



2016 Legislative Budget Request

September 2, 2015

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Office of the Executive Director

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2016 Legislative Budget Request

(1) New Budget Issues

(2) Potential 5% Budget
Reductions – Schedule VIII B

(3) Potential Budget Redirects –
Schedule VIII C

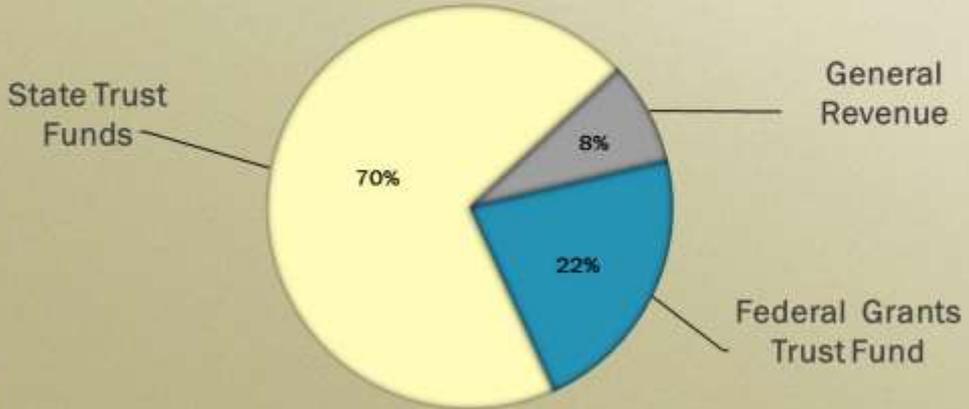


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There are three separate action items for Commission approval for the FY 2016/17 Legislative Budget Request:

- (1) New Budget Issues
- (2) Potential 5% Budget Reductions – Schedule VIII B
- (3) Potential Budget Redirects – Schedule VIII C

2016 FWC Budget \$357 Million



FWC's Budget is funded primarily from State Trust Funds.

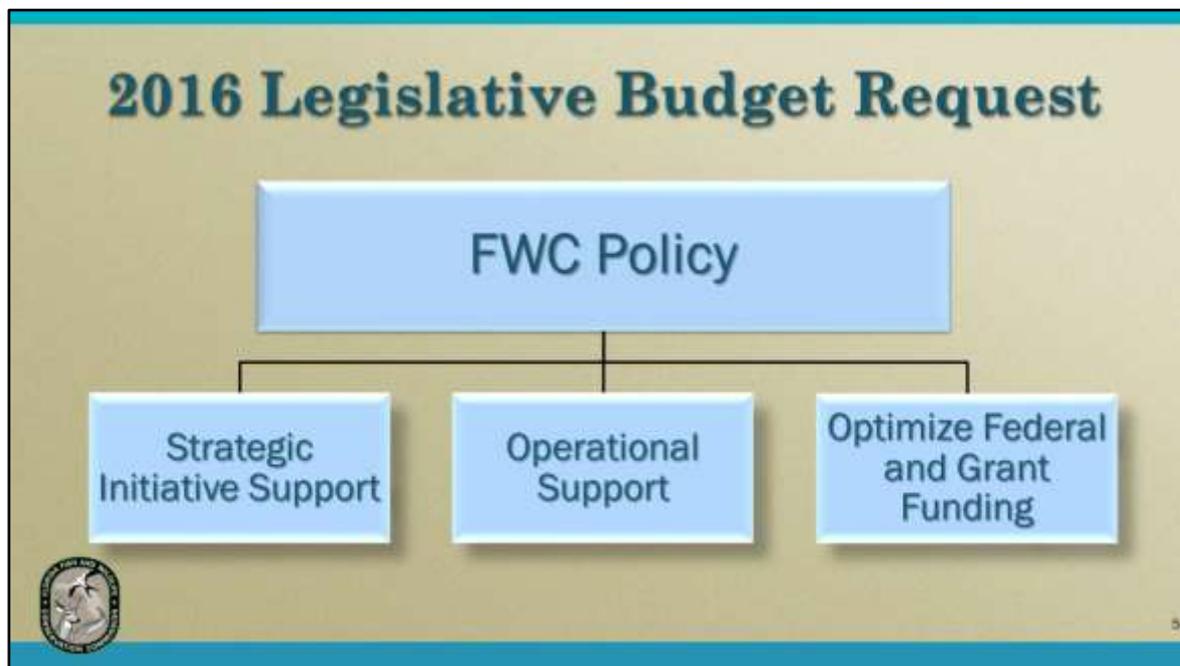
2016 Legislative Budget Request

(1) New Budget Issues



This is the first action item for Commission approval: New Budget Issues

2016 Legislative Budget Request



Agency policy is the major driver for agency budget requests. These are found in Commission Focal Areas and Agency Strategic Initiatives. The budget requests are divided into 3 main groupings:

