



## RESOLUTION 2019-02-10

### RECOGNIZING THE 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION ACT

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act has helped conservation organizations, private landowners, and government agencies to restore, protect and enhance wetlands and their associated uplands since 1989. This voluntary, non-regulatory program has engaged with more than 6,200 conservation organizations and private landowners who have conserved 30.3 million acres in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

**WHEREAS**, wetlands are among the most biologically productive ecosystems in the world with up to one-half of all North American bird species feeding or nesting in wetlands and nearly 30% of the world's wetlands are distributed throughout North America; however, approximately 50% have been lost and the continent continues to suffer from the loss and degradation of wetland habitat; and

**WHEREAS**, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) was signed into law on December 13, 1989 and provides a significant source of funding for wetland, waterfowl and other migratory bird conservation throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico; and

**WHEREAS**, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) has been the most successful continental wildlife conservation effort in history through critical funding from NAWCA, and provides habitat essential to waterfowl and other wetland-related species; and

**WHEREAS**, NAWCA has been the catalyst for partnership development, resulting in the United States Fish and Wildlife Service working in partnership with States, and other federal agencies through voluntary regional Migratory Bird Joint Ventures to achieve shared goals in wetland and migratory bird habitat conservation and management; and

**WHEREAS**, wetlands conserved with NAWCA funds provide natural benefits to society, such as improving water quality, abating flood waters, recharging groundwater, storing carbon, and mitigating natural and man-made disasters, and wetlands provide opportunities for reconnecting people with nature through outdoor education and recreational opportunities such as wildlife-watching, hunting, fishing, and trapping which contribute many economic benefits to local communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act will achieve its 30th Anniversary on December 13, 2019, and since the signing of the NAWCA, it has facilitated the conservation of over 30.3 million acres of wetlands and associated habitats in all 50 states, Canada, and Mexico involving more than 6,200 public-private partnerships, and \$1.7 billion of federal funds have been matched with \$3.5 billion in non-federal funding;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recognizes the substantial accomplishments of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and its valuable contributions to the conservation of our wetland and associated upland resources in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and reaffirms its support for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act to the Administration, the Congress, and the North American people and that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports continuation of the current funding sources for NAWCA from federal appropriations; and the dedication of interest derived from the Wildlife Restoration account.

*Submitted by the Legislative & Federal Budget Committee and the Bird Conservation Committee.*

*Adopted by the Association on September 25, 2019 in St. Paul, MN*