

SUBJECT: ASSURING THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HABITAT OF THE ATCHAFALAYA BASIN FLOODWAY SYSTEM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS TO USE THE RESOURCES OF THE ATCHAFALAYA RIVER FOR COASTAL RESTORATION

WHEREAS, the 600,000 acre Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System (Atchafalaya/Basin) is recognized as a world class ecosystem, comprising the largest river basin swamp in North America, and

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya is cherished by tens of thousands of Louisianans who enjoy the Basin's abundant natural resources and scenic beauty through a diversity of activities like fishing, paddling, hunting, birding, boating, camping and sight-seeing, and the residents of the Atchafalaya who represent the rich, natural resources-based culture that the Basin has nurtured for generations, and

WHEREAS, the health of the Basin's habitat depends on the rise and fall of the Atchafalaya River and the volume and quality of its water, and

WHEREAS, one of Louisiana's greatest natural resource conservation battles of the last century occurred over channelization of the Atchafalaya River for navigation which would have threatened the integrity of the Basin's aquatic ecosystem, and

WHEREAS, due to the involvement and advocacy of thousands of conservationists a compromise was struck to preserve the natural resource benefits of the Atchafalaya Basin for future generations, and

WHEREAS, government and commercial activity in the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway have altered natural water flow patterns through much of the landscape, and the combined effects of the Floodway and commercial activity therein has produced a negative impact on the health of the flora and fauna between the protection levees, and

WHEREAS, the Atchafalaya Basin Program (ABP) was established within the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources in 1998 to develop the state's Master Plan for the Atchafalaya Basin which was adopted by the Louisiana Legislature in 1999, and

WHEREAS, the ABP was revitalized in 2008 with stronger guidelines for projects and greater emphasis on improving and restoring water quality to the basin, and

LWF Resolution for 2010 Convention

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WHEREAS, the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 directed an “investigation and study of the maximum effective use of the water and sediment of the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers for coastal restoration purposes consistent with flood control and navigation”, and

WHEREAS, state law requires that the plans and projects of the ABP and the Atchafalaya Basin Master Plan be consistent with the state’s Master Plan for Coastal Protection and Restoration, and

WHEREAS, it is vital that any use of the water and sediment resources of the Atchafalaya River for coastal restoration and protection purposes be compatible with efforts to restore, preserve, protect and enhance the Atchafalaya Basin, its water quality and natural resources, in accordance with the goals of the Atchafalaya Basin Master Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Natural Resources is the lead State agency in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers for Atchafalaya Basin restoration efforts.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation urges the Department of Natural Resources Atchafalaya Basin Program to contribute to the study of the use of water and sediment from the Atchafalaya River for coastal restoration purposes as directed by the Water Resources Development act of 2007 and to support only plans that protect the environmental quality of the Atchafalaya Basin ecosystem.

The foregoing resolution is submitted by **Friends of the Atchafalaya** for consideration by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in convention assembled.



Charles Caillouet, President
FOA Board of Directors
January 26, 2010