

# URGENT: Please make the call TODAY to protect Michigan's sandhill cranes from recreational hunting!

**House Resolution (HR) 154**, which urges the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to authorize an open season on sandhill cranes, has passed the Michigan House of Representatives with a "voice vote" (no roll call – please ask your State Representative how she or he voted on this and let us know at [contact@songbirdprotection.com](mailto:contact@songbirdprotection.com)). While this is a non-binding resolution, it directs the NRC to open annual recreational sandhill crane hunting seasons on cranes in Michigan.

## Please act now!

- Contact (call, email, mail) the NRC and the individual commissioners and politely to ask them to continue the protection of the sandhill crane as a traditional non-game bird in Michigan, as it has been for 100 years. See talking points below and additional information at [SongbirdProtection.com](http://SongbirdProtection.com)
- Attend NRC meetings in person and be the voice for Michigan's sandhill cranes.

The NRC's main email is [nrc@michigan.gov](mailto:nrc@michigan.gov), phone is 517-284-6237. NRC appointed members contact info:

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## Other talking points:

- The recreational hunting of sandhill cranes will not "protect crops" and is not backed by sound science. Effective non-lethal methods and products already exist to protect certain crops planted near prime wetland habitat from coming into conflict with sandhill cranes, and Michigan farmers can obtain permits to lethally remove individual sandhill cranes when necessary.
- A recent USDA report acknowledged a lack of sound scientific evidence that recreational hunting or other lethal means of removing sandhill cranes from nesting habitats near certain crops actually works to reduce conflict.
- Sandhill cranes are a vulnerable and recovering species at the northernmost breeding range of the Eastern Population, and were nearly wiped out in Michigan by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century due to hunting and loss of habitat. Because of sound, scientific non-game conservation policy, Michigan's breeding population of sandhill cranes has begun to stabilize and level out. Opening up sandhill cranes to recreational hunting again could jeopardize the stability and progress that took several decades to accomplish.
- Sandhill cranes are worth much more to Michiganders alive than dead. Birdwatching is a major economic driver across the state, and each year thousands of visitors flock to "CraneFest," a sandhill crane festival in southern Michigan, to view and enjoy this iconic species. What's more, a new survey by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found that wildlife watchers now outspend hunters nationwide by nearly 3 to 1.



***Thank you for making the call to protect Michigan's sandhill cranes!***



**Songbird Protection Coalition**

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