

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

P R O C E E D I N G S

BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, March 27, 1973

10:00 o'clock a.m.

JERRY G. JONES, Chairman

Wild Life and Fisheries
Building
400 Royal Street
New Orleans, Louisiana



Helen R. Dietrich, Inc.
Stenotypists

333 ST. CHARLES AVENUE, SUITE 1221
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P R O C E E D I N G S

. . . The regular monthly Board meeting of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission convened at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on Tuesday, March 27, 1973, at the Wild Life and Fisheries Building, 400 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, Chairman Jerry G. Jones presiding.

PRESENT WERE:

- J. G. JONES, Chairman
- L. J. AUTIN, Vice-Chairman
- J. B. ANGELLE, Director
- D. G. BERRY
- M. DUPUY, JR.
- H. C. LUTTRELL
- J. THOMPSON

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A G E N D A

- 1. Approval of minutes of January 23 and February 27, 1973. (4)

LYLE ST. AMANT

- 2. Request for a permit for dredging of fill material from the Mississippi River, Mile 246 to Mile 254 AHP, and Profit (44)



Island Chute by Marshland Dredging
Company, Inc.

3. Renewal of permit to dredge fill material from (45)
the Mississippi River between Belle Point
Lt., Mile 142.2 AHP, Garyville, Louisiana,
Atlas Construction Company, Inc. and
Jahncke Service, Inc.

RICHARD K. YANCEY

4. Endangered species legislation. (53)
5. Advance contribution to Ducks, Unlimited, (50)
\$50,000.
6. Proposed changes in waterfowl hunting regula- (47)
tions.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Discussion of oyster season. (4;
21)
- Discussion of air boat regulation. (5)
- Offer of alligators to Audubon Society. (62)
- Congressional resolution re United States (65)
fishing industry.

ADJOURNMENT (71)



CHAIRMAN JONES: The meeting will come to order. The first item of business is the approval of the minutes of the meeting of January 23 and of February 27, 1973. What is your pleasure?

MR. BERRY: So move.

MR. AUTIN: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Autin. Is there any discussion? Any objection? Hearing none, so ordered.

We will go off the agenda a minute. I think we have some people here from the oyster industry that want to be heard. Why don't you come to the microphone and state your name and who represent and we will hear you at this time.

MR. PETER VUJNOVICH: My name is Peter Vujnovich. I represent the Louisiana Oyster Dealers and Growers Association and I am here to ask the Board that, if it is possible, that they can close the season April 15 because the seed oysters are getting less and less and if they leave it open all the way to May 20, it will hurt the industry as a whole for the coming year. Thank you.



THE CHAIRMAN: Does anybody have any questions? Is there anyone else that wants to be heard?

DR. ROY DUGAS: My name is Dr. Roy Dugas from the Terrebonne Parish Police Jury. Gentlemen, approximately three weeks ago we had a district police jury meeting in Franklin --

THE CHAIRMAN: Excuse me. Does this concern the oysters?

DR. DUGAS: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: O.K., let's finish that. I am sorry I didn't make myself clear, Doctor. We will be right with you. Harry?

MR. SCHAFER: There are some people who are doing business in my office right now but they were opposed and do want to talk on this subject. I will go and get them.

THE CHAIRMAN: O.K., we will take up something else on the agenda while you are doing that. I am sorry, Doctor. Go ahead now.

DR. DUGAS: As I was saying, we had a police jury convention in Franklin, Louisiana, and while I was there -- Franklin is my hometown -- I



visited with some of my deer-hunting friends and they expressed some concern to me regarding air boats. That was three weeks ago and I got involved, kind of investigating the use of air boats in Louisiana. It seems around Franklin we have a lot of trouble. The air boats are being used for illegal purposes. They can run a deer down very easily with an air boat. He has absolutely no chance. There are some reports that they use the air boats to illegally gather nutria. In other words, they run around in a circle and the nutria kind of pile up in the marsh and they can shoot them with .22 rifles, which is not illegal, but I understand it is illegal to shoot out of air boats.

At any rate, I have had reports of other problems, along with duck hunting and fishing. They can string a gill net or a trammel net out in the lake and run around and around in circles and catch a lot of fish that scoot out from the side of the wake of these air boats. Gentlemen, this is a real problem for us. First, I am concerned, because they are going across marshes that they are trespassing on. We have several large land companies



that are concerned with the use of these air boats also. Now in October of 1972 Plaquemines Parish passed an ordinance. They realized that this was quite a problem. I think probably most of the members of the Wild Life and Fisheries have probably seen this ordinance, at least some of them.

To me it is a very effective ordinance. I don't know whether it will stand a court case. I intend to present this ordinance tomorrow night to the Terrebonne Parish Police Jury, and I think we will pass it unanimously. There will be problems but I would like to call on the Wild Life and Fisheries Department to vigorously enforce the use of these air boats. I think with two and three game agents in a parish, when they sell 15 or 20 of these air boats. Recently they opened an agency in Terrebonne. I was afraid that this would happen. When they sell 15 or 20 of these air boats, the game wardens will have absolutely no chance to catch the people that are using them illegally. I am not saying that everybody uses them illegally. There is, of course, some legal use for them in the marshes, such as engineering surveys and things of



that nature, things that are concerned with oil company work, but there are certainly lots of possibilities of illegal use of air boats. I think that this Commission should really look into this particular thing and vigorously enforce laws and they ought to call on the legislature to pass some reasonable laws with reasonable fines for people who violate laws concerning the use of these air boats.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not familiar with the ordinance. What does it do, the one in Plaquemines Parish?

DR. DUGAS: Well, I can briefly go over it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just briefly tell us what it does.

DR. DUGAS: Well, of course, they have thought of everything. Chalin, I suppose, is the one who did this thing. I haven't got to talk to him. I asked Miss LaFrance if I could present it and she said she thought it would be all right. At any rate, he goes into several aspects. The first thing is noise pollution. They are very



noisy. I have a cousin that has a camp on the Intracoastal where the Franklin Canal comes into it and he tells me he has quit going out to his camp at night because of the air boats running in front of it. Those things can really make noise, just like a big airplane passing next to you. So, they have something on noise pollution.

They have a method of licensing the air boats in the parish. They have methods of giving tests to the people who drive the air boats. As you know, these things can be quite dangerous and each operator of an air boat has to have his license with him. They have also required that they put one-foot letters. In other words, each air boat is assigned numerals, on both sides of the tail of the air boat, and across the deck, so they can be seen by air, in luminous type paint.

They also have kind of strengthened the state laws on use on lands other than their own. They have to almost have a permit to be on a piece of land. Let's see if I can remember the rest of this thing.

