



**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**  
**Legislative Budget Request**  
**2020 Legislative Session**  
*October 3, 2019*

**Strategic Initiative Support**

Coral Reef Disease Response and Restoration	\$	820,000	TF
State Reef Fish Survey	\$	3,000,000	TF
Combatting Burmese Pythons	\$	1,000,000	GR
Management of Conflict Species	\$	1,561,000	TF/GR
Derelict Vessel Removal (FCO)	\$	2,135,136	TF
Enhanced Wildlife Disease Response	\$	350,000	TF
Lake Restoration and Enhancement Projects	\$	2,000,000	TF
Fish Eating Creek WMA Campground Phase II (FCO)	\$	900,000	TF
Expanding Mechanical Control Technology for Invasive Plant Management	\$	4,000,000	TF
Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance	\$	266,000	TF

**Operational Support**

Fund Shift Officers from Trust Fund to General Revenue	\$	0	TF/GR
Center for Red Tide Research – 2.0 FTE	\$	1,960,000	GR
Long-Term Stored Vessel Study	\$	231,000	GR
Blackwater Fisheries Research / Development Center (FCO)	\$	1,780,000	TF
Law Enforcement Vehicle and Vessel Replacement	\$	7,900,000	GR
Taser Replacement	\$	400,000	GR
Cloud Computing Solutions	\$	694,811	TF
Critical Statewide Facility Safety & Security Repairs (FCO)	\$	644,000	TF
Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area Office/Septic Upgrades	\$	550,000	TF
Aviation Fleet Modernization	\$	11,000,000	GR
Aviation Operations	\$	200,000	GR
Apalachicola Field Lab Modular Building (FCO)	\$	85,100	GR
FWRI Headquarters HVAC Replacement Phase I (FCO)	\$	2,950,000	GR
Marine Navigation Repair and Management	\$	566,000	TF
Heavy Equipment Replacement	\$	715,000	TF
Fishery Management Council Liaison	\$	103,750	TF
Law Enforcement Forensic Support	\$	75,000	TF
Laptop Replacement	\$	750,000	GR
Overtime Pay	\$	400,000	GR

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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>47,036,797</b>	<b>TF/GR</b>
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## Optimize Federal and Grant Funding

Hurricane Irma Fisheries Disaster Relief – Year 2	\$	18,880,871	TF
Paving Entrance JW Corbett Wildlife Management Area Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park (FCO)	\$	3,000,000	TF
Joe Budd Hunter Education Rifle & 5-Stand Shotgun (FCO)	\$	150,000	TF
Boating Access (FCO)	\$	3,900,000	TF
Florida Boating Improvement Program (FCO)	\$	3,006,175	TF
Artificial Reef Construction and Assessment (FCO)	\$	600,000	TF
Marine Debris Removal – Year 2	\$	1,026,000	TF
Hurricane Michael Fisheries Disaster Relief	\$	TBD	TF
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>30,563,046</b>	<b>TF</b>

General Revenue Fund	\$	30,876,100
Administrative Trust Fund	\$	694,811
Federal Grants Trust Fund	\$	27,256,871
Land Acquisition Trust Fund	\$	9,945,000
Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund	\$	5,681,061
Non-Game Trust Fund	\$	1,169,000
State Game Trust Fund	\$	1,977,000
<b>Total Request by Fund</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>77,599,843</b>

Recurring	\$	14,930,561
Non-Recurring	\$	32,079,011
Fixed Capital Outlay	\$	29,924,275
<b>Total Request by Fund Type</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>77,599,843</b>

