



Friends of the Atchafalaya

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FOA Resolution for LWF2010 - Constitutional Amendment

February 25, 2010

The Friends of the Atchafalaya work to promote the conservation of the Atchafalaya Basin, and since the passage of Act 606 by the 2008 Legislature, we have been encouraged by the efforts of the LA Department of Natural Resources, operating through the Atchafalaya Basin Program (ABP). We feel the renewed emphasis of the Basin Program on Water Quality initiatives, the increased push toward a scientific approach to restoration projects, and the transparency of the new legislative process will significantly improve the results of the Program.

The one missing piece of an effective restoration initiative is a consistent source of funding. In 2008, the legislature offered to the voters, an opportunity to redirect severance taxes collected around the state from the use of natural resources, into local uses. The constitutional amendment that would have re-allocated these existing taxes to local use would also have provided the Atchafalaya Basin Program with a consistent source of income for much needed projects.

Unfortunately, the voters did not support the amendment, and we are still at the mercy of annual capital outlay negotiations for basic funding of ABP projects. It was widely concluded that the wording of the amendment led voters to believe that they would be approving a new tax and that they were not willing to add to the existing tax burden.

In November 2010, we may have another chance to stabilize Atchafalaya Basin Conservation efforts and to return severance taxes across the state to the local governments that need them most. In the long run, we believe that this will place funds where they should be and reduce the waste of routing local funds through State government.

For these reasons, Friends of the Atchafalaya supports the passage of the proposed constitutional amendment and urges all LWF affiliates to do the same.

Please vote for this resolution.

Charles Caillouet, President
Board of Directors
Friends of the Atchafalaya

Spread the word about the value of the Atchafalaya Basin!
For information about Basin activities, go to <http://www.atchafalaya.info>