- 1) Strategic Initiative Support
- 2) Operational Support
- 3) Optimize Federal Funding

2016 Legislative Budget Request

\$32,329,968
TOTAL

- \$ 7.1M
General Revenue Funds
- \$25.2M
Trust Funds



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I. Strategic Initiative Support

Water & Land Conservation-----	\$19,736,425	TF
Black Bear Education and Outreach-----	\$125,000	TF
Critical Wildlife Area Monitoring Program-----	\$74,292	TF
Enhanced Monitoring of Florida's State-Listed and Federal-Listed Endangered and Threatened Species-----	\$307,184	TF
Derelict Vessel Removal Program-----	\$1,500,000	GR
Lionfish Management-----	\$297,841	GR
Babcock Ranch Preserve Management & Public Use-----	\$466,270	TF
Enhanced Wildlife Disease/Public Health Surveillance -----	\$206,715	TF
Florida Boating Improvement Program-----	\$1,842,600	TF
Blackwater fisheries Research and Development Center Water Supply Reservoir renovation-----	\$300,000	TF

II. Operational Support

Agency Fund Shift from MRCTF to GR-----	\$0	GR/TF
Statewide Network Service Upgrade and License Refresh-----	\$863,480	TF
Recreational Licensing Issuance Services Increase-----	\$250,000	TF
Farris Bryant Building Sprinkler System-----	\$250,000	TF
Southwest Regional Office Parking Lot Repair-----	\$610,161	TF
Americans with Disabilities Act(ADA) Enhancements -----	\$1,000,000	TF

III. Optimize Federal and Grant Funding

Gulf Restoration-----	\$ TBD	TF
United States Fish & Wildlife Service Boating Access-----	\$3,900,000	TF
Artificial Reef Construction and Assessment-----	\$600,000	GR/TF

2016 Budget Issues

Strategic Initiative Support

- Water and Land Conservation - \$19,736,425 TF
- Black Bear Education and Outreach - \$125,000 TF
- Critical Wildlife Area Monitoring Program - \$74,292 TF
- Enhanced Monitoring of Florida's State-listed and Federal-listed Endangered and Threatened Species - \$297,841 TF
- Derelict Vessel Removal Program - \$1,500,000 GR



Water & Land Conservation- The Land and water conservation constitutional amendment dedicates funding to restoration and improvement of conservation lands including wetlands and forests, fish and wildlife habitat, lands protecting significant water resources, and outdoor recreational lands. FWC's primary use of these funds are for land and habitat management.

Black Bear Education- This request would utilize funds generated from the sale of bear hunting permits to support efforts to reduce human-bear conflicts. Funding would be used to partner with residents, local governments, and businesses to reduce human-bear conflicts. The majority of the funds would go toward offsetting the cost of bear resistant equipment and other measures focused on resolving issues associated with food attractants and garbage. The remaining funds would be used for other elements of bear population management.

Critical Wildlife Monitoring- This request is to support seasonal OPS technicians and operating expenses to: 1) post CWAs seasonally; 2) monitor target species in order to assess effectiveness of management efforts as well as to contribute to population assessments; 3) conduct stewardship activities; 4) conduct outreach activities to foster local support for conservation efforts; and 5) engage stakeholders to improve and maintain relations. **Enhanced Monitoring of Endangered/Threatened Species-** This request will support research and monitoring on both state-listed and federal-listed species. In addition, this funding will accelerate recovery by addressing critical data gaps to determine how best to manage species and their habitats, to reduce key threats, to promote population increase and to accelerate delisting. This funding will also establish a monitoring program to track population trends both to inform management and to track progress toward recovery and to facilitate reassessment of listing status.

Derelict Vessel Removal Program- This funding would reinstate a program for the removal of derelict vessels from the waterways of the state, helping to maintain a safe and healthy environment for commercial and recreational users of these waterways and those accessing these waterways.

2016 Budget Issues

Strategic Initiative Support

- Lionfish Management - \$297,841 GR
- Babcock Ranch Preserve Management & Public Use - \$466,270 TF
- Enhanced Wildlife Disease/Public Health Surveillance - \$206,715 TF
- Florida Boating Improvement Program - \$1,842,600 TF
- Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center Water Supply Reservoir Renovation - \$300,000 TF



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Lionfish Management- Funding would provide for an incentive program for the removal of lionfish by providing partial funding to lionfish tournaments and to provide incentives for a Reef Rangers program. A second portion of this request would fund an adaptive management project to determine how effective removals might be on selected reefs and to help manage the frequency at which these removals might be needed to protect reef fish diversity.

