

DRAFT

## **Resolution for Protecting Natural Reefs of the Public Seed Grounds East of the River from Damages from Coastal Restoration and Flood Control Projects**

Whereas, the areas of Black Bay, Bay Long, American Bay, California Bay, and Breton Sound contain a vast array of natural oyster reefs of which approximately 29,292 acres are within the Public Seed Grounds of Louisiana, (Public Reefs East of the River).

Whereas, in a natural estuarine environment, oyster reefs are the most productive type of bottom that exists, and a multitude of species of marine fish and shellfish are dependent on oyster reefs for reproduction, growth and survival.

Whereas, the size and expanse of the natural reefs in the Public Reefs East of the River point to the fact that the water conditions in this area has been conducive to growing oysters for centuries.

Whereas, for over one hundred fifty years, the oyster industry in Louisiana, the top oyster producer in the U.S., has depended on the Public Reefs East of the River for the production of oysters. This area is a vital source of seed oysters necessary for the traditional methods of cultivating oysters in Louisiana.

Whereas, the Public Reefs East of the River are irreplaceable, and the People of Louisiana will benefit from conserving and protecting vital natural estuarine assets, such as the Public Reefs East of the River.

Whereas, the State of Louisiana is in the process of developing a Master Plan for coastal restoration and flood protection, and in the design process many different projects will be analyzed on their potential benefits versus their potential negative impacts on coastal resources.

Whereas, the US Army Corp of Engineers is also working on the design and evaluation of projects for coastal restoration and flood protection in Louisiana.

Whereas, some proposed projects would negatively impact the Public Reefs East of the River with an over-burden of sedimentation and/or salinity changes, and/or changes in water flow.

Therefore, Be it Resolved, The Louisiana Oyster Task Force hereby memorializes the State of Louisiana, Office of Governor, Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration, the Louisiana State Legislature, and the US Army Corps of Engineers that the Public Reefs East of the River are vital natural assets which play a critical function in the marine ecosystem of the Breton Sound estuary.

Be it Further Resolved, that the Louisiana Oyster Task Force recommends to the State of Louisiana, Office of Governor, Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration, the Louisiana State Legislature, and the US Army Corps of Engineers that in their process of designing and evaluating projects for coastal restoration and flood protection, that all means be taken to ensure the viability of, and maintain the natural function and historical productivity of the Public Reefs East of the River.