THE CHAIRMAN: Don't get me wrong,



Doctor; there is probably some abuse of it. You know, one thing that concerns me is sort of like when you get into regulation of guns. You wind up doing more harm than you do good. I think if possibly we could pick out those things that are already against the law, and I think most of the things that concern people, there are laws to protect that situation now. For example, shooting out of the boats is against the law, isn't it?

DR. DUGAS: Well, I think that's true, but the problem is, how many air boats does the Wild Life and Fisheries have? How many game wardens do you have? How will you enforce these laws when they sell 25 air boats in Terrebonne Parish and 15 of them to outlaws, which is going to happen.

MR. YANCEY: We have a legislative act that prohibits the use of air boats on that part of Catahoula Lake that lies in LaSalle Parish, and our Wild Life agents enforce that provision, but the parish ordinances are enforced by the sheriffs' offices in the parishes where these ordinances are enacted, and the provisions of this particular ordinance that Plaquemines Parish adopted were



modeled after the Florida air boat law. I think if anything that is enacted that would involve our agents, it would have to go through the legislature, rather than a parish ordinance. As the Doctor has pointed out, there are some serious problems with air boats.

It parallels the snowmobile problem that they have in the North, where you can use this type for transportation to engage in hot pursuit of wild life in the areas where you have a lot of water and so forth, but there are some problems developing and I think in response to that you are seeing ordinances adopted, such as Plaquemines Parish adopted and apparently now Terrebonne is going for the same thing. I think we would need a ruling from our attorney before we could begin having our Wild Life agents enforce these parish ordinances as they pertain to licensing operators and so forth. Now if the air boat is being used to shoot ducks out of or something like that, then certainly we could take action.

DR. DUGAS: I agree 100 percent. Like I said at one time, I didn't really know whether we



could enforce these laws. I intend to send a copy of the ordinance to Billy Guste and see if there are any areas that we will falter in, but I really believe that the Wild Life and Fisheries should take a real firm stand on this particular issue, because it is something -- for instance, I have representatives of Louisiana Land, LaTerre Corporation and Continental Land and Mr. Butley Marler, who owns a considerable amount of real estate in Terrebonne Parish. They are all fearful of these air boats and these land companies realize that if the Wild Life agents don't enforce the use of air boats, it will probably cost them money to try to keep people off of their land, and it is going to get to be a considerable thing, I can guarantee you that.

MR. LUTTRELL: Jerry, I would like to ask the gentleman a question. In my area, the poachers are using outboards because it is very hard to get back into the ridges and back in the land around the bayous and so forth and they go by water. Now if you are thinking of something to stop poachers from using the air boat, can you think of some legislation that could be used to stop people from



using outboards? The Wild Life has the same problem in catching a poacher that has a fast outboard or, in our case, in the small bayous, small ones, you see. So, if you plug your air boat people, you need to plug the outboard motors, too.

Then we come back to this vehicle that travels through any kind of a marsh, with wheels; I don't know what it is. But unless you own enough of those to follow behind these people, you have a problem. I believe Jerry has the correct answer. You sometimes do more harm in regulating than you do good.

THE CHAIRMAN: There are probably two things really we could assist in. No. 1 is to have our people look into the possibility of offering some type of legislation. No. 2 is to make a determination what we can do regarding enforcement of the ordinances that are being adopted. I think that is probably what would interest you most of all.

MR. DUPUY: With regard to the latter, the sheriff is the enforcing agent of the parish ordinance. What kind of cooperation has the Plaquemines Parish police jury gotten out of the sheriff?



DR. DUGAS: Well, they had one air boat agency which has been since closed down, since the ordinance has been enacted, so I expect that they had some success with it. I tried to call Chalin to see if he had had any court cases, but I haven't been able to reach him. I intend to do that. Of course, maybe what goes in Plaquemines may not go in the rest of the country, as far as that goes.

MR. DUPUY: It may not apply in the rest of the state.

DR. DUGAS: I would have a suggestion. It may be a bit drastic and I inferred it to Butley Marler. I think possibly two game agents in a parish with the land mass that Terrebonne has is absolutely inadequate. You can't expect them to watch that much land. I would like to see for one the Wild Life and Fisheries have a special team or special force, something like maybe Colonel Gravenberg had in his time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, one of the things we have to make clear, too, is that we are charged with enforcing only the game laws. We can't get in the business of enforcing the trespass laws.



DR. DUGAS: Well, this would be game laws, I can guarantee you, because when the alligator season comes up, I think we are going to lose a few of our alligators that we have in the marsh. That is a favorite thing to hunt with air boats. Deer, rabbit, anything else that might live in those marshes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Allan had something he wanted to say.

MR. ENSMINGER: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make one comment here. Of course, I live in Plaquemines, but I am not going to get into that cooperation down there, but we do cooperate. The air boat, as you are all aware, was designed and developed and perfected in the Everglades of Florida and, of course, the Everglades, by and large, are publicly owned areas. They have massive areas in South Florida that are public lands, open to use by the public, and this is, of course, where the air boat was developed. It is just in the last 12 or 14 years that air boats have moved into Louisiana. Our Commission owns about 10 or 12 of the boats that we have bought over the years. Before we purchased



the boats and used them along the marsh country down there, there were only a few home-made boats that were used by oil companies and then the boats on Catahoula Lake that had been used up there for 30 or 40 years.

The air boat industry in Louisiana is a brand new industry and it is a very, very hard thing to control. As the Doctor has said here, these people have much more mobility than an agent in a pirogue or an outboard and what-have-you, and it does create a serious problem, but again you get into the area of enforcing individual owners trespass problems. Miami Corporation, for instance, in Cameron Parish, incorporates in their duck leases a prohibition against the use of air boats on their land. The Miami Corporation over where Butley Marler works has done the same thing. LaTerre and Continental have done the same thing on their areas, so actually this problem of air boats has been recognized and it is something that is going to have to be faced up to. I think probably our Commission should sponsor and support regulations on air boats in this next session of the legislature.



The one coming up is a fiscal session, but during the next regular session I think it would really be wise for the Commission to work with these people and come up with a workable air boat legislation that we could all live with.

MR. ANGELLE: Allan, do you know of any other states that have adopted some of these regulations?

MR. ENSMINGER: Well, Florida by statute several years ago developed these things, and the one that Plaquemines Parish used, Mr. Angelle, is almost word for word the Florida law. They adopted the resolution out of that. The one difference is that Plaquemines did not include the navigable waters because they do not have jurisdiction over the navigable water areas in their parish, so actually the only place in Plaquemines that a man can operate an air boat without getting a parish license and operator's license is in public water areas like the river or in their natural bayous, but this is a very minor thing, and most people that hunt ducks don't hunt them in the river. In effect it eliminated air boats in Plaquemines except on



privately owned lands. Of course, the boat is a very useful item to a landowner if he uses it on his own land and, of course, should be entitled to do this.

