



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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

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Resolution No. 3D, 2017

SUBJECT: IN SUPPORT OF MAINTAINING FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AND THE LOUISIANA SEA GRANT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Sea Grant College Program, established in 1966, serves 31 states (including Louisiana) and 2 territories with a network of over 300 institutions involving more than 3,000 scientists, engineers, educators, students and outreach experts that strengthen the health and stewardship of local, state and national coastal and marine resources; and

WHEREAS, the National Sea Grant College Program and the Louisiana Sea Grant Program are extremely valuable to the State of Louisiana and the nation through its many research, education, and outreach initiatives that help conserve, protect and enhance coastal communities and economies across the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the Sea Grant Law & Policy Program has been a component of the Marine Advisory Services of the Louisiana Sea Grant College Program for nearly 40 years and provides legal information and services for the many users of Louisiana's coastal lands and waters, including state and local governments, coastal businesses, and the general public; and

WHEREAS, 42 percent of the United States population lives or works in a coastal area, contributing over \$7.6 trillion annually to the national economy; and

WHEREAS, most of Louisiana's 4.6 million population live in parishes south of the I-10 / I-12 corridor, many in parishes bordering the Gulf of Mexico coast; and

WHEREAS, both the national and state Sea Grant programs are crucial to improving the health of coastal ecosystems, supporting sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, building sustainable and resilient coastal communities and economies, and developing the next generation of students in natural resource management, coastal restoration, coastal engineering, marine fisheries management, and science and technology; and

WHEREAS, the National Sea Grant College Program had an annual economic impact of \$575 million in 2015 from a federal investment of \$67.3 million, representing an 854 percent return on investment; and

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WHEREAS, since 2005, the Louisiana Sea Grant Program has supported the response and recovery of numerous coastal disaster events including 5 hurricanes, 2 floods and the nation's largest oil spill; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana Sea Grant assists the state by providing research that helps set oyster and shrimp seasons and has offered expertise to the state to aid in the development of wetlands restoration projects in Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the National Sea Grant College Program creates or sustains more than 20,000 jobs and 2,900 businesses annually across 31 states including Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the National and Sea Grant College Program and the Louisiana Sea Grant Program has supported thousands of undergraduate and graduate students at universities across the nation, including most universities across Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, National Sea Grant College Programs across the nation and in Louisiana benefit local recreational and commercial fisheries by introducing the most modern technologies and business practices in fisheries industry development; and

WHEREAS, President Trump's Fiscal Year 2018 budget summary, *America First: A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again* (released March 16, 2017) "zeros out over \$250 million in targeted NOAA grants and programs supporting coastal and marine management, research, and education including Sea Grant," which would completely eliminate funding for Sea Grant; and

WHEREAS, President Trump is also proposing to cut the National Sea Grant College Program by \$30 million for Fiscal Year 2017, which would eliminate remaining funds for the program.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National and Louisiana Sea Grant Programs represent an exceptional example of effective partnerships between federal, state and local governments and with conservation- and natural resource-focused non-government organizations for the past 50 years.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation expresses full support of the National Sea Grant College Program and the Louisiana Sea Grant Program due to its clear and vital importance to improving the economy; advancing the science of coastal restoration, coastal resiliency and adaptation; and improving hurricane preparedness, disaster response, and disaster recovery in all 31 states it serves, especially in the State of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation strongly opposes any action that would eliminate or reduce funding for the National Sea Grant College Program from the U.S. Department of Commerce - NOAA budget and, by default, eliminate or reduce any federal, state or local funding supporting the Louisiana Sea Grant Program.

Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation Board of Directors at a meeting on April 29, 2017 in Lafayette, La.