Few areas of comparable size in the world have been blessed with the variety and quantity of natural resources as that of Cameron Parish. Abundant fish and wildlife constitute one of the renewables that can be sustained in perpetuity with proper management. Oil and gas on the other hand have proven to be resources of immense value in the Parish, but are subject to eventual depletion.

For centuries Cameron marshes have served as a winter home for countless numbers of waterfowl that move southward each fall down the Mississippi and Central Flyways. Fur bearers in the form of mink, otter, muskrat, raccoon, and, more recently, nutria have thrived in large numbers. The salt and brackish water lakes, bayous, and ponds in the Parish have served as nursery and production areas for tremendous quantities of shrimp, blue crabs, menhaden, speckled trout, redfish, and other important forms of marine life. Freshwater marshes have high yields of sport fishes; such as, black bass, sac-a-lait, and bream, as well as the commercially-important catfish and crawfish. Alligators have abounded in large numbers, and for the bird watchers: Cameron Parish has been, and is, a mecca for a wide variety and large number of shorebirds, wading birds, and others. The productiveness of the land and water areas in the Parish, which comprises 1,073,000 acres, has been geared to the ideal ecological conditions that have prevailed. Plant communities, of the type needed to feed and shelter a wide variety of marsh wildlife, grow annually across approximately 740,000 acres. Water areas occupy approximately 195,000 acres of lakes, rivers, and bayous; splendid conditions exist for the production of marine life. Salinity conditions, rainfall, water depths, water quality, temperature, and climatic conditions contribute ideally to making both the marsh and the water areas rich in fish and wildlife. While the marshes are highly productive, they are at the same time most unstable, thereby making it easy to upset ecological conditions through the construction of levees, channels, or other similar activities that may change the factors controlling types and quantities of plant and animal life. Most forms of marsh life have limited tolerances under which they can thrive and grow. Radical changes by man can quickly alter the types of animal and plant life that can exist in a given area.

In recent decades, the oil and gas industry has developed many productive fields in Cameron Parish. The development of these has involved the dredging of access canals, construction of roads, the building of spoil areas along and around channels, seismic activities, and the widespread laying of pipelines. Those operations, which have been superimposed over parts of the Cameron Parish surface, have in some instances resulted in changes in plant communities and fish and wildlife populations. Nevertheless, most forms of fish and wildlife have proven to be adaptive to changing conditions in Cameron — brought about by man's works — and the Parish continues to be one of the most productive areas of similar size on the continent.

As a result of better understanding of marshland ecology, adjustments in mineral development operations have been made in parts of the Parish by the oil and gas industry to reduce problems resulting to fish and wildlife. Roads are far less disruptive in marshlands than are dredged access canals. In recent years, many drilling sites have been reached by the industry through road construction. While the roads are more expensive initially using proper construction methods, they do not drain marshes, increase salinity conditions, alter water depths, or in any other way radically change the ecology of a marsh in a fashion similar to that of a dredged access canal.
Neither does a road result in a serious erosion problem as is the case with a heavily-used canal. While pipelines are widely used in the Parish for the transportation of mineral products, most of these have been installed using construction procedures having little adverse effect on marshland ecology. The lines that have had little effect were originally installed in narrow ditches and back filled allowing the marsh to revegetate without altering water conditions. This has not proven to be the case in many other areas along the Louisiana coast where giant canals have been dredged for pipeline construction, thereby creating all sorts of highly adverse fish and wildlife management problems.

Despite the many changes that have been made on the surface of Cameron Parish, it continues to be of tremendous significance in the production of fish and wildlife resources. Because of its international importance to migratory waterfowl, two major Federal refuges and one major State refuge, occupying approximately 230,000 acres, are located in the Parish. Cameron normally winters about 2 million pintail ducks and serves as a transient area for additional millions that move through in the early fall on route to more southerly wintering grounds in southern Mexico and the northern reaches of South America. Immediately offshore from Cameron Parish, about 150,000 scaup winter in the area where there are numerous oil rigs.

In addition, the Parish usually winters about one-half of the State's blue and snow goose population, as well as virtually all the Mississippi Flyway's white-fronted goose flock. This usually totals over 150,000 blue and snow geese and about 40,000 white-fronted geese.

As a result of ideal habitat conditions and excellent protection by the people and courts of Cameron Parish, the Parish has the highest population of American alligators to be found in any other area of corresponding size in the world. This animal has been on the endangered species list; but, as a result of sound management in Cameron Parish, population levels have increased to the point where it can lend itself to utilization.

Fur bearers remain in abundance, and offshore fishing for red snapper, cobia, king mackerel, and many others continues to be classed as excellent.

Fish, wildlife, and industry have learned to coexist in Cameron Parish. If information now available is applied to future operations in the marshes of Cameron Parish, there is no reason why a wide variety and quantity of fish and wildlife cannot be sustained in the years ahead.