DR. DUGAS: That is about all I have to say. Butley, do you have any reflections on this, or somebody from the land companies?

MR. BUTLEY MARLER: Gentlemen, I don't think I have to introduce myself to some members here. I see Mr. Autin already laughing, but I think there are two new members and a new director. My name is Butley Marler and I have been before this board quite often.

I heard a statement made a while ago about the State of Florida using a lot of air boats in the Everglades. Of course, we pick newspapers up and we read about the Everglades, a haven for wild life. Gentlemen, my second love to the State of Louisiana is the State of Florida. I love it so much I have invested money in real estate in the State of Florida. I have been in the Everglades I would say riding air boats for approximately 50 to 75 hours. We have more wild life in Terrebonne



Parish than they have in all of the Everglades, and we want to protect what we have in Terrebonne. The only thing we are asking you people is not to enforce the laws that the police jury is going to pass but we want you to back us up on what we are doing. We want to conserve for our grandchildren what we have.

I am sure that the representatives of Louisiana Land, LaTerre, that are here feel the same way. I think they are some of the largest landowners, as far as marsh is concerned, in the State of Louisiana, and I happen to know -- they may not like this when I say this -- I feel the same way as they do. In their leases for campsites, when a lease is signed, I don't think they include it, but I just want to show you how the landowner is cooperating with you. They tell every person who takes a campsite or a hunting site lease, "We give you this lease for one year, renewable every year, but if you are convicted of any conservation laws, automatically you lose your lease."

Gentlemen, you can't find better cooperation than the big landowners to you than that. So,



all we are asking, and I am sure that they will get up here and say the same thing, all we are asking you is for you to back us up when we say we want to conserve our wildlife in Terrebonne. We hope that some of the other parishes throughout South and Southwest Louisiana will follow us.

By the way, gentlemen, I want to thank you for the wonderful move you took on the nutria season, the trapping season this year. I think that you did a favor for the fur buyer, you did a favor for the dealer, you did a favor for the landowner, and you did a favor for the trapper. I want to tell you that the price of fur now is higher than it has ever been in the history of the fur industry.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Butley.

MR. DUPUY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest that we ask our legal counsel to work with the counsel either for the parish police juries or the parish sheriffs organizations and, of course, with maybe the Attorney General to see what we can do to help the enforcement of an airboat regulation with regard to wild life, insofar as it applies



within our jurisdiction.

THE CHAIRMAN: O.K., do I hear any objection to that? If not, Peter, will you work on that?

Let's get back to the oysters. We had one gentleman who asked that the Commission close the season April 15. Now are there any other persons that want to be heard about that? I think there were some people who were not in the room at the time. Have they come in? Yes, sir, would you come to the microphone and state your name and who you represent?

MR. KENNETH FOX: Gentlemen, I am Kenneth Fox. I am from the east side of the Mississippi River, down in Plaquemines Parish. A group of us came in today to oppose this because in our area right now we have a fresh water system introduced in there which is running and our leases are shut down because of this and we have no other place to work right now but the state reefs, and we are asking the Commission to hold up on this for this year until we can come up with a solution that will help the people on the east side of the river to continue on working during this period of time that



they are asking for it to be closed.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is the daily take of oysters that we are talking about?

MR. FOX: I am the harbormaster at the Pointe a la Hache boat harbor down there and right now we are running between 2,500 and 3,000 sacks of oysters coming over our conveyor every night.

THE CHAIRMAN: And to the fishermen, that is roughly how much a sack?

MR. FOX: Roughly right now our prices are bringing \$5 a sack on that dock and our oysters are very, very good. They are yielding approximately a gallon to the sack. They are the best I have ever seen and I think they can all vouch for that. We have dealers here that can vouch for that, that the oysters coming through our area right now are the best they have ever been.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anybody have any questions? Is there anyone else who wants to be heard? Gentlemen, what is your pleasure?

MR. THOMPSON: I think we need somebody to give us some more information.

THE CHAIRMAN: Lyle, we have a question



for you. Can we do that or does the legislature do that?

DR. ST. AMANT: I think this probably should be directed to our legal section, but we have in the past been able to shorten seasons and close them down, provided we had technical evidence that there was a definite threat to the industry or to the production of the particular species that we were interested in. Other than that, we do not have the power to close it down. If you were to attempt to do this, to be absolutely legal I suspect we would have to make a study to determine whether or not there was a problem out there and what have you.

THE CHAIRMAN: What recommendation would you have for us in this matter?

MR. THOMPSON: Doctor, let me ask you another question in lieu of Jerry's. You definitely will have to have the information that there is a problem before you could recommend for us to close it and if there is not, to recommend for us to open it, and I am anticipating that this would take a little bit of time. This is not something that



can be done rather quickly.

DR. ST. AMANT: It would take some time to check it.

MR. THOMPSON: In other words, what I am saying to you is this, I am getting you off the spot; in other words, by the time that you take the survey and find out, it's too late; the season will be closed.

DR. ST. AMANT: Well, I suspect this would be to a large extent true. However, we do have about 60 days left in the season, not quite that much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Doctor, what I am getting at, there is no really compelling biological reason for us to close it, is there?

DR. ST. AMANT: I don't think so.

MR. V U J N O V I C H: Mr. Kenneth Fox is a good friend of mine. He stated that they have about 2,500 to 3,000 sacks of oysters coming in every evening. If the Board cannot take any action of closing the season earlier, due that 90 percent of the people want it and asked me to come up here, I will ask Dr. St. Amant and Mr. Schafer to have



his agents out tomorrow and enforce the three-inch law and we will see how many sacks of oysters are going to be coming in. That's all I ask. If I can't have one, I will ask the other, and I believe I am within my rights. Is there any question to that?

MR. NOLAN VINET: You all don't know me. Maybe you all knew my brother. Nolan Vinet. I would say about two months ago, two and a half months ago, I had a Wild Life and Fisheries man on my boat every day in Black Bay. They told me, they said, "What are you doing with your oysters now?" I said, "I am planting." They said, "We want you to know that the minute they will have one steam factory open, that even if we have to use the force from the office to stop the boat from hauling to the factory, we are going to do it."

