2023 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 132

BY REPRESENTATIVE BROWN

WILDLIFE & FISHERIES: Urges and requests the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to study and make recommendations regarding alligator markets, populations, and hunting

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Alligator
3	Advisory Council, and the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to study and make
4	recommendations relative to alligator markets and populations and commercial,
5	recreational, and nuisance hunting in this state.
6	WHEREAS, in 1967 the American alligator was listed as an endangered species
7	under federal law; and
8	WHEREAS, in the 1970's the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries began
9	implementing conservation measures to increase the alligator population in this state; and
10	WHEREAS, there were under seven thousand alligator nests in coastal marsh
11	habitats in this state in the 1970's, but through conservation efforts that number had risen to
12	nearly sixty-five thousand by 2021; and
13	WHEREAS, the wild population of alligators has grown from less than one hundred
14	thousand to over two million in the last fifty years; and
15	WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries must be recognized
16	and commended for their outstanding work to restore this species in what has been called
17	one of the greatest conservation stories in the United States; and
18	WHEREAS, today Louisiana has an estimated population of over two million wild
19	alligators and another one million farm-raised alligators; and
20	WHEREAS, by comparison, Florida has an estimated population of one million three
21	hundred thousand alligators, just over one third of the population in Louisiana; and

1	WHEREAS, the population of wild alligators in the state has recovered so well that
2	they are now becoming a problem; and
3	WHEREAS, more nuisance alligators are being reported in residential areas than ever
4	before; and
5	WHEREAS, commercial fishermen are experiencing increasing damage to their
6	traps, nets, and other gear from alligators; and
7	WHEREAS, the conservation measures put in place many years ago to help restore
8	a healthy population must now be reduced in order to protect Louisiana citizens and
9	fishermen; and
10	WHEREAS, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries issues a limited number of
11	tags each year based on the acreage of the property with which the tags are associated; and
12	WHEREAS, while the tags should still be issued for the purposes of the Convention
13	on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the department
14	should modify the formula used to calculate the number of tags issued for individual
15	properties so that many more tags can be issued for commercial hunting; and
16	WHEREAS, from 1999 to 2009 the state operated a bonus tag program for hunters
17	that inadvertently caught alligators six feet and under; and
18	WHEREAS, the program was suspended after several natural disasters adversely
19	impacted alligator nesting; and
20	WHEREAS, the alligator markets fluctuate due to a host of factors, however, this
21	industry is a critical component to the economy and culture of this state; and
22	WHEREAS, a market analysis of the alligator industry would provide significant
23	benefit in the decision-making process.
24	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
25	urge and request the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Alligator Advisory Council,
26	and the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to jointly study and compile data relative to
27	alligator markets and populations and commercial, recreational, and nuisance hunting in this
28	state.
29	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries shall
30	submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the speaker of the House of
31	Representatives and the president of the Senate by February 1, 2024.

- 1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
- 2 secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the chairman of the Wildlife and
- 3 Fisheries Commission, and the chairman and the program manager of the Alligator Advisory
- 4 Council.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR Urges and requests the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Alligator Advisory Council, and the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to study and make recommendations relative to alligator markets and populations and commercial, recreational, and nuisance hunting.

Requires the department to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president of the Senate by Feb. 1, 2024.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by <u>House Committee on Natural Resources and</u> <u>Environment</u> to the <u>original</u> bill:

- 1. Change the resolution <u>from</u> directing the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to increase commercial and recreational hunting to urging and requesting the department, the Alligator Advisory Council and the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to study and make recommendations regarding alligator populations and markets as well as commercial, recreational, and nuisance hunting.
- 2. Add information regarding the alligator market.
- 3. Require the department to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president of the Senate by Feb. 1, 2024.