



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

The voice of Louisiana's wildlife and natural resources since 1940.

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February 2025 Louisiana Wildlife Federation Catahoula Lake Poll

The Louisiana Wildlife Federation recently conducted an informal poll related to concerns surrounding the current conditions of Catahoula Lake. The poll was an effort by LWF to gain a better understanding of how residents and concerned interest groups felt about the ongoing issues surrounding the basin. While the survey was not conducted using random sampling methods, efforts were made by LWF to obtain opinions from a wide group of interested parties.

Conclusions drawn from the poll are detailed in the following overview:

- 81% polled believed that the wildlife habitat for waterfowl and other birds on Catahoula Lake has gotten worse in the last 5 years, compared to 9% who believed it had gotten better or stayed the same.
- 76% said recreational access for public hunting, fishing, and birding in the Catahoula Lake area over the last five years had gotten worse, where 18% claimed it had gotten better or remained the same.
- 85% supported a refuge/ waterfowl resting area in the basin where 9% opposed it.
- 57% approved of the expanded boundaries for the Dewey Wills WMA.
- 61% approved of US Fish and Wildlife asserting claim to their expanded boundaries.
- 72% of those surveyed indicated that they approved of public funds being used for land acquisition or management, land acquisition from willing sellers, and the use of conservation easement agreements that would create public access to portions of the basin to help maintain habitat management as previously enjoyed on Catahoula Lake.

The survey allowed respondents an opportunity to provide additional comments, and those opinions were reflected in the following observations:

- Catahoula Lake has witnessed a serious decline in waterfowl numbers in recent years.
- The lack of a waterfowl resting area is drastically affecting waterfowl numbers.
- Encroachment of woody vegetation is negatively affecting the habitat conditions.
- Many believe access should be limited after 2p.m. and loud motors should be restricted.
- The water flow for the basin is not being managed properly and is negatively affecting the area.

The Louisiana Wildlife Federation is thankful to all that participated in the survey, and we hope to use the information gathered to guide LWF's position on how best to move forward with developing solutions that benefit wildlife habitat, wildlife resource, and community.