

Resolute Resolutions

WHEREAS, the Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Society is an organization of professional wildlife biologists, managers, administrators and educators in the State of Florida; and,

WHEREAS, effective conservation of fish, wildlife, and the ecosystems of which they are a part depends on adequate and stable funding for research, management, and education; and,

WHEREAS, the vast majority of fish and wildlife species in the United States are not classified as game, threatened or endangered, and funding for conservation and recreation programs that target these species is unpredictable and highly variable among states in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1980 created the framework for a comprehensive national wildlife diversity program designed to increase and stabilize funding for nongame wildlife conservation, but Congress identified no funding source and has never appropriated funds to effect the intent of the Act; and,

WHEREAS, over 76 million Americans recreationally view and enjoy watching wildlife; and

WHEREAS, a federal surcharge on hunting and fishing equipment has proved to be a stable mechanism for funding game wildlife and sportfish conservation programs; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive study by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recommended a small federal surcharge on supplies and equipment associated with recreational wildlife activities as the best funding option for a national program for the conservation and enjoyment of nongame fish and wildlife and their habitats;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Society:

- 1. Strongly supports the concept of a federal surcharge on supplies and equipment associated with recreational wildlife activities to fund a national wildlife diversity program modeled after existing federal aid programs for game wildlife and sportfish.**
- 2. Urges retail purchasers and manufacturers of such equipment to actively support the surcharge.**
- 3. Appeals to Congress to enact legislation effecting the surcharge during the 1995-1996 session at a level that will generate at least \$350 million annually for the increase of management, conservation, and recreational opportunities associated with nonconsumptive use of wildlife resources.**

Submitted by Brian Millsap and approved by the membership on October 5, 1995