

Resolutions Adopted by the Delegates to the 2009 Annual Convention  
of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation

**SUBJECT: NEIGHBORHOOD FISHING PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, participation in recreational fishing and recruitment of young people into the sport is declining in Louisiana, and

WHEREAS, many people start out fishing as kids, in places that they can travel to and access on their own, and

WHEREAS, many people in Louisiana do not own a boat and therefore must fish from the bank, and

WHEREAS, such fishing opportunities in urban areas are often lacking, and

WHEREAS, creating and enhancing close-to-home, easily accessible fishing opportunities will encourage recruitment of new anglers and reengagement of former anglers in the sport, and

WHEREAS, sustaining and increasing the population of anglers in Louisiana will promote conservation of aquatic resources and support for their management.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to develop a Neighborhood Fishing Program, based on a formal, written implementation plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF urges the LDWF to consider the following in developing the Neighborhood Fishing Program: establishment of criteria for inclusion of a body of water in the program; listing and evaluation of sites such as city park lakes or borrow pits in or near urban areas statewide; obtaining permission from willing landowners and agencies such as DOTD, levee boards, etc. as required; developing and implementing intensive management plans to include liming, fertilizing, feeding and stocking of easily managed species such as channel catfish, hybrid bream, etc.; and providing site amenities such as lighting, fishing piers, fish attractors, trash receptacles, etc.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF urges the LDWF to act as the lead agency in this effort and identify partner agencies, local governments, organizations, or other potential sources of funding, labor, and services.

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**SUBJECT: MAINTAINENCE OF PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF  
“BIG CATS” IN LOUISIANA**

WHEREAS, over the years there have been numerous reports of sightings of “big cats,” that is, cougars/mountain lions/panthers, in Louisiana, and

WHEREAS, most of these sightings are not corroborated with physical evidence, and

WHEREAS, in recent years two sightings corroborated with physical evidence have been reported, i.e. scat at Lake Fausse Point in 2002 and a corpse in Bossier City in 2008, and

WHEREAS, the number of “big cats” in Louisiana or passing through Louisiana at any given time is unknown, and

WHEREAS, the genetic composition of big cats in Louisiana, specifically whether of “Texas cougar affinity” or of “Florida panther affinity” or some separate affinity, is unknown, and

WHEREAS, the future collection of physical evidence of “big cats” is likely, and

WHEREAS, comparative and statistical analysis of genetic evidence from collected physical evidence of “big cats” would help to determine answers to the population and affinity questions.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges that the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), possibly in conjunction with academic institutions, maintain and genetically analyze samples of all physical evidence of “big cats” collected in Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the LWF requests that the LDWF continue to make the results of these ongoing genetic analyses and statistical studies available to the public so as to enhance the public’s awareness of the status of “big cats” in Louisiana.

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**SUBJECT: REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGES ON WILDLIFE  
MANAGEMENT AREAS**

WHEREAS, Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), like state parks and other natural and cultural attractions encourage Louisiana residents and out-of state visitors to recreate and spend money in Louisiana, and

WHEREAS, there are bridges on several WMAs which have been found to be structurally insufficient for safe utilization by highway vehicles, and

WHEREAS, bridges have been closed on Big Lake, Loggy Bayou, Red River and Russell Sage WMAs and possibly others, and

WHEREAS, the closure of these bridges greatly restricts user access to the WMAs and discourages their use.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges that the closed bridges on Wildlife Management Areas be restored to safe condition and reopened to the public, that the Legislature provide funding for such repair and replacement work and that the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development make restoration of these bridges a priority in its budget.

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**SUBJECT: DESIGNATED NON-MOTORIZED-ONLY AREAS IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS (WMAs)**

WHEREAS, the cohort of hunters is becoming older and less physically capable and

WHEREAS, the rules governing the management of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) have accommodated the aging hunters' desires for more motorized access by creating more All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) trails, by designating persons "greater than age 60" as eligible to ride ATVs on "handicapped-only trails" and by allowing ATV access to retrieve downed big game, and

WHEREAS, this increased motorized access has put at a disadvantage those who do not own an ATV and the equipment to transport one to the trailhead, and

WHEREAS, this motorized mode of hunting is expensive, and

WHEREAS, the advantage given to motorized access and the obvious expense to compete may discourage recruitment of new hunters, particularly those who are recently emancipated, who, as a cohort, generally are less financially capable of acquiring ATVs and the vehicles required to transport them, and

WHEREAS, the future of hunting as a sport and the establishment and maintenance of WMAs as semi-wild places requires the recruitment and support of new and younger hunters, and

WHEREAS, to recruit younger hunters it may be advantageous to provide opportunities on WMAs commensurate with their physical and financial capabilities, and

WHEREAS, establishing "Walk-in Areas" on WMAs where the development of outdoor skills and the application of them by navigating and hiking "deep" into the woods will result in a sense of accomplishment and solitude that originally attracted most of the now aging cohort to the sport of hunting will provide such opportunities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries (LDWF) and the Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries Commission (LWFC) to consider and determine the feasibility of establishing "Walk-in Areas"

on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs); such areas to comprise 10 - 20% of each area where no off road motorized access is allowed and where nearby ATV trails (including handicapped-only) offer no advantage to the ATV rider over the hunter arriving by highway vehicle, that is, so that there is no motorized advantage to an ATV rider.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no funds be spent to maintain or develop trails in these areas.