## **Strategic Initiative Support**

### **Coral Reef Disease Response and Restoration**

**\$ 820,000 (\$220,000 NR)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

Florida's coral reefs, which account for over \$6 billion annually in economic value to the state of Florida, are in a state of serious decline due to the cumulative impact of a number of environmental and disease-related stressors. In addition to these historical stressors, a large-scale ongoing disease event that began in 2014 has impacted several critically important reef-building coral species, some of which have become essentially extinct in the wild. The critical condition of our coral reefs has galvanized dozens of state, federal, academic and nonprofit partners who are working collectively to determine the nature of the disease, intervene or treat affected corals, and develop restoration strategies to restore degraded reef ecosystems. Given the highly degraded condition of Florida's reefs, it is likely these response efforts will be needed for a decade or more. While each of the partners involved brings unique skillsets to the effort, one common need is coordinated field support for disease surveillance, investigation, intervention and treatment; out-planting of nursery-raised corals for restoration, and collection of healthy corals to preserve genetic diversity and support restoration efforts. FWC, with nearly 30 years of experience and infrastructure support for coral reef monitoring and research, is uniquely positioned to provide this coordinated field support. This request will fund a team of 5 OPS scientific research divers and technicians that will augment existing capability and serve as a dedicated team in support of this multiagency effort. Additional recurring expense funds are included to support this field capability as well as nonrecurring funds to purchase a tow vehicle and new motors/trailer for a research vessel. Nonrecurring funds to expand coral holding facilities at the Keys Marine Lab are requested to support restoration using corals propagated in facilities outside of the Keys. (FWRI)

### **State Reef Fish Survey**

**\$ 3,000,000 (R)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

Funding is requested to implement a survey that will improve estimates of recreational harvest and effort for 13 reef fish species and would essentially expand the highly successful Gulf Reef Fish Survey (GRFS) statewide. The proposed State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) would improve recreational reef fish data collection by identifying the universe of reef fish anglers in Florida and allowing FWC to collect recreational harvest and effort data specifically from these anglers. As with GRFS, these data would be used to provide more accurate, reliable, and credible data for management of reef fish by supplementing Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data. Such data are critical to accurate stock assessments and successful management. Currently, GRFS provides the data required for FWC to manage Gulf red snapper in state and federal waters, but the survey is funded by a grant which expires June 30, 2020. Due to the enhanced data collection provided by GRFS, FWC has been delegated authority to manage Gulf red snapper through state management starting in 2020 so continuing the enhanced data collection will be critical. Rather than simply extending GRFS beyond 2020, staff proposes replacing GRFS with SRFS, which would expand the benefits of better data and management opportunities realized in the Gulf through GRFS to the Atlantic.

Specifically, the proposal would require resident and non-resident anglers to register for the SRFS at no cost. Anglers under 16 years of age will not be required to register. Proof of registration would be required to harvest or possess any of the following reef fishes for recreational purposes from any waters of the state when fishing from a vessel: red snapper, gag

grouper, greater amberjack, lesser amberjack, banded rudderfish, almaco jack, red grouper, black grouper, vermilion snapper, gray triggerfish, yellowtail snapper, mutton snapper, and hogfish. Non-recurring funds are requested to avoid gaps in data collection and allow FWC to work with stakeholders and federal fisheries managers on an approach to funding SRFS long-term that has broad support. (FWRI)

**Combatting Burmese Pythons in Florida**

**\$ 1,000,000 (R)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

This request is for \$1,000,000 in recurring spending authority to address Burmese pythons and other nonnative constrictor snakes. Burmese pythons pose a significant ecological threat to Florida, preying upon native mammals, birds and reptiles. Pythons are well-established across many natural areas in south Florida and have significantly impacted native wildlife in many areas. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has been working to control pythons for the past 7-8 years. Since 2016, FWC and our partners have increased python removal statewide by nearly 300%. This increase has been due to the use of paid python hunters and increased access to areas for python removal.

In 2017, the FWC developed the Python Action Team and began paying qualified individuals to remove pythons. Paid python hunters survey for pythons and other nonnative constrictors on public conservation lands where they have been reported. Captured snakes are turned over to the FWC. Currently, this program has over 40 participants who work to remove pythons and other nonnative constrictors from public lands. As of July 2019, over 500 pythons have been removed by FWC's paid python hunters.

