



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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Resolution No. 5, 2019

SUBJECT: ATCHAFALAYA RIVER BASIN RESTORATION PROJECT IN EAST GRAND LAKE

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya River Basin is the largest remaining bottomland hardwood swamp in North America, possesses the largest coastal cypress-tupelo swamp in North America, and supports cultural, economic and natural treasures; and

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya hydrology has been impacted by a long history of navigation, flood control, and oil and gas development projects that has resulted in severely altered water flow resulting in poor water quality, degraded fisheries and declining forest health; and

WHEREAS, subsidence and sea level rise also exert negative impacts to the Atchafalaya ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, the State of Louisiana recognized cumulative negative impacts to environmental health of the ecosystem, and created the Atchafalaya Basin Program to develop, implement, and manage a comprehensive state master plan for the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System; and

WHEREAS, the East Grand Lake Project was approved in the FY 2010 Atchafalaya Basin Annual Plan as "Development of a Complete and Specific Plan to Address Water Quality and Sedimentation in East Grand Lake/Flat Lake/Upper Belle River Management Units Through Modification of Water & Sediment Inputs;" and

WHEREAS, the project, as referenced in the FY 2020 Atchafalaya Basin Program Annual Plan, was "...intended as a first step toward realigning water flow patterns and strategically redirecting sediment in the East Grand Lake project area, and the Upper Region was chosen as a starting point;" and

WHEREAS, in 2011, The Nature Conservancy began implementation of its Atchafalaya River Basin Initiative, a partnership driven effort incorporating science, restoration and community outreach; and

WHEREAS, The Nature Conservancy completed its first Atchafalaya Basin land acquisition in 2015 with the purchase of 5,359 acres, hereby referred to as the Atchafalaya Basin Preserve; and

WHEREAS, The Nature Conservancy has partnered with the state of Louisiana, first with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, and now, as a result of Act 570 of the 2019 Regular Legislative Session, with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, as the first Atchafalaya Basin landowner to participate in an Atchafalaya Basin Program restoration project through the implementation of components of the East Grand Lake Project; and

WHEREAS, The Nature Conservancy is an active steward of their conservation properties, of which the Atchafalaya Basin Preserve is one and implements a comprehensive community-based conservation effort with commercial and recreational fishing interests, landowners, industry, local citizens, government, and others; and

WHEREAS, The Nature Conservancy has recorded baseline data, and will continue to monitor project performance through various methods and take an adaptive management approach if monitoring results indicate a need to do so; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana, Atchafalaya Basin Program, filed a permit application (MVN-2016-01163-CM LDNR East Grand Lake) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the construction of 13 features anticipated to restore hydrologic function in the project area, benefiting approximately 5,000 acres in the Basin; and

WHEREAS, this project is expected to improve Basin habitat, benefiting wildlife, fisheries and the communities and businesses linked to the Basin.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports the implementation of the components of the East Grand Lake Project described in Corps permit application “MVN-2016-01163-CM LDNR East Grand Lake.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports The Nature Conservancy’s community-based conservation efforts, on-going monitoring and other scientific efforts that are contributing to a greater understanding of the Atchafalaya Basin and how to better conserve it into the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority’s role in integrating the management of the Basin into the management of the Louisiana coastal ecosystem, recognition of their efforts to include public meetings and meetings with Basin stakeholders, and acknowledges the foundational work of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources when the Basin Program was housed in that agency.

Adopted by Louisiana Wildlife Federation in Convention Assembled on August 17, 2019 in West Monroe, Louisiana.