AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 56:1684(D)(1) and to enact R.S. 36:610(B)(13), R.S. 56:10(B)(17), and Part VI of Chapter 8 of Title 56 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 56:1931 through 1936, relative to the Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program; to create the Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program and the Louisiana Outdoors Forever Fund; to provide for executive branch organization; to create a project selection board and a technical advisory board; to provide for board membership and duties; to provide for program eligibility and applications; to provide for natural areas; to provide for administrative rules; to provide for program termination; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 36:610(B)(13) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§610. Transfer of agencies and functions to Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

* * *

B. The following agencies, as defined in R.S. 36:3, are transferred to and hereinafter shall be within the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, as provided in R.S. 36:802.

* * *

(13) The Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program project selection board and technical advisory board (R.S. 56:1931 et seq.).

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Section 2. R.S. 56:1684(D)(1) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 56:10(B)(17) and Part VI of Chapter 8 of Title 56 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 56:1931 through 1936, are hereby enacted to read as follows:

§10. Annual report to governor; estimate of proposed expenditures; particular funds; limitations on purposes for use of monies in particular funds and accounts; warrants; vouchers; surplus funds

B.

(17) There is hereby created within the Conservation Fund a special account known as the "Louisiana Outdoors Forever Fund". The funds in this account shall be used solely for and in accordance with the Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program, provided for in R.S. 56:1931 et seq. Any appropriations, public or private grants, gifts, or donations received by the state or the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries for the purposes of this program shall be credited to the fund. The monies in the fund shall be subject to the same requirements as provided for in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection. The monies in the fund shall be invested by the treasurer in the same manner as the monies in the state general fund and all interest earned shall be deposited and credited to the fund after compliance with the requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana. All unexpended or unencumbered monies remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain to the credit of the fund.

§1684. Categories of classification

Each office of state parks holding will be identified and operated according to the basic purpose for which it is established and will be selected, operated and identified according to the following classification categories and the criteria thereof:

D. "State parks" are natural areas which, when evaluated on a statewide basis, possess outstanding potential for recreation utilization. The natural area must
possess outstanding scenic and natural qualities to provide a recreation opportunity
of high quality in a natural setting.

The criteria for the selection of areas to be designated as state parks shall be:

1. Size: A state park shall be of sufficient size to insure efficient operation
and maintenance of its recreation facilities and have sufficient buffer to preserve the
natural integrity of the area.

All state parks, except those currently within the system and those in Caddo
and Bossier Parishes, must adhere to an absolute minimum size standard of two
hundred and fifty acres and preferred minimum size standard of four hundred acres.
The secretary of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism will determine
in each case which minimum standard will be applicable.

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PART VI. LOUISIANA OUTDOORS FOREVER PROGRAM

§1931. Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program; fund

There is hereby established within the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
the Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program for the purpose of providing funding for
outdoor conservation projects in the state. The administration of the program and
the conservation projects selected for funding under the program shall be funded by
the Louisiana Outdoors Forever Fund as provided for in R.S. 56:10(B)(17).

§1932. Project selection board

A. The program shall be governed by a project selection board composed of
the following members:

1. The governor or his designee.

2. The executive assistant to the governor for coastal activities or his
designee.

3. The lieutenant governor or his designee from the office of state parks.

4. The commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry or his
designee.

5. The secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality or his
designee.
(6) The secretary of the Department of Natural Resources or his designee.

(7) The secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries or his designee.

(8) The speaker of the House of Representatives or his designee.

(9) The president of the Senate or his designee.

B. The members of the board representing the Louisiana Legislature shall be nonvoting members.

C. The project selection board shall elect a chairman at its first meeting each year. The chairman shall serve a one-year term and may be reelected by the board.

D. The project selection board shall make all final determinations regarding the selection of projects for funding under the program.

§1933. Technical advisory board

A. The project selection board shall be advised by a technical advisory board composed of the following members:

(1) Subject matter representatives from the following:

(a) The office of the governor.

(b) The division of administration.

(c) The office of coastal activities.

(d) The office of state parks.

(e) The Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

(f) The Department of Environmental Quality.

(g) The Department of Natural Resources.

(h) The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

(2) Up to three representatives of nonprofit conservation organizations having offices in Louisiana and engaged in conservation efforts in the state may be appointed by the governor, provided that no such representative may participate in the evaluation of applications from their own organization.

B. The technical advisory board shall review and evaluate applications in accordance with the program criteria and scoring and forward assessments to the project selection board.

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§1934. Program eligibility; application process

A.(1) State agencies, political subdivisions of the state, including local
governing authorities, and nongovernmental organizations working in coordination
with public agencies may apply to the program for funding.

(2) The program shall be strictly voluntary and in no way invokes eminent
domain.

B. The following types of projects may be eligible for funding:

(1) Land conservation of important natural areas, including fish and wildlife
habitat.

(2) Water quality projects related to land conservation or land management,
including those lands that protect drinking water supplies.

(3) Working land, farms, and forested land.

(4) Recreational properties related to important natural areas and public use.

(5) Historic properties adjacent to or integral to habitat restoration or
enhancement.

C. Application forms as well as information about application requirements
shall be made available online.

D. Submitted applications shall be evaluated by the technical advisory board
and selected by the project selection board using defined criteria and scoring based
on a clear, defensible, science-based process.

E. The department shall, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure
Act, promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement this program. Such
rules shall include procedures for applying to the program and detailed criteria and
scoring to be used by the boards in their evaluation and selection of projects for
funding.

§1935. Transparency

The Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program, fund, project selection board, and
technical advisory board shall be subject to all applicable laws concerning public
meetings and public records, including the Open Meetings Law, the Public Records
Law, and the Ethics Code. In addition, the meetings of each board shall be open to

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the public, broadcast via the internet when possible, and allow time for public
comment. Meeting minutes shall be made available to the public. Information about
the members of each board shall also be readily available to the public.

§1936. Program termination

The Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program shall terminate on July 1, 2033.

Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
effective on the day following such approval.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: ____________________

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