

## **RESOLUTION SUPPORTING MIDWEST LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE**

**WHEREAS**, landscape-scale conservation efforts are characterized by conservation of connected and healthy ecological systems, use of science-based and culturally sensitive conservation planning, collaborative network structure and meaningful multi-sector stakeholder engagement;

**WHEREAS**, conservation challenges unique to the Midwest region of the United States and Canada require coordinated and collaborative efforts of the members as well as those of federal agencies, tribes, private landowners and conservation groups;

**WHEREAS**, the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association) recognizes the important role and unique responsibility of state and provincial fish and wildlife agencies in conserving fish and wildlife and their habitats;

**WHEREAS**, the Association, in cooperation with historical Regions 3, 4 and 6 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, had established the Midwest Landscape Initiative (MLI) Steering Committee in June 2018 to identify shared priorities and define how to best address them;

**WHEREAS**, the MLI Steering Committee has developed preliminary co-identified priorities, goals and objectives related to them; has established a Technical Committee, which is developing work groups around the priority areas; and has developed preliminary governance documents for operation of the MLI;

**WHEREAS**, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) adopted a resolution to promote Landscape Level Collaborations at Landscape Levels, which provides guidance to the development and implementations of forums like the MLI.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Association, in annual assembly on June 26, 2019 in Oregon, OH hereby enthusiastically supports and endorses the continuation of the Midwest Landscape Initiative and further directs the following:

1. The work groups must be populated with robust and diverse membership from groups and individuals interested in fish and wildlife conservation in the Midwest Region.
2. The MLI should continually evaluate the co-identified priorities and make recommendations for adjustments or modifications to them. The MLI may hold workshops or use other appropriate mechanisms to engage in such evaluation.
3. The MLI should develop a Comprehensive Regional Conservation Action Plan (Action Plan). This Action Plan will be a regional framework intended to address the co-identified conservation priorities of the MLI and to coordinate voluntary conservation actions and investments in the region. The Action Plan should include clear, specific, practical and measurable objectives, performance measures and outcomes.

4. All work of the MLI must be based on sound scientific principles, including but not limited to social science and human dimension.
5. The work of the MLI should align to the principles of the AFWA Resolution described above.
6. The work of the MLI should, to the extent possible, integrate with and inform the work of other regional landscape initiatives, particularly in instances where landscapes overlap.