The factory did open, Slidell, Biloxi and everywhere else. We didn't pack no oysters in the Vinet factory from the reef, but this is one man that saw a lot of Biloxi boats and every other boat go to the factory, they say that if they go to the factory, it is going to have to be three-



inch oysters. There ain't no such thing. Maybe once in a while you have a three-inch oyster, because my son-in-law was picking the three-inch oyster to sell by sack in the one that we were taking to plant at Grand Lake, and he was getting from 14 sacks to 20 sacks a load, and we were staying three and four days to make the load to bring to Grand Lake to plant. Since then they have been hauling.

Now we had one conservation boat at Petit Pass, boys from Mississippi. They come and they boarded my boat to check me, and I say, what those boat is doing here. Those boat, he said, is steaming. I said, "Those Biloxi boats with open hold and all, they is steaming?" He say, "Yes." He say, "All the factory is open." I said, "I thought they had a law on that."

Two days after my fuel line broke; I was going to Slidell with 70 barrels of oysters. He stopped me in the Rigolets. He was watching the boat that was coming out of Lake Pontchartrain and he stopped me, the same fellow. He said, "Where you going?" I said, "I am going to get some fuel



and I am going to sell those oysters."

He said, "You are going to sell those oysters?" I said, "You told me that everybody else is doing it." "Well," he said, "if you do sell it, tell them that you didn't see me." That's the law?

And I will say like Pete, if you want to sell some three-inch oysters out of Black Bay, you ain't going to get 2,500; you ain't going to get 3,000; you ain't going to get 200. So where is the law? I think they ought to be closed

MR. VUJNOVICH: While we are on the subject, I am a dealer also, and the public is getting gyped. I hate to say this, but this trash is going on trailers to Alabama, Mississippi and parts of Florida. Gentlemen, I am not fighting for myself, because tomorrow I could give up the oyster business. I am a hard-working man. I have been in the industry since I was 13 years old. I am fighting because I have three sons and I am fighting for the public and for the people, and it would be a shame and a disgrace to see our oysters completely destroyed. That is what it is coming to if we do not take some



legal action. We need it bad, very, very bad. We have representatives from Lafourche Parish, from Plaquemines Parish, all around, that I have been talking to in the last couple of weeks, and I could have brought this room here three times full of people that are strictly asking that the season be closed and that the laws be enforced. That is all we ask.

MR. VINET: They say that Dick Guidry, our representative, why he don't do nothing for the people in Lafourche Parish, and how can Dick Guidry do something for the people when you can't get the Frenchmen together or the Slavonia people together and try to make the oyster that we are going to be able to sell next year. I think that a man that start the first of September and go to the first of April and ain't got that season made, he ain't going to make no season in another 30 or 40 days.

MR. THOMPSON: Jerry, let me ask a question. These oysters, I presume and I think I am right, are all east of the Mississippi River, correct?

MR. VINET: That is correct.



MR. THOMPSON: What is the stage of the river this morning?

DR. ST. AMANT: 17.5.

MR. THOMPSON: Bonnet Carre Spillway will be open at what stage?

DR. ST. AMANT: 20, 19.5 or 20.

MR. THOMPSON: It is possible within a few days it could be opened?

FROM THE FLOOR: The law says it has got to be opened.

MR. THOMPSON: The forecast says it is going to get up there?

DR. ST. AMANT: I don't know about that.

MR. THOMPSON: Would this stop all activity?

FROM THE FLOOR: Somebody said it was going to lack about five inches.

MR. THOMPSON: What I am saying, Jerry, I am trying to get everybody off the hot seat. It looks like the season is going to be closed automatically.

MR. BERRY: Mr. Bucquet, you have been in the oyster business all your life. Why don't



you get up and make a comment and tell us something about it. We would like to hear what you have got to say.

MR. A. J. BUCQUET: Thank you, Mr. Berry. Gentlemen of the Commission, I don't know that I quite understand exactly what is being said here, because my knowledge tells me that by legislative act a certain area of the Louisiana marsh east of the river has been set aside as a seed oyster ground. That is the only thing my knowledge says that the legislature has done and you, gentlemen, are empowered in the enforcement of that seed oyster ground, and here we are talking about people marketing merchandise. Nowhere in the law do I know that you have any say whatsoever as to what can be marketed from a seed oyster ground.

Now possibly, possibly, I don't know it all; possibly I don't understand it. When some people say there are plenty of oysters, A. J. Bucquet can stand before you and vouch for the fact that the Bucquet Canning Company has been harvesting seed oyster grounds east of the Mississippi River, planting them in Barataria Bay for many years, 20-



odd years, that we have been doing just that. We couldn't get any seed oysters east of that river this year. The Bucquet Canning Company is going to can approximately one-third of the merchandise that they have been producing year in and year out for the last 15-odd years because of no seed east of the Mississippi River in Black Bay area.

Again, I repeat to you that you are entrusted with the care and the protection of a seed oyster ground east of the Mississippi River. That area has been set aside, again I repeat, by legislative act and you are to protect just that, and the conversations that I am listening to here this morning are people that want to harvest, they want you to permit them to harvest a marketable merchandise from that seed ground, and I don't think it is in your power to handle it. I don't know. You would have to discuss that with your attorneys.

I do also say that these gentlemen, if you were to question them each and every one individually, including your biologists, Dr. St. Amant, Mr. Schafer, or any and all of them, they will all vouch for the fact that there are practically no



seed oysters east of the Mississippi River for the industry as a whole. That is the only way that I could put that to you, Mr. Berry, that you are talking about a seed oyster ground, and people are trying to get you to regulate a market deal, which I don't think is in your power to do. Thank you.

Is that clear? Are there any questions you want to ask of me?

MR. BERRY: No, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: A. J., what you are telling us is that there are not enough seed oysters to begin with.

MR. BUCQUET: The proof is there. All of these gentlemen here, including my friend from Plaquemines Parish there that wants you to keep it open, he will stand here and tell you that there was no seed there this year. I am positive he will do that, because the proof is there. There was none. We were in a terrible shape.

I have been before you gentlemen before and have asked you to try to get something done, getting us some water some way, to bring our seed area back, because if you don't, we are going to be



out of business.

THE CHAIRMAN: What you are really saying, A. J., is that we shouldn't even be marketing the oysters off those seed areas.

MR. BUCQUET: Well, I don't say that you shouldn't do it, but I don't think that you have any right to regulate marketing oysters whereas it has been set up for a seed area. If you are going to regulate marketing for one segment of the industry, I think you should regulate marketing for other segments of the industry. As the other gentleman said, there are some people hauling these oysters directly to canneries. I have been told in no uncertain terms, "Don't you dare go get one of those oysters and market it." I know it is being done elsewhere. I don't know; if the area were closed, maybe we would stop some of that marketing. I am not going to recommend that, but maybe we ought to, you know, sort of protect our seed for the next year.

