

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 754

BY REPRESENTATIVE COATES

WILDLIFE & FISHERIES: Creates sanctuaries on Lake Pontchartrain

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 56:804(A) through (E), relative to sanctuaries in Lake
3 Pontchartrain; to create the Manchac Wildlife Management Area Sanctuary; and to
4 provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 56:804(A) through (E) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as
7 follows:

8 §804. Lake Catherine and Lake Pontchartrain ~~Sanctuary~~ Sanctuaries

9 A.(1) There is hereby created the Lake Catherine and Lake Pontchartrain
10 Sanctuary for fish, shrimp, and other seafood and marine life, to be comprised of the
11 waters of Lake Catherine, and its passes, the Rigolets, Unknown Pass, and Chef
12 Menteur, and that portion of Lake Pontchartrain as follows: the whole area from
13 where the Rigolets and Chef Menteur Passes enter Lake Pontchartrain extending in
14 a westerly direction to a point one and one-quarter miles west of the Southern
15 Railway Bridge, being all of Lake Pontchartrain and its tributaries lying east of the
16 Southern Railway Bridge, and all that portion of Lake Pontchartrain extending out
17 one and one-quarter miles from shore along the Orleans Parish shoreline to the
18 Jefferson-Orleans Parish line, and that area of Lake Pontchartrain along the north
19 shore extending out one and one-quarter miles from shore and running from the

1 Southern Railway Bridge to a line drawn between a point one and one-quarter miles
2 southwest of Goose Point and Goose Point.

3 (2) There is hereby created the Manchac Wildlife Management Area
4 Sanctuary for fish, shrimp, and other seafood and marine life, to be comprised of that
5 portion of Lake Pontchartrain adjacent to and south of the Manchac Wildlife
6 Management Area, bounded on the north by the shoreline of said wildlife
7 management area, on the west by a line drawn south from the western boundary of
8 said wildlife management area near Pass Manchac, on the east by a line drawn south
9 from the boundary between the Manchac and Joyce Wildlife Management Areas, and
10 extending waterward into Lake Pontchartrain to a line one and one-quarter miles
11 from the shoreline.

12 B. The taking of fish, shrimp, and other seafood from the waters of the Lake
13 Catherine and Lake Pontchartrain ~~Sanctuary~~ Sanctuaries by use of trawls, skimmer
14 nets, butterfly nets, seines, or traps or other netting, with the exception of cast nets,
15 drop nets, or scoop nets, is hereby prohibited. However, nothing in this Section shall
16 be construed to prohibit the spearing of fish by any skin diver, operating for sport,
17 while submerged in the water, and using standard underwater spearing equipment.

18 C. The taking of legal catfish by means of legal hoop nets or legal slat traps
19 in the ~~sanctuary~~ sanctuaries is authorized. The use of crab traps in the ~~sanctuary~~
20 sanctuaries is authorized. The use of legal trawls, skimmer nets, and butterfly nets
21 is authorized in open seasons in the area of the ~~sanctuary~~ sanctuaries located south
22 and east of the Interstate 10 bridge.

23 D. The ~~sanctuary~~ sanctuaries created herein shall be administered by the Fish
24 and Game Section of the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission or its successors.

25 E. Fish, shrimp, and other seafood and marine life may be caught or taken
26 from the waters of the ~~sanctuary~~ sanctuaries by any method other than those
27 prohibited above, including by skin divers operating for sport, while submerged in
28 the water, and using standard underwater spearing equipment, during the seasons and
29 in accordance with regulations now or hereafter prescribed by the legislature or by

1 the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries of the state of Louisiana appertaining to
2 these waters or to the other waters of the state generally.

3 * * *

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)]

HB 754 Original 2026 Regular Session Coates

Abstract: Create the Manchac Wildlife Management Area Sanctuary for marine life in Lake Pontchartrain.

Present law creates sanctuary areas on Lake Pontchartrain and creates prohibitions for catching certain fish and other marine life including prohibitions for certain equipment.

Proposed law retains provisions of present law and adds the Manchac Wildlife Management Area Sanctuary.

(Amends R.S. 56:804(A)-(E))