Additional funding will allow FWC to expand the number of trained individuals working in south Florida to remove pythons from public conservation lands through python removal compensation programs. Additionally, it will provide funds for the FWC to develop new technology by working with private industry, and expand the use of proven techniques to improve efficiencies and effectiveness of current removal efforts such as detection dogs and sentinel snakes. Funds will also be used for enhanced law enforcement presence in known python areas. (DHSC \$900,000; DLE \$100,000)

**Management of Conflict Species, Lionfish, Alligators, and Crocodiles**

**\$1,561,000 (1,000,000 NR)**

Funding Source: \$1,000,000 General Revenue

\$ 461,000 State Game Trust Fund

\$ 100,000 Nongame Wildlife Trust Fund

As human and wildlife populations continue to grow and expand into new areas of the state, negative interactions between people and wildlife are rising. Native species that can cause conflicts by posing a public safety risk include species such as alligators and crocodiles. Conflicts between people and native wildlife can range from simple annoyance to serious injuries or death to people. Nonnative species, such as lionfish can pose threats to the environment and the economy of Florida. They can prey on and compete with native fish adversely impacting fishing and ecotourism. Public demands for immediate response to both real and perceived threats continue to increase.

To reduce the potential for non-native lionfish to affect native fish and their habitats we are requesting non-recurring funding to (1) enhance our understanding of lionfish habitat preferences and densities so that high lionfish densities could be targeted for removal (\$400,000); (2) utilize incentives for lionfish removal (\$200,000); and fixed capital outlay

funding to (3) develop innovative gear and enhancements to existing gear to increase the efficiency of lionfish removal (\$400,000). (DMFM)

To address these increasing problems, we are requesting recurring funding (\$561,000) to (1) provide for payment of an increased stipend (from \$30 to \$50 per alligator) for all nuisance alligators taken in a given year (up to 12,000 alligators) (\$390,000); (2) amplify the current living with alligators digital outreach campaign (\$50,000), (3) retain quality Nuisance Alligator Hotline Call Center operators (\$21,000) to maintain continuity in program operations, and to cover costs for expanded American crocodile conflict response efforts (\$100,000). (DHGM)

**Derelict Vessel Removal**

**\$2,135,136 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

FWC requests budget authority for FY 2020/21 to continue derelict vessel removal operations. The requested amount would allow DLE to continue the cleanup of approximately 215 of the 450 derelict vessels currently documented in the public waters of the state. Chapter Law 2019-054, provides that from the vessel registration fees designated for use by the counties, a specified amount from each vessel class registration shall be remitted to the state for deposit into the Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund to fund derelict vessel removal grants, as appropriated by the legislature pursuant to s. 376.15, Florida Statutes. Estimates received from the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles for the number of vessel registrations per vessel class were used to develop an estimated revenue amount to be received of \$2,135,136. (DLE)

**Enhanced Wildlife Disease Response**

**\$350,000 (\$100,000 NR)**

Funding Source: Nongame Wildlife Trust Fund

Diseases and exposure to toxins are increasingly a threat to fish and wildlife, domestic animals, and people, and they can have significant economic impacts on the agricultural, recreational and commercial sectors. Florida is especially at risk for infectious disease introduction due to its geographic location, subtropical climate, and large human population. Emerging diseases are currently impacting Florida's wildlife and could have a significant impact to susceptible species. A recently discovered virus (bunyavirus) is responsible for a large die-off of soft-shelled turtles and cooters in the St. Johns River and adjacent waters over the past two years. This disease and several others impacting reptiles, amphibians, birds, bats, and other wildlife are significant threats to wildlife populations and, for some, human and domestic animal health as well. For Florida panthers, emerging diseases include infections from feline leukemia virus and pseudorabies virus as well as potential other neuromuscular diseases that may impact panther recovery. To address these disease threats, we are requesting \$250,000 in recurring funds and \$100,000 non-recurring funds. Recurring funds will support two full time OPS wildlife biologist positions who will assist biologists and veterinarians with the investigation of emerging disease threats and responding to mortality events. These positions will be based in Naples and Gainesville to maximize geographic coverage. Recurring funding will also support travel for field work, vehicle maintenance and fuel, supplies and lab testing fees. Non-recurring budget will cover the purchase of two field vehicles, an ultra-cold freezer for sample storage/archiving, and two laptop computers. This added capacity will allow FWC to enhance its response to emerging wildlife health issues and potentially mitigate their impacts. (FWRI)