Babcock Ranch Management- This request is to develop and provide public-use opportunities and conduct natural resource management on Babcock Crescent B Ranch. Public hunting and other fish and wildlife management activities will be established and implemented by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Permit fees for hunting will be used to cover the costs of administering public hunting, fish and wildlife management, and other land management activities.

Enhanced Wildlife Disease/Public Health Surveillance- This funding would provide support for an OPS Veterinarian I who will conduct research and surveillance to assess health risks to Florida's wildlife (and where relevant, threats to domestic animals and public health), implement coordinated efforts at early detection and prevention of disease introduction or spread, provide training to FWC employees to minimize their risk of zoonotic disease, conduct timely investigations of avian and other wildlife mortality events, provide expanded health diagnostic capabilities to the agency, and enhance FWC capacity and readiness to respond appropriately to significant large-scale wildlife health threats.

FL Boating Improvement Program- This request is for fixed capital outlay funding to continue a long term program of providing grants to local governments for boating improvements. Projects that meet the criteria under the FBIP include recreational channel marking, public launching facilities, derelict vessel removal, and other boating related activities that enhance boating access for recreational boaters.

Blackwater Fisheries Water Supply Reservoir Renovation- This request would provide funding for needed renovations to a 2-acre water supply reservoir at FWC's Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center in Holt, Florida. This would include stabilizing the banks, removing 3-feet of sand/clay from the lake bottom, replacing original asbestos piping and valves, and fully lining the reservoir.

2016 Budget Issues

Operational Support

- Agency Fund Shift from Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund to General Revenue - \$0 GR/TF
- Statewide Network Service Upgrade & License Refresh - \$863,480 TF
- Recreational Licensing Issuance Services Increase - \$250,000 TF
- Farris Bryant Building Sprinkler System - \$250,000 TF
- Southwest Regional Office Parking Lot Repair - \$610,161 TF
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Enhancements - \$1,000,000 TF



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Agency Fund Shift MRCTF to GR- This request is for the shift of expenses in the amount of \$5,000,000 to General Revenue from the Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund, within the Division of Law Enforcement. Current projections indicate that the cost to continue the current Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund budget will exceed the annual revenues in FY 2016/17.

Statewide Network Service and License Upgrade- This funding would provide new circuit construction to reach the lowest entry-point for more capable technology for 22 remote locations and recurring bandwidth upgrade costs. This funding for software licensing would allow all SQL database servers to be upgraded to the latest version (currently SQL version 2014), improving and ensuring system reliability, availability and industry support. A total of seven (7) enterprise licenses are required at \$46,714 each.

Recreational Licensing Issuance Services Upgrade- This funding will assure that the increase in the license administrative fees is spent to support the RLIS contract as originally intended, and that the RLIS contract will be fully supported from its own appropriation. Increased license sales benefit the State through increased revenues to support program needs.

Bryant Building Sprinkler System- The Bryant Building was built in 1964 and the attic area has never had a fire sprinkler system installed. FWC has been cited for a High Hazard violation from the State Fire Marshall during annual Fire Safety inspections.

SW Regional Office Parking Lot Repair- This funding would be used to correct the Lakeland Regional Office parking lot and facility grounds grading to eliminate drainage and runoff issues and alleviate flooding.

ADA Enhancements- FWC is compiling a list of all known ADA issues in FWC-owned facilities. There are two key factors to the timeliness of these renovations/enhancements: 1) we will undergo a federal audit in 2017 that will review facilities for ADA compliance; and 2) the agency is exposed to litigation due to non ADA-compliance where public access occurs.

2016 Budget Issues

Optimize Federal and Grant Funding

- Gulf Coast Restoration - \$TBD TF
- United States Fish & Wildlife Service Boating Access - \$3,900,000 TF
- Artificial Reef Construction and Assessment - \$600,000 GR/TF



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Gulf Restoration- Spending authority is requested to provide for anticipated funding for the following projects from settlement funding from the Deepwater Horizon incident:

- (1) – Apalachicola River Wildlife and Environmental Area Public Access - \$195,000
- (2) – Escribano Point WMA Hydrologic and Public Access Improvements - \$1,432,000

USFWS Boating Access- Federal funds would provide for the extensive maintenance and repairs of 240 boat ramps operated and maintained by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, construction of new boat ramps, assistance with the increased responsibility for oversight of waterway markers in Florida, and joint boat access partners on public lands, such as Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Water Management Districts, and other governmental entities.

