

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

From: Dr. Thomas Eason, Director, Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

Date: June 22, 2016

Subject: Consent Item: Marine Turtle Permit Rule, 68E-1, Final Rule

Purpose:

To request final adoption of the Marine Turtle Permit Rule, Chapter 68E, Florida Administrative Code (FAC) and approval to publish a Notice of Change.

Summary:

FWC authorizes all research, education, and conservation work with five species of federally listed threatened and endangered marine turtles in accordance with authority granted in Florida Statutes and through implementation of Chapter 68E-1 Florida Administrative Code. Staff received permission to advertise amendments to the existing rule at the April 13th, 2016 Commission meeting. Since then, additional clarifying amendments to the draft rule and the handbook based on input from stakeholders and notification received from USFWS that a Federal permit requirement for certain activities in captive facilities is no longer needed.

Staff need permission to address two changes in the draft rule and a number of clarifications to the guidance document, such as:

- specifying that digging into nests to locate the eggs is no longer required to mark nests
- allowing flexibility in nest marking and inventory procedures
- clarifying language on measuring turtle shells
- adding flexibility on holding and releasing turtles
- decreasing reports required on turtle fate and mortality

The full text of the changes will be provided at <http://www.myfwc.com/license/wildlife/marine-turtle-permit/>.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff requests approval to publish a Notice of Change and then file the rule as amended for adoption.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:

Carol Knox, Section Leader, Imperiled Species Management
Dr. Robbin Trindell, Biological Administrator III, Imperiled Species Management