**Lake Restoration and Enhancement Projects****\$ 2,000,000 (R)**

Funding Source: Land Acquisition Trust Fund

This request is for an increase in recurring spending authority from available revenues pursuant to s. 379.212, Florida Statutes for the Lake Restoration Program. Florida's aquatic resources are increasingly being threatened by water level stabilization, nutrient loading and sediment input from agricultural, industrial and urban runoff resulting in impacted habitat for fish and wildlife. The Lake Restoration program conducts 80 to 100 restoration and improvement projects in Florida's public waterbodies annually. Many of these projects take several years to complete, requiring funding over multiple fiscal years. For FY19/20, we have 20 active projects in various stages of development totaling \$7.1 million and we received over 95 new project proposals totaling \$6.3 million. Existing funds are often matched with funding or in-kind services from federal, state, and local entities and non-governmental organizations. Partners include the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, Department of Defense, non-governmental organizations such as Audubon, the Nature Conservancy, and Ducks Unlimited, and many state and local governmental entities (Water Management Districts, Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Forest Service). Examples of work conducted include 1) removal of accumulated organic material along shorelines, 2) harvesting and removal of nuisance aquatic plants to improve habitat, 3) restoring degraded and eroding river/stream banks, including spring runs, to reduce or minimize sedimentation, 4) vegetative planting projects to improve fish and wildlife habitat, and 5) hydrological re-connection projects to restore historic flows regimes. Implementation of enhancement projects are typically contracted through the private sector and increased funding will result in increased private sector job opportunities. (DHSC)

**Fisheating Creek WMA Campground Phase II****\$ 900,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Land Acquisition Trust Fund

This funding will provide for Phase II of the Campground Environmental Safety and ADA Project at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) campground located near Palmdale in Glades County. Work under Phase I funding appropriated during FY18/19 included replacement and upgrading of approximately half the deteriorating infrastructure in the campground and is scheduled to be completed by December 2019. Phase II construction will complete the replacement of the water, sewer, electric distribution systems, provide road, parking and drainage improvements. Final repairs will ensure that facilities operate safely and efficiently, are up to current public campground standards, and will protect the natural resources of Fisheating Creek. Completing repairs on this infrastructure will provide enhanced public safety, public use and recreation opportunities. All construction plans are complete, and the permits are in place to begin site work. (DHSC)

**Expanding Mechanical Control Technology  
for Invasive Plant Management****\$ 4,000,000 (R)**

Funding Source: Land Acquisition Trust Fund

This request will provide for an recurring spending authority for expanded use of mechanical control in management of invasive plants. Invasive plants impact native habitats that are critical to the proper management of fish and wildlife resources. They also can have negative impacts on recreation (fishing, hunting, boating, swimming) business (marinas, ecotourism), navigation, and flood control. Stakeholders around the state have requested that FWC implement more mechanical harvesting activities as an alternative to herbicide applications. Mechanical harvesting has traditionally been more expensive and less selective than other management strategies. This request would provide funds to expand mechanical control actions and allow FWC to further evaluate how we can more efficiently and effectively use mechanical methods

and reduce the use of herbicides. Systems like the Harris and Kissimmee Chain of Lakes have experienced an increased abundance of invasive hydrilla and many citizens have requested additional control efforts be directed to this problem. Invasive plants also pose a significant risk to upland public conservation lands including forests, swamps, mangroves and marshes. Additional funds will allow for expanded treatments of invasive plants that threaten the hydrological integrity of the Everglades ecosystem and their control is an important component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). Much of the work in both the aquatic and upland habitats is contracted through small business owners, and increased funding will result in increased private sector job opportunities. (DHSC)

**Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance** **\$ 266,000 (R)**  
 Funding Source: State Game Trust Fund

The Deer Management Program within HGM and the Wildlife Health Section within FWRI are leading efforts to actively and passively surveil deer mortality to determine 1) if CWD is already present in Florida, and 2) to detect the disease early, if it is introduced. The sampling strategy uses a combination of methods that increases the likelihood of detecting CWD at the lowest prevalence possible given available resources (AFWA, 2018). CWD is now found in 26 states, and most recently in Mississippi and Tennessee. Nationwide, there is a heightened sense of urgency to aggressively monitor state deer herds for this disease and take swift and thorough action should the disease be detected. The need to conduct intensive monitoring activities is considered permanent and dedicated recurring funding is needed to ensure the stated objectives can be met. Currently, the Commission spends approximately \$130,700, with surveillance costs being covered by HGM (\$56,700 SGTF), a grant issued through the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida (\$40,000), and HSC (\$34,000 FGTF). Additional funding will cover expenses, such as ammunition, OPS staff, travel, vehicle maintenance and fuel, annual supplies, incentive payments for sample submission (taxidermists/processors), lab testing fees, waste disposal fees, cell phones and telecommunication charges, and marketing/messaging. Non-recurring budget will cover purchases, such as a portable tissue digester, specialized vehicles (lift gate and heavy towing capable), database development for CWD test reporting, and fully-equipped firearms with night-vision/suppressor. (DHGM)

