

Resolution expressing the need to rename the Fort Collins Audubon Society

Whereas Fort Collins Audubon Society was founded in Fort Collins but now serves members across virtually all of Larimer County and parts of Weld County, including members in the communities of Loveland, Estes Park, Wellington, Timnath, and beyond;

Whereas a different name could better reflect the geographic boundaries and diversity of our members and clarify why our organization gets involved in conservation and education activities in communities outside of Fort Collins;

Whereas John James Audubon enslaved human beings and publicly opposed the movement to abolish slavery;

Whereas “Audubon” is not ubiquitously synonymous with avian conservation/birding;

Whereas John James Audubon was not a founder or member of the National Audubon Society, the first Audubon chapter having been formed almost 50 years after his death;

Whereas according to American science writer Christian Cooper: “...outside of well-educated groups and conservation circles, many people don’t know what Audubon is; the name carries no intrinsic meaning or value in communicating the mission of bird conservation”;

Whereas removing “Audubon” from the name of our organization would not erase John James Audubon from history nor erase his art, his contributions to conservation, or his immoral past from the annals of history, but would represent a conscious effort to refocus the future of our work and reject any association with racism;

Whereas changing our name can be a critical step forward in making sure as many people as are interested are welcome in birding, and that our membership is diverse and representative of our community; and

Whereas The Board of Directors is unanimously recommending a name change;

Therefore be it *Resolved* that

Chapter members authorize and direct the Board of Directors to determine, with input from members and others in our community, at least two potential new names for the organization that do not include the name Audubon and better reflect the geographic breadth of our chapter boundaries, present the potential new names to members at a future meeting, and then take all necessary and affirmative steps towards renaming and rebranding the organization based on an option that garners broad support from members.