Oregon Field Ornithologists, the Oregon Duck Hunters Association and The Wildlife Society, and a founding member of the Flyfishers’ Club of Oregon and the Oregon chapter of The Nature Conservancy. Tom McAllister was also a founding member of the Lewis and Clark Columbia River Water Trail Association, which worked to establish a designated route for kayakers, canoeists, and other boaters touring the lower Columbia River. He served as a board member for the Oregon State Parks Foundation and the Oregon Wildlife Foundation and as chairman of the Izaak Walton League. Oregon Governor Tom McCall named Tom McAllister president of the committee that nominated Oregon rivers for protection under the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968. He was a member of the Oregon Geographic Names Board for decades, including many years as president, leaving his mark on the state through his devoted efforts to ensure that place names in Oregon reflect the authentic history of the state, including the history of Native Americans.

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Tom McAllister died on March 12, 2018. His ashes were laid to rest on a small island in the Metolius River, alongside his wife Barbara, who preceded him in death in 2015, close to the site of a cabin they built together as a young couple. Tom McAllister was more than a legendary writer about the natural world, he was an active adventurer and a committed conservationist, working tirelessly to preserve Oregon's natural treasures. Everything Tom McAllister wrote, as one of the many tributes he received put it, was infused with "his tireless passion for the earth and the water and the air."

Senate Concurrent Resolution 23 expresses the Eightieth Legislative Assembly's deep respect for Tom McAllister and celebrates his lifetime of accomplishments and contributions, with gratitude and sympathy on behalf of the people of the State of Oregon.