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**SUBJECT: STUDY AND MONITORING OF BORROW AREAS IN COASTAL RESTORATION PROGRAMS**

WHEREAS, an increasing number of restoration projects in coastal Louisiana involve creation of marsh using material obtained from a “borrow” site, and

WHEREAS, it is important that the overall impact of wetland restoration projects is beneficial and that the most beneficial projects are give priority for funding and implementation, and

WHEREAS, the “Wetland Value Assessment” used to evaluate and prioritize restoration projects for funding and implementation, and to monitor the efficacy of projects, assesses only the area where wetland creation occurs, or loss prevented, and

WHEREAS, the creation/use of borrow sites may have adverse as well as beneficial impacts to fish and wildlife habitat, yet the borrow sites for the material used to create marsh for a wetland restoration/creation project are not assessed for positive or negative impacts and incorporated into the wetland value assessment for a restoration project, and

WHEREAS, it is conceivable that what would otherwise be a beneficial wetland creation project would not produce an overall net benefit in habitat units or would have a reduced Wetland Value Assessment ranking if the impacts of the removal/use of borrow material were included in the assessment of the project benefits, and

WHEREAS, adverse impacts to fish and wildlife habitat due to the creation/use of borrow sites for wetland restoration projects should be avoided.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of the state of Louisiana and the Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection & Restoration Act Task Force to include the assessment of ecosystem impacts due to the creation/use of borrow sites for proposed wetland/marsh restoration projects in the Wetland Value Assessment used to prioritize and fund implementation of each wetland restoration project that requires the use of borrow material.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that LWF urges that the borrow site assessment proposed herein be applied to other coastal protection and restoration projects such as those implemented through LCA, CIAP, State Surplus Funds, etc.

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**SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF COASTAL RESTORATION PROJECTS THAT INCORPORATE ORGANISM INGRESS/EGRESS FEATURES**

WHEREAS, coastal protection and restoration projects that create barriers that may alter hydrology and otherwise interrupt free access of organisms to and from waters and wetlands are usually designed with features that provide for some degree of ingress/egress via gaps and structures, and

WHEREAS, proposed coastal restoration projects are evaluated for funding and priority based, among other considerations, on a determination of “Average Annual Habitat Units” the project is projected to yield, and

WHEREAS, projects which have only a single-source entry/exit point are often given a higher rating under the analyses protocol than projects designed with multiple openings for organism ingress/egress, yet provision of more openings may yield greater capacity for organism ingress/egress that is more consistent with natural habitat conditions, and

WHEREAS, within limitations posed by available funding and public safety considerations, it is important for coastal restoration projects to maximize benefits to fish and wildlife and their habitats.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection & Restoration Act Task Force to review the application of the assessment of “Average Annual Habitat Units” (AAHU) to restoration projects that include gaps/structures for organism ingress/egress with the intent of revising, as warranted, the allocation of AAHUs based on overall beneficial (compared to natural conditions) ingress/egress provided by the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF urges that the review and revision proposed herein be applied to other coastal protection and restoration projects such as those implemented through LCA, CIAP, State Surplus Funds, etc.

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**SUBJECT: PROTECTING WOODED CHENIERS, BARRIER HEADLANDS AND RIDGES IN LOUISIANA’S COASTAL ZONE**

WHEREAS, coastal Louisiana contains cheniers, barrier headlands and ridges that are or have been covered in woody vegetation, and

WHEREAS, these wooded areas provide storm protection as evidenced during the approach, landfall and passage of both Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, and

WHEREAS, these wooded cheniers, headlands and ridges provide nesting habitat for herons, egrets, roseate spoonbills, ibis and other wading bird species, and

WHEREAS, these coastal woodlands are also important as resting and refueling sites during trans-Gulf avian migration, and

WHEREAS, during high water events coastal woodlands provide refuge for wildlife and livestock, and

WHEREAS, many coastal woodlands, ridges and barrier headlands are at risk to sand mining and the removal of woody vegetation which would diminish their storm buffering capacity and degrade the quality of protection and habitat they provide to birds and other animals.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges the state of Louisiana to protect and restore coastal barrier headlands, ridges and cheniers and establish/reestablish, via plantings and habitat management, the presence of woody species of plants appropriate to the sites.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that LWF urges the state of Louisiana to preserve the habitat quality and storm buffering capacity of coastal cheniers through acquisition, easement and regulation, including prohibition of sand mining, land clearing and other significant alterations to chenier integrity.