## **Operational Support**

**Fund Shift Officers from Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund to the General Revenue Fund** **\$ 0**  
 Funding Source: \$3,000,000 General Revenue  
 Funding Source: (\$3,000,000) MRCTF

The Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund (MRCTF), authorized in s. 379.208, F.S., is the funding source for approximately 20% of FWC's total budget or \$76.4M in operating and fixed capital outlay authority budget authority. This fund provides for marine research, management and enforcement activities. Primary revenue sources include proceeds from recreational and commercial fishing license sales, vessel registration fees, vessel fuel tax receipts, proceeds from sales of sea turtle license plates, and transfers from the DEP and DACS for the 2012 consolidation of law enforcement functions within FWC. This fund has been heavily strained from hurricane recovery and restoration activities over the last several years and reimbursement requests from FEMA are progressing, but slow to be received. A fund shift of approximately 32 officers from the MRCTF to General Revenue is requested to provide for funding of the State Reef Fish Survey program within the MRCTF. Transferring 32 officers to General Revenue

funding will allow greater flexibility for the Division of Law Enforcement to assign patrols between water and land as needed. (DLE)

**Center for Red Tide Research – 2.0 FTE**

**\$ 1,960,000 (R)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

Funds are requested to support the Center for Red Tide Research within FWC’s Fish and Wildlife Research Institute that will prioritize work associated with detecting, tracking and mitigating the effects of red tide blooms. Collaborative research and monitoring activities building on long term partnerships among FWC, the University of South Florida (USF) College of Marine Science, Mote Marine Laboratory (MML), Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS), and other partners will sustain improvements and upgrades in HAB detection technologies enabled by nonrecurring FY 2019-20 enhanced state red tide appropriations and will enable FWC and partners to continue to collect information in a more timely and efficient manner during bloom events. FTE funding for a Program Administrator responsible for overseeing the Center is included. Requested funding will also help frame and direct the activities of the Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Task Force by FWC as defined in Florida Statutes (Chap. 379.221), and funding for an FTE Scientific Coordinator is requested to facilitate and manage activities of the Task Force. A competitive grant program will be continued under the auspices of the HAB Task Force to fund innovative approaches to understanding, documenting and mitigating the effects of HABs in Florida. (FWRI)

**Long-Term Stored Vessel Study**

**\$ 231,000 (NR)**

Funding Source: General Revenue Fund

As required by ss. 327.4109(6)(b), (c) and (d) F.S., passed into law through Chapter Law 2019-054 (SB 1666) during the 2019 legislative session, the FWC is required to: conduct, or contract with a private vendor to conduct, for no longer than 2 years, a study of the impacts of long-term stored vessels on local communities and the state. This study will also investigate whether, and to what extent, long-term stored vessels and vessels anchored or moored outside of public mooring fields for more than 30 days contribute to the number of derelict and abandoned vessels on the waters of the state; investigate the impacts of long-term stored vessels, vessels anchored or moored outside of public mooring fields for more than 30 days, and vessels moored within public mooring fields on the local and state economies; public safety; public boat ramps, staging docks, and public marinas; and the environment during and after significant tropical storm and hurricane events.

Provide recommendations for appropriate management options for long-term stored vessels and vessels anchored or moored outside public mooring fields for more than 30 days to mitigate any identified negative impacts to local communities and this state. FWC is required to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives within 6 months after the study is completed.

