

RESOLUTION 89-V

Prevention of Damage to Aquatic Ecosystems from Oil Spills or Other Hazardous Materials

WHEREAS, seventy-five percent of the Nation's population will live within fifty miles of the United States coast by the year 2000, including the Great Lakes, also nine out of ten of the largest urban areas are located along the coastline, thus placing greater demands on the coastal resources, and

WHEREAS, marine resources contribute to the Nation's economic stability, with commercial and recreational fishery activities supporting industries with a total estimated value of \$12,000,000,000 a year; and

WHEREAS, the spill of nearly 11,000,000 gallons of crude oil on March 24, 1989 from the Exxon Valdez into the waters of Prince William Sound of Alaska has served as a grievous reminder of the vulnerability of critical coastal and marine resources and has heightened the Nation's awareness of the persistent threat to these valuable resources, and has promoted in excess of thirty separate pieces of proposed legislation to be introduced to the Congress in response to the cataclysmic effects of the spill to valuable fisheries and other marine life; and

WHEREAS, Senator George Mitchell (D-ME), Representative Gerry Studds (D-MA), Senator John Kerry (D-MA), and Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) as key members of Congress, in June of this year, joined in a bipartisan coalition to introduce and press sweeping legislative proposals in a comprehensive national strategy to help reduce pollution in the Nation's bays, estuaries, sounds and harbors; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the 15 member states of the ASMFC to be knowledgeable and informed about programs, projects, problems, existing laws and pending legislation affecting the fishery resources of the member states, and to be fully involved with the issues and supportive of resolving them on the basis of the best knowledge available,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission recognizes the pressing need for legislation to protect coastal and marine resources and clean up polluted waters critical to the health of these resources, and supports the bipartisan efforts of these key legislators,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is the desire of the Commission for pending legislation to adequately address improved methods for prevention of discharge of oil and other hazardous materials into coastal territorial waters and that such legislation also assign clear Federal authority in cooperation with involved states for immediate response to contain and clean up such discharges. *Adopted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, October 2-5, 1989, Dixville Notch, NH.*