Artificial Reef Construction/Assessment- This request is for fixed capital outlay spending authority for artificial reef planning, development, assessment, and management. Artificial reefs are manmade structures that are very popular with anglers and divers because they tend to concentrate species of fish of interest to these groups. The program has more than 25 years of history working in partnership with local governments, recreational fishing interests, and state universities for local reef development and assessment.

2016 Legislative Budget Request

(2) Potential 5% Budget Reductions
–
Schedule VIII B



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The second action item we will take up is the Potential 5% Budget Reductions – Schedule VIII B.

Potential 5% Budget Reductions – Schedule VIII B



In preparation for the 2016 Legislative Session, the Governor, House, and Senate instructed state agencies to prepare a list of potential reductions equal to 5% of the adjusted recurring budget for next year. The full extent of what may be needed for budget reductions next year, if any, is not yet known. It is intended that this list will provide lawmakers with enough options to allow them to be selective in the event budget reductions are necessary. In developing this list, agency directors carefully reviewed all activities within divisions and offices and made every effort to minimize jobs losses, conserve long term program investments, minimize impacts to existing programs' abilities to effectively operate, maximize use of federal grants, continue work in progress, delay work not yet started, and identify least critical functions. It should be noted, however, that these issues are all very important and valuable to agency services.

The 5% list totals \$12,090,469 of which \$1,453,225 is from General Revenue and \$10,637,244 is from trust funds. Also, because so much of the agency budget is used as State match for grants, an additional \$60,000 in grant funding would be lost if the matching budget included in some of these issues is cut.

2016 Legislative Budget Request

(3) Potential Budget Redirects –
Schedule VIIIIC



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This is the third action item for the Commission approval: Potential Budget Redirects – Schedule VIIIIC.

In preparation for the 2016 Legislative Session, the Governor, House, and Senate instructed state agencies to identify programs, services, functions and activities that are currently being performed that may no longer be the highest and best use of state or federal resources. Essentially, this exercise asks agencies to recommend how current resources could be better used for other important programs, services, functions, and activities. Staff was asked to consider those functions where we may be currently limited by statutory language, proviso, or other mandates that could be changed and re-directed to higher priority work. Any issues that are identified are not restricted by funding source, but proposed reprioritizations must be an allowable use of existing funds. Agencies are only required to submit a total of three (3) issues in the Legislative Budget Request (LBR).

Potential Budget Redirects – Schedule VIIC



A) From: Transfer to DACS/Invasive Exotic Plant Research To: Wildlife Management Area Land Improvements

- This proposal would reduce the transfer of funds to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services that help support invasive exotic plant research at the quarantine lab in Ft. Pierce for insects that must be quarantined before being released. Currently, the agency pays \$844,171 from the Invasive Plant Control Trust Fund (IPCTF) on a recurring basis to help support this program. The spending authority for \$250,000 of these funds is proposed to be shifted to fund Wildlife Management Area land improvements from the Invasive Plant Control Trust Fund.

B) From: Wildlife Management Area User Pay To: Small Game Management Program

- This proposal would reduce the agency's spending authority for the Commission's Wildlife Management Area User Pay Program by \$179,820 and re-direct resources to a high priority need; enhancing small game management and increasing public opportunities for small game hunting. The Division of Hunting and Game Management (DHGM) anticipates reduced private landowner participation in the user pay program, due in large part, to market conditions. The agency pays up to \$638,266 from the State Game Trust Fund (SGTF) on a recurring basis to help support this program. Increased attention to small game management, and especially the northern bobwhite quail, will provide increased opportunities for public hunting.

C) From: Finance & Budget Office OPS Support To: Finance & Budget Office Software Development

- This proposal would redirect \$26,000 OPS funding from the Administrative Trust Fund (ATF) within the Finance & Budget Office, to contractual services funding that would be used for software development. OPS support staff is used on a seasonal basis to extract data from state financial systems. This practice is labor intensive and allows for human error. Funds would be better spent to develop a business system that would extract data from state financial systems for use with trust fund monitoring and management reporting. Financial information would be available in a timely, efficient manner, and the potential for human error would be reduced.

2016 Legislative Budget Request Staff Recommendation:

Approve New Budget
Issues

Approve the list of
potential Schedule VIII B
reduction issues for the
2016 Legislative Session

Approve the list of
potential Schedule VIII C
redirect issues for the
2016 Legislative Session

Authorize the Executive
Director in consultation with
the Chairman to make
adjustments to these issues as
needed through the 2016
Legislative Session



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At this time, we have scheduled an opportunity for public comment.

After public comment, if any, staff recommends adoption of the budget issues and reductions as presented, with an authorization for the Executive Director to consult with the Chairman as needed to make any adjustments that may be necessary as we continue to move through the process.