

By: Hughes

H.C.R. No. 281

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The City of Mineola is developing the Mineola
2 Preserve on the Sabine River to protect and enhance a richly diverse
3 natural area; and

4 WHEREAS, Containing 2,921 acres, the preserve offers an
5 unusual opportunity for birders to view, within the boundaries of
6 one site, the avian fauna of several different East Texas ecotypes;
7 visitors to the Mineola Preserve can wander through a patchwork
8 landscape composed of uplands, lowland pastures, young bottomland
9 and mature bottomland forests, and successional woodlands; and

10 WHEREAS, This wide range of habitat and vegetation types is
11 capable of attracting as many as 218 different species of birds; to
12 date, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has verified
13 the occurrence of 75 species, and it is continuing verification
14 work at the site to develop a comprehensive listing; and

15 WHEREAS, Among the native or migratory species present at the
16 preserve may be some that are now considered to be "threatened"; one
17 such species is the swallow-tailed kite, a bird listed by TPWD as
18 threatened in Texas and a species of concern for bird initiatives in
19 the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture; swallow-tailed kites
20 have been observed at the nearby Old Sabine Bottom Wildlife
21 Management Area, making it highly likely that they can be sighted in
22 the Mineola Preserve; and

23 WHEREAS, A master plan for conserving and promoting the area
24 is in development by several governmental and nongovernmental

1 organizations, including Ducks Unlimited and the Audubon Society;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, In order to make the tract and its treasures
4 accessible to the public, amenities will include a variety of
5 trails and a number of wildlife viewing stations; complementing the
6 gravel trails will be a two-mile-long all-weather path along a
7 raised, abandoned railroad bed, which traverses each of the
8 preserve's ecotypes; discussion is also underway regarding the
9 possibility of establishing an Audubon Center at the site; and

10 WHEREAS, The Mineola Preserve has been nominated for
11 inclusion on the new Prairies and Pineywoods Wildlife Trail; a
12 project of the TPWD, the trail is designed to help travelers find
13 the best wildlife-viewing sites in North and East Texas; and

14 WHEREAS, Affording ample opportunities for recreation,
15 inspiration, and research to all who cherish the out-of-doors, the
16 Mineola Preserve constitutes an exceptionally valuable asset to
17 birders, and the City of Mineola is committed to protecting this
18 property for the education and enjoyment of all Texans and visitors
19 to the Lone Star State; now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas
21 hereby recognize Mineola as the Birding Capital of East Texas.