

Regular Session, 2013

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 53

BY SENATOR MILLS

WATER/WATERWAYS. Nominates Bear Bayou, Bayou Chevreu, Big Bayou Jessie, Bayou Grosbeak, Bayou Cocodrie, and Bayou Cane for inclusion in the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to evaluate and study the scenic Bear Bayou, Bayou Chevreu, Big Bayou Jessie, Bayou Grosbeak, Bayou Cocodrie, and Bayou Cane within the lower Atchafalaya Basin (Basin) for inclusion in the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System (LNSRS).

WHEREAS, Louisiana has the largest scenic stream system in the nation including more than eighty streams or stream segments; and

WHEREAS, located primarily in the southern reaches of the state, the bayou is described as a defining feature of this unique part of America and is home to many people, along with an abundance of wildlife; and

WHEREAS, bayou life has its own pace and culture with swamps and alligators that are often misunderstood areas and in many ways remain unique mysteries; and

WHEREAS, according to The Famous Wonders website, the term "bayou" is native to Louisiana and is believed to have originated from "bayuk," a word meaning small stream in Native American tongue; and

WHEREAS, bayou culture is more diverse than most are aware of with a rich blend of cultures, languages, careers, hobbies, life and entertainment; and

WHEREAS, since 1930, bayous have been disappearing as the coast of Louisiana

1 loses twenty-five square miles annually; and

2 WHEREAS, many do not understand the importance of the Louisiana bayou, not
3 only as a natural habitat for many species of animals, but as a protector of inland areas; and

4 WHEREAS, the residents of Louisiana who live, work, and enjoy the scenic quality
5 of the many bayous in the Atchafalaya Basin agree they should be eligible and designated
6 under the LNSRS for special protection, preservation, and enhancement for the present and
7 future benefit of landowners, workers and visitors for the continuing economy of the region,
8 and for the natural beauty of the bayous and surrounding areas; and

9 WHEREAS, the recent designation of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area and
10 ongoing efforts through the state's Atchafalaya Basin Program to enhance water quality and
11 recreational opportunities should encourage the inclusion of these scenic waterways in the
12 inventory of LNSRS; and

13 WHEREAS, south of Little Bayou Sorrel in St. Martin Parish, Bear Bayou, Bayou
14 Chevreu, Big Bayou Jessie, Bayou Grosbeak, Bayou Cocodrie, and Bayou Cane are lined
15 by large bald cypress trees, flowing into Flat Lake; and

16 WHEREAS, the tranquility of bayous Bear, Chevrue, Big Jessie, Grosbeak,
17 Cocodrie, and Cane are invigorating to the spirit and provide a more than unique ambience
18 to the people who live, work, and visit them; and

19 WHEREAS, these bayous comprise one of the most pristine areas in the Basin and
20 are particularly suitable for inclusion into the LNSRS.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
22 request the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to consider all possible
23 alternatives available to ensure future protection and preservation of scenic Bear Bayou,
24 Bayou Chevreu, Big Bayou Jessie, Bayou Grosbeak, Bayou Cocodrie, and Bayou Cane.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and
26 Fisheries shall submit a report of his findings and recommendations to the legislature no
27 later than thirty days prior to the commencement of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted
29 to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the chair of the
30 Atchafalaya Basinkeeper.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Michelle Broussard-Johnson.

DIGEST

Mills

SCR No. 53

Urge and request the inclusion of Bear Bayou, Bayou Chevreu, Big Bayou Jessie, Bayou Grosbeak, Bayou Cocodrie, and Bayou Cane in the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System.