

9-12-1979

Resolution 1979-02-26 Draining and Filling of Wetlands

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

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Recommended Citation

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, *Resolution 1979-02-26 Draining and Filling of Wetlands* (1979),
Available at: http://digitalcommons.law.msu.edu/afwa_reso/294

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Resolution No. 1

State Marine Recreational Fishing Licenses

WHEREAS, an estimated 21 million anglers in the estuarine and coastal waters of the United States catch about 1.2 billion pounds of edible fin-fish annually, with a total economic value of over \$3.9 billion and a service industry employing over 241,000 people, all growing at a rate of about 5% per year; and

WHEREAS, concern is growing over the possible depletion of valuable resources, and equitable allocations of yield are a growing necessity; and

WHEREAS, not enough is known about the needs, habits, population status, and harvest rates of most coastal and oceanic game fishes to allow their management with confidence by coastal state administrators or the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils; and

WHEREAS, the states, despite modest financial assistance from several federal programs, have insufficient income for marine recreational fishing studies, coastal fishery management efforts, estuarine and shoreline habitat protection, prevention of marine pollution, and construction of fishing facilities, and are unable to obtain more financing because of lack of documenting data on paid license holders and/or lack of license income;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies hereby urges all coastal states to develop and refine licensing requirements for sport fishermen in estuarine and coastal waters under state jurisdiction, retaining all possible comparability and reciprocity with adjacent states and devoting the resulting license data and income to the study and improvement of salt water angling.

Resolution No. 2

Draining and Filling of Wetlands

WHEREAS, fresh and saltwater wetlands provide unique and critically important habitat for many species of birds, mammals, fish, and shellfish and reptiles;

WHEREAS, these wetlands and the species of fish and wildlife dependent on them provide millions of days of recreation annually for hunters, fishermen, trappers, clam-diggers, bird-watchers, and naturalists; and

WHEREAS, maintenance of coastal wetlands is essential for the conservation of valuable commercial finfish and shellfish; and

WHEREAS, naturally functioning wetlands are valuable in assimilating airborne and waterborne pollutants at little cost to society; and

WHEREAS, freshwater wetlands help to replenish groundwater supplies and help to provide natural protection from floods; and

WHEREAS, more than half of the wetlands existing two centuries ago in the United States have been drained or filled; and

WHEREAS, thousands of acres of wetlands are being drained or filled each year for agricultural, urban and industrial purposes; and

WHEREAS, much draining and filling is unnecessary and would be uneconomical without governmental subsidies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies hereby opposes federal or state actions which encourage or subsidize the draining or filling of valuable wetlands.

Resolution No. 3

Full Funding for the Commercial Fisheries Research and Development Federal Grant Program (PL 88-309)

WHEREAS, the Commercial Fisheries Research and Development Act of 1964 (PL 88-309, as amended) authorizes a maximum of \$10,000,000 under Section 4a of said Act annually for grants-in-aid to the States for research and development of the nation's commercial fisheries resources; and

WHEREAS, the current annual nationwide appropriation under Section 4a of PL 88-309 is \$5 million, which is only one-half of the appropriation authorized by the Act; and

WHEREAS, inflation is reducing the purchasing power of funds provided by the PL 88-309 program to the States to less than 50 percent of their 1965 value; and

WHEREAS, the States need increased annual appropriations to provide a sustained source of funding for intensified programs to support fishery management in the territorial waters and to develop integrated fisheries management programs with the Regional Fisheries Councils as provided for by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (PL 94-265);

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies hereby urges the Congress to appropriate the full \$10 million authorized under Section 4a of the Commercial Fisheries Research and Development Act (PL 88-309).

Resolution No. 4

Legislation to Amend Wild Horses & Burros Act

WHEREAS, the Wild Free-roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 protects wild horses and burros from destruction, capture or sale by any person or governmental entity, except when authorized by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture in connection with public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service; and