Taking into consideration that this work will span across 2 fiscal years, an initial appropriation of \$231,000 will be needed to advertise and award a contract to start the study during FY 2020-21 followed by a subsequent request for the remaining balance of \$119,000 for FY 2021-22. (DLE)

**Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center****\$1,780,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Land Acquisition Trust Fund

Funds would provide needed facility repairs and upgrades to the Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center. The hub of the Center is the Blackwater Hatchery; originally constructed in 1938, the building is in need of repairs to comply with ADA standards and upgrades to meet the needs of increasing fish production requests. The facility supports Florida's diverse fishing opportunities by providing over one million sportfish annually for stocking in public waters. Recreational freshwater fishing is a \$2.1 billion industry in Florida supporting over 17,000 jobs. The hatchery is integral in ensuring that the Commission meets objectives identified in its strategic priorities.

This facility is currently assisting with efforts to evaluate the impacts of Hurricane Michael on the shoal bass population in the Chiploa River, and has also been instrumental in regional restoration efforts for striped bass. The native striped bass had virtually disappeared from rivers in Florida and neighboring states, but through a multi-agency partnership this fish is on the road to recovery. As part of this restoration effort, Blackwater hatchery has produced over 14 million fry that have been used to enhance or reestablish striped bass populations in Florida's panhandle, as well as other river systems in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Population assessments and reports from anglers indicate that this successful program is now producing catches in the 30+ pound class in Florida's rivers. The Center also supports research efforts on other imperiled fish and mussels that are found in the NW region of the state. The facility consists of the hatchery itself, 16 outdoor production ponds, and two primary buildings that house FWC personnel. Approximately 1,000 visitors tour the hatchery and associated grounds annually. This funding request would ensure that the facility complies with ADA standards to provide equal access for all visitors by making modifications to the doorways, reception area, and restrooms, which would ensure that the path of travel is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals with wheelchairs. Funding would also be used to restore the six larger fish production ponds (1.75-acres each) that are suffering from destabilization and significant seepage issues, and to construct an outdoor fish harvest pavilion to allow stocking trucks to transfer fish for holding and quarantine purposes. These enhancements will increase operational efficiency, decrease handling time, reduce the risk of pathogen introductions, and reduce fish mortality. (DFWF)

**Law Enforcement Vehicle and Vessel Replacement****\$ 7,900,000 (NR)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

Vehicle Replacement \$5,400,000 - The replacement criteria for vehicles is 10 years or 120,000 miles. Of the nearly 1,000 vehicles within the Division of Law Enforcement, 127 meet DMS eligibility requirements for trade. In FY 18/19 the average cost is \$42,000 for each unit. This request also includes funding to replace vehicles that have become inoperable.

Vessel Replacement \$2,500,000 - The replacement criteria for vessels is 10 years or older. Of the nearly 600 vessels within the Division of Law Enforcement, 331 meet DMS eligibility requirements for trade. The Division primarily purchases vessels that range in size from 16' to 28'. Depending on the type of vessel and whether a motor and trailer are needed, the average cost ranges from \$57,497 to \$234,318 for each unit. (DLE)

**Taser Replacement****\$ 400,000 (NR)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

Conducted Electrical Weapons (CEWs or Tasers) are critical pieces of law enforcement equipment. All 848 sworn FWC personnel are required to carry a CEW, and the agency maintains several spare units in case of damage or loss. CEWs provide non-lethal options for officers presented with resistance. Their use is shown to minimize injury to both officers and the public during use of force encounters and often their presence gains compliance without having to be used. CEWs were used 13 times last fiscal year, and their presence as a use of force option, deescalated an encounter with a suspect 43 times. The contract for our Taser electronic control device is in its final year. Renewal costs are anticipated to be higher than current contracted levels. This funding will pay for one year of anticipated costs to renew the Taser contract. (DLE)

**Cloud Computing Solutions****\$ 694,811 (R)**

Funding Source: Administrative Trust Fund

Chapter Law 2019-118, Laws of Florida, declares that the most efficient and effective means of providing quality data processing services is through the use of cloud computing. This law requires, among other things, that state agency to adopt a cloud-first policy. As part of this, agencies must adopt formal procedures for the evaluation of cloud-computing options for existing applications, technology initiatives, or upgrades. Additionally, agencies must develop a strategic plan to be updated annually to address its inventory of applications located at the state data center and include a plan on when these will be moved out of the data center. The benefits of moving to a cloud service include:

- Improved Disaster Recovery capabilities – in the event of a disaster FWC will be able to quickly switch services to a Disaster Recovery site to continue providing stakeholders and law enforcement with access to required services;
- Allows for environments to be scalable – Provides the ability to quickly provision new servers or add resources to accommodate the growing demand for services offered by FWC
- Improved flexibility – Promotes the ability to provision new environments to test software upgrades, integration and application roll outs.