MR. FOX: May I ask a question? Don't you own the boat PAN AMERICAN?

MR. BUCQUET: Yes, I own the PAN AMERICAN



and many others.

MR. FOX: Well, I see a lot of your boats out there.

MR. BUCQUET: Mr. Fox, you saw my boats there for about three weeks in the month of September and you haven't seen one of my boats cross that Mississippi River since, and my boats usually stay there through January.

MR. FOX: Whose boat that they caught on the reservation down there? Mr. Bucquet's boat.

MR. BUCQUET: There were no oysters this year, gentlemen, and in the event that he wants me to verify that statement, he is absolutely correct, that a year ago, a year and a half ago, they saw to it that one of my boats was caught in an area that was set aside that was well preserved by this department for future reference and the next year they were completely dead. Thank you.

MR. FOX: Gentlemen, may I say something?

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MR. FOX: He said the factories didn't operate. I can ask the owner of Slidell Canning Company, Violet Packing Company, to come up here



and tell you that they operated very, very effectively this year and that they didn't lose, I'd say, any time due to lack of oysters from the reef and that the only thing that stopped them was maybe bad weather. They did operate and they did have the oysters. I am sure that these few days that we are talking about on the end of the season are not going to bring the industry back. We need to look further into this problem but not on these few days. That is not going to solve our problem.

MR. VINET: That means that I am telling the truth then. Didn't the man say that Slidell is operating steadily from the state reef. They are supposed to do that with seed oysters? From the state reef? Operate in Slidell and Violet from the state reef of seed oysters?

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. St. Amant, are they supposed to do that?

MR. VINET: When we are supposed to be tied up at home like we are doing and Vinet factory didn't pack one from this side of the river?

DR. ST. AMANT: Gentlemen, you are hearing a lot of things and practically everybody is



telling you some truth. They are not all of them telling you the whole story. Not only that, the story you are hearing today might be different next year in September or next November or whatever happens to be the case when the oysters so suit them. It just so happens today they are a little tight, so they are all fighting over it, and I don't think the Commission ought to be blamed for something that they have never wanted enforced except when it suited their own business. It goes for anybody that wants to listen to it.

The trouble with the thing is that the oyster laws are outmoded, and you have got too many oyster fishermen and your oyster seed ground has changed, not so much more fishing but because you don't have any fresh water. Now what happened was production gradually went down, and you had a lot of people trying to make money on a system that wasn't there for them to make it. You can't blame one group or the other for wanting the best of this thing, but they have always produced off the seed reefs directly to the market, provided they met the three-inch law. It is in the book.



Now the catch to this is enforcing the three-inch law, because you can have a man with a lease up side the red line area, the seed area, and by law he can take an oyster off there that is half an inch long if he wants to, and he can step over the line and he is illegal if he has anything under three inches. So, when we catch him, he's got four outs, or three outs. If we pin him down on the seed ground, he says, "I am going to plant them on my reef." If we follow him in and catch him at the factory, all he has got to say is, "I caught them on my lease." He is still legal. The only way you can possibly handle this thing is to get on his boat and go with him the day he picks it up until he markets the damned thing.

We need a change in this. Now two or three years ago, we did draw up a recodification of the oyster law, and I think it met and took care of a lot of these answers. We do need a change in the legislation. We need a major change in the oyster laws and until we get this, you are not going to get rid of this type of argument.

Now the question of oyster sizes in a



sense is ridiculous. It is sort of like your shrimp size arguments that you constantly get into. It depends on whose ox is being gored. There is no man in here that will tell you that a two and a half inch oyster that is fat and salty won't sell for just as much as a three or a four inch oyster anywhere, but you can get trash oysters at three and a half, four inches long that are not fit to eat, and they are being put on the market.

When you get automatic machines, and Mr. Bucquet will stand up and tell you, you can take an oyster this big (indicating) and make a profit out of it, and when you are in the business of commercial fishing, you are after a profit, and it doesn't make any difference who is after it, they want their profit first and the other fellow can take what's left.

This situation is not going to end today and it is not going to end until we get to a position where we can have laws that we can enforce. Now, under the situation, they are unenforceable and these men know they are not enforceable. Sure, it may be that what Mr. Vujnovich says is true. We



can put a man down there and check every sack that comes up and make a count. If they are two and a half inches or under three inches, they are out of business. But I will tell you this, there has been times that this Commission has been faced with just the other request, and you know it and I know it, too, not only about oysters but about shrimp. When it suits the industry's needs, they want us to turn the other way and not look and not enforce the laws, and when it suits somebody else's needs, then they come in and say we are negligent in our duties because we don't enforce the law.

The problem here is that you have unenforceable statutes and we have no simple way to do it with the equipment and the manpower that we have. Now, if I am out of order, I will stand by my position.

MR. FOX: Gentleman, this man speaks the truth. Our laws are inaccurate. Three-inch oysters we just don't have.

THE CHAIRMAN: One thing I like about a shrimp dispute and an oyster dispute, everybody is telling the truth, but they are all telling



different things. While you are coming to the microphone, I will tell you, just like I tell the shrimp people, that is your industry, not ours, and a lot of these problems, like Dr. St. Amant is talking about, the industry themselves, everybody has got a different interest. You expect the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission to come and solve your disputes. We are not people in the oyster business. You know a lot more about it than we do, but then we are called upon to solve your disputes in the industry.

Gentlemen, we have had a lot of discussion. What is your pleasure?

MR. DUPUY: Mr. Chairman, in order to get something before the chair for a vote, I would like to suggest or make the motion that we leave the season as it is presently set up and attempt in any way possible to enforce whatever laws are presently on the books.

MR. BERRY: Mr. Dupuy, is that in the form of a motion?

MR. DUPUY: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion by Mr.



Dupuy.

MR. LUTTRELL: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been seconded by Mr. Luttrell. You have heard the motion. Is there any further discussion?

(No response)

O.K., all those in favor, say "aye".

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion is carried.

This is just like the shrimp business. Every time we do something about it, one group walks out of here mad and one group is happy.

MR. VUJNOVICH: Thank you for taking your time and I should have brought this out first. We did have a bill introduced in the last session of the legislature and it was April 1 to September 1, open from September 1 through April 1, but due to this thing that we had going -- what do you call it -- the Bohemia Spillway -- we had to make a deal with Chalin Perez to get the right-of-way, and Chalin Perez told myself, I was then the president, that Representative Patti withdrew the bill, take it out and make the season read from



April 20 close, open September 1. That was agreed also by Mr. Kenneth Fox. If I am incorrect, just tell me I am.

