

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

From: Jessica Crawford, Legislative Affairs Director
Charlotte Jerrett, Chief Financial Officer

Date: February 21, 2019

Subject: Staff Report – Budget and Legislative Update

Purpose:

Provide an update of the 2019 Legislative Session including progress on the FY 2019/20 Legislative Budget Request, the 2019 Agency Legislative Package, and any substantive legislation of interest.

Summary:

The 2019 Legislative Session begins on Tuesday, March 5, 2019 and ends on Friday, May 3, 2019. Bills are filed and Committees meet prior to the commencement date. Staff is advancing and monitoring both substantive and budgetary legislation and will provide an update on those efforts.

Two notable legislative issues identified include reauthorization for Citizen Support Organizations (CSOs) and approval for the agency to operate residential conservation programs that include meals and meal services.

CSOs for all state agencies need to be reviewed by the legislature and reauthorized. FWC has a Wildlife Alert Reward Association, which handles compensation for citizens who report fish, wildlife and environmental law violations. The Fish and Wildlife Foundation is also a CSO which provides significant assistance, funding and promotional support on behalf of the agency.

Last year the Department of Financial Services pointed out that it was unclear in statute that FWC had authority to organize, staff, operate and equip residential programs, including the provision of meals and meal services. Since there is a 50+ year history of hosting fish and wildlife conservation residential camps, programs and trainings, it is important for this legislative clarification to be obtained.

Staff Recommendation:

This presentation is for informational purposes and any direction the Commission may want to provide as we continue to work within the legislative process.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:

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Charlotte Jerrett, Chief Financial Officer