



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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



Resolution No. 14D, 2011

SUBJECT: SABINE REEF OYSTER SANCTUARY

WHEREAS, the take of oysters from Sabine Lake on the border between Louisiana and Texas has been prohibited by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for over 30 years due to contamination from pollutants discharged into the Lake's watershed, and

WHEREAS, during the time Sabine Lake has been closed to oyster harvest, oysters have built an extensive reef system at the mouth of the lake with significant vertical structure such that the reef is considered to be the best example of a natural living oyster reef complex currently existing in temperate regions of the world, and

WHEREAS, because of its unique status as a specimen oyster reef, the Sabine Reef has value as a laboratory for research on the formation of oyster reefs which may be beneficial to Louisiana's coastal restoration and protection efforts, as well as to commercial oyster production, and

WHEREAS, the Sabine Reef provides important habitat for other marine species, and

WHEREAS, oysters on the Sabine Reef are no longer contaminated, and lifting the ban on taking oysters from Sabine Lake by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is imminent, and

WHEREAS, resuming the take of oysters on the Sabine Reef will likely degrade the habitat quality of the reef and reduce, if not eliminate, its value as a laboratory to study the characteristics of a healthy, unaltered oyster reef, and

WHEREAS, in December of 2010, the Board of Directors of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation unanimously supported the establishment of an oyster sanctuary at the Sabine Reef to preserve the integrity of the reef and the habitat quality it provides.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation urges the Louisiana Legislature to designate the Sabine Reef Oyster Sanctuary to conserve and protect the biological, ecological and structural integrity of the Sabine Reef.

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