



# LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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

affiliated with



Resolution No. 11C, 2012

**SUBJECT: LOUISIANA SALTWATER FISH HATCHERY**

WHEREAS, in July of 2011 Governor Bobby Jindal unveiled the "Louisiana Plan", which outlines his Administration's proposals for spending millions of dollars which the state expects to receive from BP as mitigation for damages from the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill, and

WHEREAS, these mitigation funds from the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) process will be limited and should be applied to projects that have broad scientific support and provide maximum benefits, and

WHEREAS, one of the more costly proposals in the "Louisiana Plan" calls for spending \$48 million for the construction of a new saltwater fish hatchery in south Louisiana, and

WHEREAS, overhead expenses for operation and maintenance of this hatchery are projected to cost millions of dollars annually, but the "Louisiana Plan" only includes funding for the original construction, meaning that the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries will have little choice but to divert substantial resources away from other areas of fish and wildlife conservation in order to operate and maintain this hatchery, and

WHEREAS, only a relatively small number of fish can be utilized as breeding stock and in the unlikely event that a large number of hatchery fish survive, this could diminish the genetic diversity of the fishery, thereby weakening the fitness of fish populations to adapt and persist over time through changing environments; a problem hatchery managers in salmon fisheries have been unsuccessfully trying to overcome for decades, and

WHEREAS, stock assessments reveal that both red drum and spotted sea trout stocks are healthy, and their spawning potential ratios are within acceptable benchmarks, and

WHEREAS, a single female trout or redfish is capable of producing millions of eggs in a single spawning season, rendering the potential output of a single hatchery insignificant by comparison, and

WHEREAS, restoring and maintaining Louisiana's vast natural marsh fish nursery is a more effective and economically viable long term solution than adding young fishes from a hatchery that requires perpetual expenditures for operation and maintenance.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation concludes that construction of a saltwater fish hatchery will provide no measurable impact on the presence and abundance of fish in comparison with natural reproduction and is therefore an unnecessary waste of taxpayer dollars which would be better spent on fishery habitat restoration.

(more)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation is opposed to the use of NRDA oil spill mitigation monies, Conservation Fund dollars, or other public funds for the construction or operation of a saltwater fish hatchery.

*Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in Convention Assembled, March 11, 2012 in Covington, Louisiana.*

The Louisiana Wildlife Federation is a statewide conservation education and advocacy organization with more than 10,000 members and 26 affiliate groups. Established in 1940, it is affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation and represents a broad constituency of conservationists including hunters, fishers, campers, birders, boaters, and other outdoor enthusiasts.