



## LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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

337 S. Acadian Thruway, Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
P.O. Box 65239, Baton Rouge, LA 70896-5239

(225) 344-6707  
[www.lawildlifefed.org](http://www.lawildlifefed.org)

Resolution No. 3, 2019

**SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR MAINTAINING AND ENFORCEMENT OF INCIDENTAL TAKE PROVISIONS IN THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT AS A SUCCESSFUL TOOL FOR BIRD CONSERVATION**

WHEREAS, in 1918, the United States enacted the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) to implement a 1916 treaty between the U.S. and Canada to protect migratory birds, which helped restore populations of many birds, ranging from herons and egrets to shorebirds and waterfowl, including the Wood Duck, Sandhill Crane and Snowy Egret; and

WHEREAS, in December 2017, the current Administration proposed a complete reversal of existing policy fully supported by decades of both Democratic and Republican administrations with a new policy in which prohibition of incidental take would no longer be implemented or enforced, only direct intentional killing; and

WHEREAS, the State of Louisiana continues to rely on the MBTA to guide bird protections, and the current legal opinion weakens this law by eliminating an incentive for industries and individuals to minimize and mitigate foreseeable impacts of their activities on migratory birds; and

WHEREAS, the State of Louisiana is globally, nationally and regionally important to many species of birds, including but not limited to the Sandwich Tern, Mottled Duck, Clapper Rail, Tricolored Heron, Wilson's Plover, Royal Tern, Black Skimmer and Seaside Sparrow, and is charged with conserving its natural resources; and

WHEREAS, MBTA protections have incentivized proactive conservation to help bird populations and limited the need for further and more intense protections under the Endangered Species Act; and

WHEREAS, incidental bird deaths can often be avoided or minimized with basic precautions and best management practices, such as covering oil waste pits, flagging transmission lines, turning off tower lights and following wind energy guidelines; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the MBTA, there is a steady drop in communication towers running red lights at night, a situation that kills millions of migratory birds; and

WHEREAS, some corporations, businesses or other entities need the encouragement of the MBTA to do the right thing; and

WHEREAS, the MBTA provides time tested and vital conservation protections for migratory birds, many of which are of conservation concern, decreasing in number and under siege from multiple threats; and

WHEREAS, the MBTA working at its best can be found in the example of the Deepwater Horizon disaster, an egregious violation of the MBTA that killed more than one million birds, resulting in a fine of \$100 million to be used to restore habitat for waterfowl and other birds; and

WHEREAS, birds are of enormous economic value through birding, hunting, and ecosystem services; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's *2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, in 2016 birders joined other wildlife watchers in contributing a total of nearly \$80 billion to the U.S. economy; and

WHEREAS, according to the *Economic Impact of Waterfowl Hunting in the United States, 2006*, waterfowl hunters spent \$494 million on travel and \$406 million on equipment, generating \$1.2 billion and \$1.1 billion in total output, respectively, in the United States; and

WHEREAS, some things have immeasurable value since birds bring pleasure, recreation, and relaxation to millions; and

WHEREAS, we have a moral and ethical responsibility to protect other species that inhabit our planet.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED Louisiana Wildlife Federation encourages the Federal Administration and Congress to maintain Incidental Take provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (Pre-December 2018) and encourages full implementation to protect this valuable resource and source of pleasure to its people.

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