



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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



**SUBJECT: MONITORING THE EFFECTS OF WATER QUALITY PROJECTS IN THE ATCHAFALAYA BASIN**

WHEREAS, the Governor and the Legislature have endorsed the State Master Plan for the Atchafalaya Basin and provided funding for initial plan projects, and

WHEREAS, both recreational and commercial fishing are the major public uses of the waters within the Atchafalaya Basin, and

WHEREAS, construction projects to improve and manage water circulation to improve water quality are an integral part of the Atchafalaya Master Plan, and

WHEREAS, monitoring fish and important crustacean populations by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to assess the effects of water quality projects is part of the master plan but has not yet been funded, and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to understand the effects of water quality improvement projects on fish populations so the projects can be properly constructed and managed to provide the greatest benefit to Basin fisheries, and

WHEREAS, the massive fish kills resulting from water quality problems generated by Hurricane Andrew is a vivid reminder of the importance of water quality to healthy fish populations and to the well-being of the Basin, and

WHEREAS, the LDWF has historically conducted limited monitoring of fish populations in the Atchafalaya Basin and has the expertise to conduct pre and post project monitoring of fish populations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation requests the Governor to approve and the Legislature to appropriate state general funds to the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to conduct monitoring to determine the effects on fish and important crustacean populations of Atchafalaya Basin Master Plan projects for improving water quality, or alternatively, to dedicate a portion of any fishing license fee increase that the Legislature may approve to this purpose.

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