



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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

affiliated with



Res. No. 11D, 2010

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROVIDING FUNDING FOR THE ATCHAFALAYA BASIN CONSERVATION FUND

WHEREAS, the 600,000 acre Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System (Atchafalaya/Basin) is recognized as a world class ecosystem comprising the largest river basin swamp in North America, and

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya is cherished by tens of thousands of Louisianans who enjoy the Basin's abundant natural resources and scenic beauty through a diversity of activities like fishing, paddling, hunting, birding, boating, camping and sight-seeing, and the residents of the Basin who represent the rich, natural resources-based culture that the Basin has nurtured for generations, and

WHEREAS, after a protracted battle to assure the conservation of the natural resources and environmental quality within the Basin in conjunction with maintaining the original mandated purposes of navigation and flood control, the United States Congress, in 1986, authorized \$250 million for enhancing the conservation, recreation and water quality of the Basin which required a commitment from the State of Louisiana to develop a plan and provide cost shares for such enhancements, and

WHEREAS, after a long delay through 2 state administrations, under the leadership of the administration of Governor Mike Foster the Atchafalaya Basin Program (ABP) was established within the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and developed a Master Plan for the Atchafalaya Basin (Plan) which was approved by the Louisiana Legislature in 1999, including authorization of \$85 million to implement the Plan, and

WHEREAS, a lack of emphasis on water quality issues and years of weak enforcement of construction permits have degraded the environment of the Basin, and

WHEREAS, the ABP was revitalized in 2008, via Act 606 of the Louisiana Legislature, with stronger guidelines for projects and greater emphasis on improving and restoring water quality to the Basin, and the Atchafalaya Basin Conservation Fund was established to receive appropriations, donations and other sources of funding to implement the Plan, and

WHEREAS, the ABP has made impressive strides in water management project planning since the passage of Act 606, and

WHEREAS, timely improvements are now required to improve the water and habitat quality in the Basin, and

WHEREAS, a consistent source of funding will be necessary to assure implementation of restoration plans and provide matching funds for the federal dollars that become available, and

(More)

WHEREAS, a constitutional amendment has been proposed to provide a source of funding for the Plan from a percentage of state mineral income from state lands and waterbottoms within the Basin, and

WHEREAS, that Constitutional Amendment will appear on the November, 2010 general election ballot.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports adoption of the proposed constitutional amendment to provide funding to implement the state's Master Plan for the Atchafalaya Basin that will appear on the November, 2010 general election ballot and urges the people of Louisiana and all organizations involved in Atchafalaya Basin activities to do so as well.

Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in convention assembled, February 28, 2010 at Cypress Bend Resort, Many, Louisiana