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**SUBJECT: CONTROL OF FERAL HOGS**

WHEREAS, hunting is a sport pursued and enjoyed by many Louisianans and provides significant revenue for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), both through the sale of hunting licenses and the federal excise taxes on arms and ammunition returned to the state through the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (Pitman-Robertson)Program, and

WHEREAS, hunting has a significant positive impact on the State's economy through the leasing of hunting lands and the sale of firearms and ammunition, vehicles, and a great quantity and variety of hunting gear used in the sport, and

WHEREAS, hunting opportunity in Louisiana keeps many hunters engaged and is vital to recruitment of new hunters, and

WHEREAS, the recruitment of new hunters is vital to both LDWF and the future of hunting, and

WHEREAS, the LDWF expends considerable resources in managing the state's white-tailed deer herds and in responding to any threats to the health of the whitetail population, as it should given the importance of this resource, and

WHEREAS, the presence and increasing populations of feral hogs (*Sus scrofa*) on many LDWF Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and other privately-owned and public lands in the state represents a significant threat to the state's native white-tailed deer herds since hogs eat many foods that deer depend on, and

WHEREAS, the capacity of feral hogs to reproduce far exceeds the reproductive capacity of deer; free-ranging hogs can quickly overwhelm the capacity of the habitat to produce forage for deer and other wildlife, and

WHEREAS, efforts to control or eliminate feral hog populations have been ineffective thus far due to restrictions on methods of take and the times and length of the season during which feral hogs may be taken, such as not allowing nighttime hunting during open seasons and restrictions on the methods used to kill or capture feral hogs on LDWF WMAs, lack of state laws and regulations prohibiting the release of domestic hogs and the release of captured hogs onto public or private lands, and lack of a bounty or any incentives to encourage landowners and the public to take feral hogs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) urges the Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries Commission (LWFC) to act swiftly and decisively to lift or ease current restrictions on taking feral hogs to the maximum extent possible or practical on both public and private lands.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF urges that the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries (LDWF) establish a working group composed of LDWF deer biologists, enforcement staff, deer hunters, agriculture and livestock interests, private landowners, and managers of federal public lands to study the problem caused by the proliferation of feral hogs in the state and make recommendations to the LWFC and the Louisiana Legislature for controlling or eliminating feral hog populations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF supports legislation necessary to regulate the introduction of hogs to public lands in the state.

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**SUBJECT: CAMINADA HEADLANDS STATE SEASHORE**

WHEREAS, the approximately 12 miles of beachfront between Caminada Pass near Grand Isle and Belle Pass near Fourchon on the central Louisiana coast is of great recreational value and has traditionally been a Mecca for land-bound recreational anglers, crabbers, birdwatchers, campers and beachcombers, but in recent years and for various reasons, public access to and use of these state-owned beaches has been diminished or denied, and

WHEREAS, understanding the recreational value of the Caminada Headlands, the Louisiana Office of State Parks included a concept for development of a state park/state seashore in its "Louisiana State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012" that included public access and various user amenities at and between Elmer's Island and the Fourchon Beach, and

WHEREAS, the acceleration of coastal erosion and the impact of tropical storms on the Caminada Headlands, along with state and federal restrictions on development activities, renders most construction and traditional park developments unwise and infeasible, but does not diminish the importance of the ecosystem and its value to the public for appropriate recreational uses, and

WHEREAS, on August 13, 2008 Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal announced the largest investment in coastal protection programs in Louisiana history, including the \$71 million Caminada Headlands/Barataria Basin Shoreline Restoration (Caminada Headlands) Project, and

WHEREAS, the Caminada Headlands Project encompasses the Caminada to Belle Pass beachfront and includes the area known as “Elmer’s Island,” a historically popular coastal recreation area on the eastern reach of the project area, and the vaunted Fourchon Beach, another historically popular public fishing and recreation area on the western reach of the Project, and

WHEREAS, the Caminada Headlands Project includes the acquisition and restoration of Elmer's Island and its management for public enjoyment, including for fishing and other recreational uses; an objective long advocated by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation and other conservation organizations, and

WHEREAS, the state will have to obtain permission or otherwise acquire the right to access and use private property for the implementation of the Caminada Headlands Project, and

WHEREAS, to advance the concept of creating a “state seashore” between Caminada and Belle Passes it would be appropriate for the state to seek sufficient land rights from private landowners, when negotiating rights to construct and maintain the coastal restoration and protection features of the Caminada Headlands Project, to eventually establish a “Caminada Headlands State Seashore.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) does hereby express appreciation to Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal for his historic investment in Louisiana coastal restoration as announced on August 13, 2008.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF supports the concept of creating a “Louisiana State Seashore” along the Caminada Headlands, from Elmer’s Island and Caminada Pass on the east to Belle Pass and the Fourchon on the west, to be managed for fish and wildlife conservation and public uses compatible with coastal conservation, restoration, and protection.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF urges the State of Louisiana to incorporate the creation of a “Louisiana State Seashore Recreation Area” into the current plans for restoration of the Caminada Headlands and to pursue negotiation of land rights necessary to achieve this goal.