

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 311

BY REPRESENTATIVE COATES

WATERWAYS: Urges and requests the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment to conduct a comprehensive study of Louisiana's Scenic Rivers Program and the long-term stewardship, protection, management, and conservation of Scenic River resources, including issues affecting the Tangipahoa River following the Smitty's Supply incident

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment to study
3 the importance, stewardship, protection, management, conservation, recreational
4 value, fisheries resources, tourism significance, ecological integrity, and long-term
5 sustainability of Louisiana's Scenic Rivers Program and designated scenic rivers
6 throughout the state, including issues affecting the Tangipahoa River following the
7 Smitty's Supply incident, and to report any findings and recommendations to the
8 House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana no later than February 1,
9 2027.

10 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' Scenic Rivers
11 Program preserves, protects, develops, reclaims, and enhances the wilderness qualities,
12 scenic beauties, and ecological regimes of designated free-flowing Louisiana rivers, streams,
13 bayous, and segments thereof; and

14 WHEREAS, the Scenic Rivers Program plays a critical role in protecting designated
15 scenic river resources, including water quality, habitat integrity, fisheries management, and
16 recreational uses; and

17 WHEREAS, Louisiana's scenic rivers are a vital natural resource supporting
18 recreation, fisheries, wildlife habitat, and local economies in southeast Louisiana; and

1 WHEREAS, the scenic rivers support fishing, paddling, boating, wildlife
2 observation, outdoor recreation, tourism, and other economic and cultural activities
3 important to communities throughout the state; and

4 WHEREAS, effective stewardship of scenic rivers requires coordination among state
5 agencies, local governments, landowners, nonprofit organizations, recreational stakeholders,
6 scientific experts, and other entities involved in watershed management and conservation
7 efforts; and

8 WHEREAS, industrial incidents, pollution events, erosion, sedimentation,
9 development pressures, and other watershed management challenges may affect the
10 ecological integrity, recreational value, fisheries resources, and scenic character of
11 Louisiana's scenic rivers; and

12 WHEREAS, the Tangipahoa River is one of Louisiana's designated scenic rivers and
13 serves as an important recreational, fisheries, tourism, ecological, and cultural resource for
14 southeast Louisiana; and

15 WHEREAS, the Tangipahoa River and Tangipahoa Parish derive their names from
16 the region's Native American heritage, reflecting the river's longstanding cultural and
17 historical importance to southeast Louisiana; and

18 WHEREAS, state and federal environmental programs have recognized the
19 Tangipahoa River as an important resource supporting recreation, fish and wildlife
20 propagation, and valuable natural resource significance; and

21 WHEREAS, the Tangipahoa River has been the subject of long-term watershed
22 management, restoration, and public investment efforts aimed at improving water quality,
23 protecting recreational uses, and restoring ecological health; and

24 WHEREAS, substantial restoration efforts have successfully improved water quality
25 conditions and restored recreational uses along the Tangipahoa River following prior
26 environmental impairments; and

27 WHEREAS, on or about August 22, 2025, an explosion and fire occurred at the
28 Smitty's Supply facility in Roseland, Louisiana, raising concerns regarding potential impacts
29 to the Tangipahoa River, connected waterways, fisheries, wildlife habitat, recreation,
30 tourism, and scenic river resources; and

1 WHEREAS, the Smitty's Supply incident highlighted broader questions regarding
2 scenic river stewardship, watershed protection, environmental communication, fisheries
3 resources, recreational uses, and long-term ecological management within Louisiana river
4 systems; and

5 WHEREAS, clear, transparent, and accessible communication regarding
6 environmental conditions and watershed stewardship is important to maintaining public trust
7 and making informed decision-making regarding Louisiana's scenic rivers and related
8 natural resources.

9 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
10 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the House Committee on Natural
11 Resources and Environment to study Louisiana's Scenic Rivers Program and the long-term
12 stewardship, protection, conservation, recreational value, fisheries resources, ecological
13 integrity, and watershed management of scenic river resources throughout the state,
14 including issues affecting the Tangipahoa River following the Smitty's Supply incident, and
15 to report any findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives no later than
16 February 1, 2027.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature
18 of Louisiana recognizes the Tangipahoa River as an important component of Louisiana's
19 Scenic Rivers System and further recognizes the river's significance to recreation, fisheries,
20 tourism, ecological stewardship, watershed management, and the cultural and economic
21 well-being of southeast Louisiana.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature
23 of Louisiana further recognizes that recent events involving the Smitty's Supply incident
24 have highlighted broader statewide considerations regarding scenic river protection,
25 watershed stewardship, restoration efforts, recreational resources, fisheries, wildlife habitat,
26 and long-term ecological management affecting Louisiana river systems.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature
28 of Louisiana urges and requests the House Committee on Natural Resources and
29 Environment to evaluate the following:

30 (1) The history, purpose, and effectiveness of Louisiana's Scenic Rivers Program.

1 (2) The ecological, recreational, cultural, and economic importance of scenic rivers
2 throughout Louisiana.

3 (3) Existing protections, management practices, and conservation efforts affecting
4 scenic rivers statewide.

5 (4) The role of the Scenic Rivers Program in protecting fisheries, wildlife habitat,
6 water quality, ecological integrity, and watershed sustainability.

7 (5) Existing and emerging challenges affecting scenic river resources, including
8 industrial incidents, pollution events, erosion, sedimentation, development pressures, and
9 watershed management concerns.

10 (6) The environmental, recreational, fisheries, tourism, and watershed management
11 issues associated with the Tangipahoa River following the Smitty's Supply incident.

12 (7) Existing monitoring, restoration, and watershed management efforts associated
13 with the Tangipahoa River and surrounding watershed.

14 (8) Potential impacts of industrial contamination events on scenic river resources,
15 including fisheries, wildlife habitat, recreation, tourism, scenic character, and public
16 confidence in river stewardship.

17 (9) Existing coordination among state agencies, local governments, universities,
18 nonprofit organizations, scientific experts, and other entities involved in scenic river
19 stewardship, watershed management, conservation, recreation, and restoration efforts.

20 (10) Long-term restoration, resilience, and stewardship considerations associated
21 with scenic rivers and watershed protection throughout Louisiana.

22 (11) Potential recommendations for improving scenic river stewardship, watershed
23 management, conservation efforts, recreational resources, fisheries protection, environmental
24 communication, and public education regarding Louisiana's scenic rivers.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall consider data, scientific
26 information, and any other relevant input from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and
27 Fisheries' Scenic Rivers Program, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the
28 Louisiana Department of Health, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, state
29 universities, nonprofit organizations, local governments, recreational stakeholders, business
30 organizations, and other entities relevant to the study of scenic river stewardship and

1 watershed management and may report any findings and recommendations to the House of
2 Representatives no later than February 1, 2027.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
4 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the secretary of the
5 Louisiana Department of Health, the regional administrator of the United States
6 Environmental Protection Agency, and the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife
7 and Fisheries.

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)]

HR 311 Original

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Coates

Urges and requests the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment to study the importance, stewardship, protection, management, conservation, recreational value, fisheries resources, tourism significance, ecological integrity, and long-term sustainability of Louisiana's Scenic Rivers Program and designated scenic rivers throughout the state, including issues affecting the Tangipahoa River following the Smitty's Supply incident, and to report any findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives no later than Feb. 1, 2027.