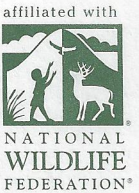




LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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



Resolution No. 11D, 2011

**SUBJECT: LOUISIANA ARTIFICIAL REEF TRUST FUND**

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Artificial Reef Program was established in 1986 to take advantage of obsolete oil and gas platforms which were recognized as providing habitat important to many of Louisiana's coastal fishes, and

WHEREAS, since the program's inception, 64 oil and gas related companies have participated in the program and donated oil and gas structures for the establishment of artificial reefs, and

WHEREAS, in addition to the material, companies also donate one half of their savings over a traditional onshore removal into Louisiana's Artificial Reef Trust Fund, and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the Louisiana Division of Administration and the Louisiana Legislature withdrew almost 50% of the balance (approximately \$18 million) from this trust fund for the purpose of balancing the budget in other departments and areas of state government that were unrelated to the Artificial Reef Program or wildlife and fishery conservation in general, and

WHEREAS, most Louisiana sportsmen were surprised by this action due to the collective assumption that, since this was in fact a "trust", administration of the fund was restricted and could only be used for the sole purpose of reef development and maintenance.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges members of the Louisiana Legislature to enact the necessary legislation to protect the Louisiana Artificial Reef Trust Fund and restrict its use to development, enhancement, and maintenance of artificial reefs on Louisiana's coast.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF urges the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to be more aggressive and proactive in spending the monies in this trust fund for their intended purpose of development of offshore, near-shore, and in-shore artificial reefs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF urges the LDWF to develop a budget and plan for the Artificial Reef Program; to seek public input in the development of this plan; and to annually revise and present the plan and budget to the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED considering the original intent and contractual obligations to participating oil and gas companies for the dedicated use of this fund for the "Rigs to Reefs" program, that the LWF respectfully requests the Attorney General to render an opinion on the legality of the use of these funds for purposes other than intended.

*Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in Convention Assembled, March 20, 2011 in Alexandria, Louisiana*