MR. FOX: The bill did read from September first --

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you all plan to reintroduce that bill?

MR. VUJNOVICH: Oh, yes. Right now, as I say, the oyster industry is at rock bottom and if we don't do something about it, well -- and I believe the next time, I am the president, if I have something to present to the Board, I will come much more prepared than I came today.

THE CHAIRMAN: Has the industry gotten together on the bill?

MR. VUJNOVICH: Yes, last year we got together on the bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Everybody agrees on it?

MR. VUJNOVICH: Everybody agrees on it except one man. He was opposed but we carried it. He was the only man that was opposed, and we had asked for this coming year to be closed April 1. As I say, it was introduced in the legislature by



Dick Guidry and was withdrawn by Patti, due to the past president who made this deal with Chalin Perez to give him the right-of-way that we can have the Bohemia Spillway

MR. DUPUY: Do you have an association that speaks for all of the oyster industry?

MR. VUJNOVICH: I could say this, that the majority of the people, the bulk of the industry, is represented.

MR. FOX: I will disagree with that.

THE CHAIRMAN: O.K., we have discussed the issue and we will move on to something else. I might close by making just one remark that I have observed since I have been on the Commission. Every time you start talking about over-harvesting resources, you go back and you find out that is not really the problem. It is something else besides overharvesting and in the oyster situation I think you can say it is a number of other things, not that you are going out there and getting too many of them.

MR. VUJNOVICH: I have been in the industry since I was 13 years old and I haven't had any



other education and by the knowledge that I see what is happening to our wastelands because of the marshes, there is only one thing that can really help us, and that is why we are so in favor of the Bohemia Spillway. There are hundreds of thousands of acres that are not producing one single sack of oysters, and if we can bring one bit of that back by the spillway, the money will be well invested and we will not have no arguments in the future like we have had here today.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We will move on to Dr. St. Amant, Item No. 2 on the agenda, please, sir.

DR. ST. AMANT: On the agenda we have two requests for permits. One is a new permit by Marshland Dredging Company to dredge for fill material from the Mississippi River between Mile 246 and Mile 254 AHP. This is in the area of the Profit Island Chute north of Baton Rouge, and we have examined this request. It meets all the requirements of the Commission and therefore I recommend that it be granted.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the



recommendation. What is your pleasure?

MR. THOMPSON: So move.

MR. BERRY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Thompson, seconded by Mr. Berry. Is there any discussion? Any objection? (No response) Hearing none, so ordered.

(Text of the resolution
is here made a part of
the record.)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby grant permission to Marshland Dredging Company, Inc. to remove fill material from the Mississippi River between Mile 246 and Mile 254 AHP and from Profit Island Chute.

DR. ST. AMANT: This request is for renewal of a permit which expires this month. It is by the Atlas Construction Company and Jahncke Service, Inc. It is for dredging for fill material from Mile 142 to Mile 139 AHP. This material is



being used for the construction of Highway Interstate 10. It has been in operation for some time. I would recommend that the permit be extended or renewed until such time as the work is completed.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation. What is your pleasure?

MR. BERRY: So move.

MR. THOMPSON: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Thompson. Is there any discussion? Any objection? (No response) Hearing none, so ordered.

(Text of the resolution
is here made a part of
the record.)

BE IT RESOLVED that the
Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries
Commission does hereby grant renewal
of permit expiring March 26, 1973,
allowing Atlas Construction Company,
Inc. and Jahncke Service, Inc., to
remove fill material from the Mississippi
River between Belle Point Lt. Mile 142.2



AHP and Terri Haute Lt., Mile 139.6

AHP near Garyville, Louisiana.

MR. RICHARD YANCEY: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, we have a letter from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, proposing certain changes in the migratory bird hunting regulations and they are asking that we provide them with the benefit of our views on these proposed changes.

The first of these proposed changes would permit shooting of crippled waterfowl from motorboats under power. This is presently legal only in certain sea duck areas in some of the coastal states and we feel that if this change is made, it would virtually legalize the shooting of waterfowl from motorboats, because when an agent witnesses someone shooting a bird from a motorboat, when he stops a man, certainly the man will claim that this particular duck or coot or whatever it may be would be a crippled waterfowl.

I would like to recommend that the Commission oppose this proposed change.

Now the second proposed change has to do



with shortening the framework on the hunting of geese. For the past three years the framework on the hunting of geese has extended to February 15 and they propose to cut this back to January 20.

I would suggest that we object to that proposed change.

Also they are proposing to allow 107-day snipe season in Florida, rather than the 65-day season that has been allowed in recent years. We would like to suggest that we recommend that Louisiana also be allowed this longer season. This is an under-utilized game bird in the state. We do have a few people that hunt snipe. We have a good number of snipe all through the winter months and to have the longer season would give these people a little more opportunity to go afield.

They also propose to continue with the September teal season, and certainly we would want to endorse that. They have a number of proposals in here but these are the four that would affect us, and we would like to recommend that you all approve of our responding to their letter in the fashion that we have just outlined.



THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation.

MR. LUTTRELL: I so move.

MR. THOMPSON: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Luttrell, seconded by Mr. Thompson. Is there any further discussion? Any objection? (No response) So ordered.

(Text of the resolution
is here made a part of
the record.)

WHEREAS, the United States Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife has by letter dated February 27, 1973, advised that certain proposed changes in the migratory bird hunting regulations are under consideration; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau is requesting the views of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission in connection with these proposed changes; and

WHEREAS, these changes would legalize the shooting of crippled



waterfowl from motorboats under power, reduce the goose hunting framework from February 15 to January 20, and also lengthen the number of days of the Wilson snipe season to 107 days in length in Florida;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby oppose legalizing the shooting of crippled waterfowl from motorboats under power and strongly objects to curtailing the goosehunting framework as planned;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission also requests a 107-day snipe season similar to that being proposed for Florida since this will allow for better utilization of this underharvested game bird.

MR. YANCEY: Ducks Unlimited will be holding its national meeting in New Orleans late next week and it is customary for the Commission at this time of year to make an advance allocation



to Ducks Unlimited of about \$50,000, which would be from the sale of the 1972-73 hunting licenses in the state, resident hunting licenses, and of course this money is to be used by Ducks Unlimited only for the purpose of constructing and maintaining waterfowl breeding ground areas in Canada. This is the Louisiana duck hunters' approach to helping preserve the breeding ground areas that produce birds that winter here in Louisiana during the winter months.

We would like to recommend that you authorize this advance allocation to Ducks Unlimited, with the check being presented by either the Governor or Mr. Angelle at their meeting late next week.

MR. BERRY: How much money have we given Ducks Unlimited so far?

