



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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



SUBJECT: COASTAL RESTORATION EFFORT

WHEREAS, erosion and subsidence has claimed nearly a million acres of Louisiana's coast over the past seventy years and is predicted to claim an additional 600,000 acres or more by the year 2050, and

WHEREAS, despite this horrendous loss of some of the most productive fish and wildlife habitat in the world, the remaining wetlands, beach fronts and barrier islands continue to support hundreds of \$millions in economic activity associated with commercial fishing and recreational hunting and angling, and

WHEREAS, neither the natural resources productivity nor the economy of coastal Louisiana is sustainable in the face of the relentless loss and degradation of the coastal ecosystem, and

WHEREAS, over the past 20 years various projects and initiatives have been undertaken by state and federal agencies, and coastal parish governments to combat the loss of Louisiana's coastal ecosystem and infrastructure, including siphons and diversions of fresh water from the Mississippi River, barrier island restoration, beneficial use of dredged material, sediment trapping, seeding and planting, shoreline protection, and nutria control, among others, and

WHEREAS, despite these efforts, and the \$millions in state and federal funds that have been spent on them, it is widely recognized that a bolder and much more aggressive program is required to "save the coast", as outlined in the State's "Coast 2050" document, and

WHEREAS, inspired by the commitment Governor Foster expressed at the August 2001 Coastal Summit, and an understanding of the urgency and magnitude of the problem, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) and the New Orleans District of the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), along with other state and federal agency partners, have ramped up their planning in order to seek authorization and funding by the US Congress, through the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), for a comprehensive coastal restoration plan, and

WHEREAS, the initial proposal for WRDA funding includes the completion of the "Coast 2050" Feasibility Study, the establishment of a federal advisory committee to guide the work on "Coast 2050", and a Mississippi River Delta Management Study to determine the cost and feasibility of alternatives to use the Mississippi River below New Orleans to restore and sustain coastal wetlands, and

WHEREAS, to meet deadlines of the WRDA process, the Corps and LDNR have been pursuing an accelerated schedule of planning which has caused some concern among stakeholders that proposals are being developed without adequate public review and input, and

WHEREAS, "Coast 2050" will be very costly to implement, will impact many people, and will require consensus public support to succeed; therefore it is essential that local and national stakeholders be well informed and afforded every opportunity for timely/meaningful input as LDNR and the Corps pursue the "Coast 2050" concept, and

WHEREAS, if coastal restoration is to succeed, those state and federal agencies responsible for developing and implementing the program must maintain the highest level of motivation and enthusiasm for their mission and receive strong public support; therefore stakeholders in coastal restoration must collaborate with the responsible agencies by staying abreast of the work being done and cooperate to resolve issues as they arise.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR), US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), and other state and federal agency partners in coastal restoration to keep stakeholders and the interested public fully apprised of the coastal restoration effort and provide ample opportunity for review of and meaningful input to the development and implementation of strategy and plans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that LWF urges coastal restoration stakeholders and the interested public to keep current on the status of the coastal restoration effort and collaborate with the responsible agencies to provide timely input and resolve issues as they arise.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF commends the LDNR and Corps for pursuing a bolder and more aggressive coastal restoration agenda and urges coastal restoration agencies and stakeholders to work in partnership to achieve a sustainable coastal ecosystem and economy for Louisiana.

Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in convention assembled, 3 March 2002, in Marksville, Louisiana.