



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

"... conserving our natural resources and your right to enjoy them."



SUBJECT: RED SNAPPER HARVEST MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS, the red snapper is a prized "table" fish pursued by both recreational and commercial fishers, and

WHEREAS, red snapper is "overfished" in the Gulf of Mexico according to some professional fisheries managers and fish researchers, including scientists with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the federal agency responsible for administering marine fish conservation programs, and

WHEREAS, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act requires implementation of plans and regulations necessary to recover "overfished" species within a 10-year period, and

WHEREAS, in an effort to recover red snapper populations in the Gulf of Mexico, quotas have been placed on commercial and recreational harvest along with other restrictions such as minimum length and daily creel (recreational) limits, and

WHEREAS, according to calculations by NMFS, both recreational and commercial red snapper quotas have been exceeded prior to the end of the calendar year in past years making it necessary to set fishing seasons for red snapper so the harvest doesn't exceed the quota, and

WHEREAS, this has caused the loss of red snapper fishing during the winter months for recreational anglers, and

WHEREAS, in an effort to further regulate the harvest of red snapper in favor of maintaining a viable commercial and charterboat industry, consideration is being given to implementing an individual quota system of allocating the fish within the quota, and

WHEREAS, if a sufficient amount of the quota is not reserved for harvest by individual recreational snapper anglers, it will further impact the fishing opportunity of this segment of resource users that has already lost the winter months for catching red snapper.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation urges the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to fairly represent the individual red snapper angler in its allocation decisions and to ensure that this segment of snapper harvesters receive a fair allocation should an individual quota system be implemented for red snapper.

Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in convention assembled, March 12, 2000 in Alexandria, Louisiana.