MR. YANCEY: Well, since the early 50's, it is about 1.2 or 1.3 million. This is an annual allocation that is made to DU. Several of the other states also make contributions to DU to do the same things, and that is to preserve the breeding ground marshes. Of course, the duck hunters



from throughout the country make the main contribution, direct contribution, to DU for this same type of work. Of course, they have a very, very successful program in Canada and they produce more ducks for the dollar than just anyone else that we know of.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is your pleasure?

MR. BERRY: So move.

MR. DUPUY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Dupuy. Is there any further discussion? Any objection? (No response) Hearing none, so ordered.

(Text of the resolution
is here made a part of
the record.)

WHEREAS, the Louisiana revised statutes provide for the allocation of a portion of the annual hunting license revenue to be used for the development, maintenance and preservation of marshlands and other habitat productive of migratory waterfowl; and

WHEREAS, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.,



a private conservation organization is actively engaged in carrying out a program to develop, maintain and improve highly productive waterfowl marshes in western Canada where ducks are produced that winter in Louisiana;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that an advance payment of \$50,000 on the 1972-73 hunting license sales be made to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., with the stipulation that these funds shall be used for waterfowl habitat development and restoration in the prairie provinces of western Canada; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ducks Unlimited, Inc. provide this Commission with a detailed report on the projects upon which these funds are expended.

MR. YANCEY: About a week ago an international convention on endangered species ended in Washington and in this treaty they listed three different groups of wildlife that will be affected



in international trade. On all of the animals listed on Apprndix I, there will be no international trade allowed. It will be strictly prohibited. The forms of wildlife on Appendix I are those that are allegedly in imminent danger of extinction and, lo and behold, they put the American alligator on Appendix I without consulting Louisiana, Florida or, to our knowledge, any other state in the Southeast where this animal is indigenous in the world.

Last week while Mr. Angelle and I were in Washington, we met with some of the powers that be up there and strongly recommended that they take this animal off Appendix I and we are hopeful that we got some sympathy and that perhaps this action will be taken.

Secondly, there is an endangered species bill now pending in Congress. As a matter of fact, Congressional hearings are being held today and tomorrow in the subcommittee on fisheries and wildlife conservation. This bill will do two things. No. 1, it is going to provide some additional protection for endangered species. Certainly I think we would agree that those species



that are truly endangered should deserve more attention if they are truly threatened with extinction, but secondly, this bill is going to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to name forms of wildlife to this endangered species list without necessarily getting the concurrence of the affected states.

We all know that the federal government has always exercised jurisdiction over migratory forms of wildlife while the states have exercised control and jurisdiction over resident forms of wildlife. The way we view this bill, if it is passed as it is now worded, it is going to extend federal control into areas of traditional state jurisdiction, which we feel is going to be harmful to relationships between the states and the federal government and harmful to the management of some of these so-called endangered species.

We would like to suggest that we work in the direction of having this endangered species bill amended to require the Secretary of the Interior to obtain state concurrence rather than just state consultation before naming a form of wildlife



to the endangered species list. We all know the difficulty we have had over the past year in connection with this alligator situation, with them having it on the list and us trying to get it off the list because the population levels have increased dramatically. We feel if we are going to operate an endangered species program on a truly partnership basis that neither partner should have the authority to control what the other one does.

We would like to recommend that you all authorize that we work in the direction of having this bill amended to require state concurrence, that an annual review be conducted of all the forms of wildlife on the endangered species list, and that criteria be set up for designating forms of wildlife to that list and not just leave it to the discretion of somebody who may feel that something is endangered and should be on the list, which is about the situation that we have now.

We have brought this matter to the attention of the Southeastern Association of Game and Fish Commissioners. They share our views on it and adopted a motion last fall and the other day



the International Association of Game and Fish Commissioners adopted a motion favoring amending the bill. If you gentlemen feel the same way, we would like to recommend that you adopt a resolution favoring the amendment of this endangered species bill and also favoring the removal of the alligator from Appendix I in this international treaty that was just agreed upon in Washington, which ended about a week ago.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation.

MR. DUPUY: I so move.

MR. THOMPSON: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Dupuy, seconded by Mr. Thompson. Is there any discussion?

MR. LUTTRELL: I would like to ask Mr. Yancey a question. If we should fail in this plan that you have, I am wondering if these is a wild-life species of that area that is non-existent in our area, and if we might have that bill amended on the floor to put that species there that is very similar to ours here on Appendix I.



MR. YANCEY: Well, of course, that is a real good question and it is one of the ramifications of what we are getting into here that we are fearful about. If this same bill had been considered back in the early 1920's, you would probably have named the white-tailed deer to the endangered species list, and if you would consider the criteria that they are using now for putting endangered species on the list, which says that this particular species has to fully occupy its entire range, you would probably put the antelope or the wild turkey or some of these important game species on this list. We just don't think that the Secretary of the Interior should have unilateral authority to do that, without the concurrence of the affected state.

MR. DUPUY: Dick, may I ask you a legal question? Is this an area of law in which, if the state fails to act, that the federal government can do? Or, to put it another way, if Louisiana were to come up with an endangered species list of our own, would this in any way help us or preclude the federal government from acting in this fashion?



MR. YANCEY: Well, the answer to your first question is yes, and the answer to your second question is probably yes, in that there has been a model endangered species proposal that is being circulated to the various states with recommendations that the various state legislatures enact a model endangered species law. We have got a copy of it and possibly it has some merit and possibly we should consider having it introduced.

MR. DUPUY: Shouldn't we move forward in that direction? What harm could come if Louisiana adopted an endangered species law of its own?

MR. YANCEY: Well, probably none. It would possibly be beneficial. I think we have got to be careful in the way we word it. One of the recommendations in adopting a state endangered species act was that it would be funded out of the general fund, and I think the possibility of our getting revenue out of the general fund to finance an endangered species program in Louisiana is pretty slim. That is just a personal opinion. There were certain recommendations in connection with this model state endangered species act along



this line that we didn't feel were really workable. I think if we are ever going to have a program on endangered species, we are going to probably have to take it out of the funds we are operating out of now, which means that we are going to have to cut back in some other area of our current operations.

THE CHAIRMAN: They won't be satisfied until that Mr. Baysinger -- is that his name, that man with the goatee up there? -- is going to regulate the alligators. That's what they want.

