

Resolution No. 3

FOREST STEWARDSHIP

WHEREAS, demands for fish and wildlife resources from forestlands in the United States are increasing; and

WHEREAS, nearly 333 million acres of the forestland in the United States are in private ownership and most of the land is held by about 8 million non-industrial private forestland (NIPF) owners; and

WHEREAS, NIPF will absorb more demands for recreation, fish and wildlife, aesthetics as well as timber uses as public land multiple use pressures intensify; and

WHEREAS, NIPF objectives vary, but generally include stewardship or land ethics, fish and wildlife, aesthetics and recreation, as well as timber production; and

WHEREAS, approximately 80 percent of the NIPF owners who own forest land have wildlife management as either a primary or secondary objective; and

WHEREAS, nearly one-half of the NIPF owners in the United States are over 50 years of age and many are considering passing forestland on to their heirs; and

WHEREAS, less than 10 percent of the state forestry assistance in the United States is provided before the timber is harvested; and

WHEREAS, assisting NIPF owners before the timber harvest decision is made provides more opportunity for soil and water, wildlife, aesthetics and recreation options, as well as timber, and more opportunity for NIPF landowners to reinvest funds from timber sales into resource management; and

WHEREAS, less than 40 percent of the NIPF owners harvesting timber seek any technical advice; and

WHEREAS, The International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in partnership with USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) actively seek ways to assist NIPF owners in the long-term stewardship management of their lands to improve wildlife habitat and the general quality of life in the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports a Forest Stewardship Program and encourages cooperation with USDA Forest Service, NASF and other Conservation Agencies, and groups; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports the implementation of a Forest Stewardship Program that will place 25 million NIPF acres under Forest Stewardship Management.