6. **POLICY POSITION**

**FRESHWATER INFLOW CONSERVATION**

**Background**

The continuous supply of freshwater inflow to marine estuaries is necessary for the maintenance of delicate salinity balances. Increasing consumptive water loss associated with certain industrial and municipal water withdrawals resulting in the decline of freshwater inflow to marine estuaries throughout the Southern United States.

Significant unnatural decreases in freshwater inflow during normal low flow periods can create dramatic and disturbing increases in salinity in estuarine environments. Unnatural increases in salinity in estuaries can create severe environment problems including proliferation of the oyster parasite MSX.

**Recommendation**

The Southern Legislative Conference encourages, where appropriate, the establishment of state programs to study the problems associated with increasing consumptive water loss and declining freshwater inflow and to implement water conservation strategies or other appropriate measures to insure that an adequate supply of freshwater continues to flow to the region's estuaries.