



# LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

*"... conserving our natural resources and your right to enjoy them since 1940."*

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Resolution No. 7F, 2018

## **SUBJECT: SCENIC RIVERS RECREATION AND ACCESSIBILITY**

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) has administrative responsibilities for the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System, including reviewing and approving permits requested for activities that could affect the natural and scenic values of the rivers, but LDWF's responsibilities do not extend to promoting the goals of the program or facilitating/encouraging recreational use of the streams;

WHEREAS, recreational use of the rivers has been enjoyed by riparian property owners and by some members of the public, which demonstrates public interest in low-impact non-consumptive outdoor recreation despite the constraints on public access;

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOT) has been responsible for prohibiting access to many rivers where public ownership of the right of way at bridges would otherwise allow access by paddlers and anglers;

WHEREAS, few public rights of way over rivers in Louisiana are maintained in such a way that a recreational user can approach and put a canoe or kayak in a scenic river, particularly due to dumping, littering, severe rutting, and occurrence of unpermitted and, in some cases, illegal activities;

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC), has recently identified certain "blueways" as streams that could be an important component of the outdoor recreation opportunities in the parish, and such blueways include the Comite River and other scenic rivers;

WHEREAS, the crossing of the Amite River by Florida Boulevard has a wide public right of way that could provide accessibility and use of the Amite River, and similar points on the Comite River (LDWF's Waddell Refuge, Hooper Road, Comite Drive and Dyer Road among them) provide potential access with a moderate level of improvement and maintenance;

WHEREAS, BREC's canoe landings in south Baton Rouge have proved very popular with the public and BREC would like to provide more opportunities for recreational paddling and fishing; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) supports the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System and endorses the idea that public support for scenic rivers will increase if the potential for access and recreational use of the streams are improved.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), Louisiana Department of Transportation and

Development (LDOT), and local governments throughout the state to cooperate for the creation and maintenance of designated access points for selected scenic rivers that offer recreational paddling and fishing opportunities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that LWF urges LDWF, LDOT, and the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC) to cooperate in implementing the “blueways” concept for recreation in East Baton Rouge Parish and that such a concept includes creation and maintenance of access points for the blueways; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that LWF urges local governments with a scenic river in their area to consider the “blueways” model that Baton Rouge Recreation and Park Commission is developing as a possible initiative to provide appropriate access and enjoyment.

*Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in Convention Assembled, August 18, 2018 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.*