MR. YANCEY: Well, ironically this same individual agreed that this animal was not endangered in Louisiana but he still refused to take it off the list, so this is what you run into if you have a federal control, complete federal control over those things. We think it is a real dangerous bill. Mr. Angelle and I talked to the author of the bill last week while we were in Washington. Congressman Breaux was with us and we advanced every argument that we could to try to get him to agree to amend his own bill, but he felt that it was a good bill and that he wanted to go with it the way it was. The general feeling up there, I



understand the Interior Department spokesman yesterday said that while Louisiana has a great wildlife management program, there are other states that don't and that this is the area where you need this federal coercion and so on. I tried to get the name of some of these states and wasn't able to, because I know most state game people around the country and I think the state game departments around the United States have gotten a lot more sophisticated in the last twenty years than ever before and they are doing a good job. I don't think that is a sound argument, but nevertheless that is the one that they are using to try to advance this bill as it is presently written.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion? Any objection? (No response) Hearing none, so ordered.

(Text of the resolution
is here made a part of
the record.)

WHEREAS, H. B. 37, which is
known as the Endangered Species Bill,
is now under consideration in Congress; and



WHEREAS, this bill as presently written will permit the Secretary of the Interior to name resident species of wildlife to the Endangered Species List over the possible objections of affected states,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby urge that the bill be amended to require the Secretary of the Interior to obtain the concurrence of affected states before naming the resident form of wildlife to the Endangered Species List; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an annual review of the species of fish and wildlife on the Endangered Species List be conducted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that criteria be established that would assure no forms of wildlife would be placed on the List unless they were actually endangered.



THE CHAIRMAN: While you are talking about alligators, you know about the only comment the Audubon Society had was that we didn't disperse enough alligators to those states that needed them, and I certainly would suggest that now would be the proper time for us to make an offer to give them about 2,000 alligators if they come to Louisiana and take them and go put them in all those places that they say we have been neglecting.

MR. YANCEY: Well, of course, offers were circulated last fall to some, I think all, of the southeastern states and Arkansas did come down and get a bunch of Louisiana alligators for restocking purposes in their state, and so did Mississippi. I think you have got a real good suggestion. We should reiterate this offer to the states that may be low in these animals so they can more rapidly build up their population.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let's not leave out the Audubon Society. Let's make the offer to them, too. They were doing the complaining.

MR. THOMPSON: I would like to put it in the form of a motion that we offer the Audubon



Society a minimum of 2,000 alligators at this time.

MR. BERRY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved and seconded that we offer the Audubon Society a minimum of 2,000 alligators. All in favor, say "aye".

IN UNISON: Aye.

MR. DUPUY: Any size you want to specify?

THE CHAIRMAN: No. Give them the big ones.

(Text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has actively been involved in research and protection of the American alligator for many years, and

WHEREAS, through the efforts of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, state and federal laws have been amended and corrected to sufficiently protect the American alligator, and

WHEREAS, these combined efforts



have resulted in the re-establishment of a huntable population of alligators in large portions of the Louisiana marshes, and

WHEREAS, a heavy concentration of alligators are present on the state owned wildlife refuges and management areas, and

WHEREAS, the National Audubon Society has stated that alligators should be made available in other portions of the natural range of the animal,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby officially offer to the National Audubon Society a minimum of 2,000 alligators to be used for transplanting into suitable alligator habitat throughout the southeastern United States.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. St. Amant, you had something else, I believe.

DR. ST. AMANT: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, Mr. Colson has called my



attention to the fact that while we were in Washington and when we met with the three fisheries compacts, the Gulf States, Atlantic and Pacific Compacts, that we discussed a Congressional resolution that has been introduced by Senator Eastland of Mississippi. This resolution has been presented to Congress at the request of the various fisheries compacts and it asks Congress to spell out exactly how the fisheries of the United States should be handled in the best interests of the states.

What we are running into in national commercial fisheries is similar to the kind of things we are running into here with the alligator and what-not. The states' positions are not necessarily being heard. The position of the fisherman down in the fleet is not necessarily being taken care of, and with the shortage of funds at the national level, we feel that some of this funding may not be spent in the right direction.

In order to set up a situation and to spell out what the states feel ought to be encompassed in the national fisheries program, we have asked Congress to present this resolution. It is



not too long. Perhaps I should read it and then we would like to ask that this Commission endorse it, if you like, and we would then send the proper notices to the various Congressional delegations so that this resolution probably would be accepted.

It says:

"WHEREAS the position of the United States in world fisheries has declined from first to seventh place among the major fishing nations;

"WHEREAS there has been a continuing decline in domestic production of food fish and shellfish for the last five years;

"WHEREAS our domestic fishing fleet in many areas has become obsolete and inefficient;

"WHEREAS intensive foreign fishing along our coasts has brought about declines in stocks of a number of species with resulting economic hardship to local domestic fishermen dependent upon such stocks;



"WHEREAS rising costs and extremely high insurance rates have made fishing uneconomic in some areas even when stocks of fish and shellfish are at normal levels;

"WHEREAS assistance to fishermen is very limited as contrasted to federal aid to industrial, commercial and agricultural interests;

"WHEREAS United States fishermen cannot successfully compete against fish products in the market because a number of foreign fishing countries subsidize their fishing industry to a greater extent;

"WHEREAS some 60 percentum of the seafood requirement of the United States is being supplied by imports;

"WHEREAS the United States fisheries and fishing industry is a valuable natural resource supplying employment and income to thousands of



people in all of our coastal states;

"WHEREAS our fisheries are beset with almost insurmountable production and economic problems; and

"WHEREAS certain of our coastal stocks of fish are being decimated by foreign fishing fleets;

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that it is the policy of the Congress that our fishing industry be afforded all support necessary to have it strengthened and all steps be taken to provide adequate protection for our coastal fisheries against excessive foreign fishing.

"The Congress also recognizes, encourages and intends to support the key responsibilities of the several States for conservation and scientific management of fisheries resources within United States territorial waters; and in this context the Congress



particularly commends federal programs designed to improve coordinated protection, enhancement and scientific management of all United States fisheries, both coastal and distant, including presently successful federal aid programs under the Commercial Fisheries Research and Development Act of 1964, and the newly developing Federal-State fisheries management programs."

I would like to ask this Commission to endorse this resolution and direct us to so notify Congressional delegations.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation. What is your pleasure?

MR. BERRY: I so move.

MR. AUTIN: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Autin. Is there any discussion? Any objection? (No response) Hearing none, so ordered.

I would like to introduce to some of the new members of the Commission who might not know



Joe, Joe Colson is the executive director of the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Is there any other business to come before the Commission? If not, do I hear a motion we adjourn?

MR. BERRY: I so move.

MR. AUTIN: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: The meeting is adjourned.

. . . Thereupon, at 11:20 o'clock a.m., Tuesday, March 27, 1973, the Board meeting of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission was adjourned. . . .