FWC maintains over 100 applications all of which will need assessment, and many will need to be rewritten to move to the cloud. Currently we have approximately 40 TB of data at the data center that will need to be moved to the cloud. \$220,400 of this request will be used to provide secure infrastructure, servers and storage to support cloud applications and data from the data center. \$474,411 is requested to fund increased bandwidth in facilities required for cloud access. (OED)

**Critical Statewide Facility Safety and Security Repairs****\$ 644,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Nongame Wildlife Trust Fund

This funding will provide safety and security upgrades for the FWRI labs in Cedar Key, Milton and Gainesville. The Senator George E Kirkpatrick Marine Lab in Cedar Key needs a secure parking area to house FWRI and LE vehicles and vessels. This will require permits, site prep (leveling, clearing and rock base), security fencing, power and security cameras (\$49,000). The Lovett E Williams Wildlife Research Lab in Gainesville needs to have the electrical system in the necropsy lab/Cold Room area upgraded to meet code and provide a secure connection to the Emergency Generator (\$134,000). The Garçon Point Freshwater Fisheries Research lab in Milton needs a new roof (\$12,000). The Senator George E Kirkpatrick Marine Lab in Cedar Key is 25 years old and at end of life and needs to be replaced. The facility totals 20,000 ft<sup>2</sup> and houses 26 staff,

including partners (\$284,000). Permitting, architectural/engineering design, construction administration and 15% contingency needed for all 4 projects (\$165,000). (FWRI)

**Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area  
Office and Septic Upgrades**

**\$ 550,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Land Acquisition Trust Fund

Currently 12 personnel that staff both the Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area and Babcock Ranch Preserve are housed in one open room in a small enclosed storage area connected to the maintenance shop at Babcock Webb. This building was not designed or permitted as an office. The facility and its septic system do not meet current codes. A new energy efficient, ADA-compliant building properly designed for public office use is proposed to be constructed. This construction would allow the maintenance shop storage area to be returned to its original intended use and necessary storage function for valuable equipment and supplies. Significant site and storm water modifications will be made to retrofit the site to meet current water quality regulations. Project is shovel ready as all plans are complete, and all land use and environmental permits are in place for quick construction start. (DHSC)

**Aviation Fleet Modernization**

**\$ 11,000,000 (NR)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

The FWC has an aviation section that consists of fixed and rotary wing aircraft. These aircrafts' primary missions are to conduct search and rescue operations (SAR), assist in disaster relief, and increase the efficiency of water and land patrols by acting as an observer for officers in the field. The FWC is one of only two governmental entities (United States Coast Guard) responsible for responding to an event when human life is endangered due to an accident or mishap at sea. When people are lost in rural areas, wildlife management areas, federal parks or in state parks, the FWC is the primary entity responsible for responding. This request will modernize our rotary wing aircraft fleet increasing our capabilities while also increasing pilot safety. New aircraft will increase our ability to survey and track red tide events and harmful algae blooms, monitor any future oil spills, improve search and rescue response times, allow us to partner with FDLE on homeland security issues, and allow us to partner with the Florida Forest Service during wildfire events.

The Aviation Unit is operating an aging fleet of helicopters, specifically the three 1970s-era OH-58s (military surplus) and two Bell 206 B3 models. The unit is severely limited in its capability to conduct certain operations. The L4 helicopters are equipped with older infrared camera systems which will soon not be supported by the manufacturer. The current fleet is as follows:

1969 UH-1H N205
1970 Bell OH-58 N233
1970 Bell OH-58 N239
1972 Bell OH-58 N235
1976 Bell Jet Ranger N86
1991 Bell Jet Ranger N118
2006 Bell Long Ranger N401
2006 Bell Long Ranger N402

Acquisition of new helicopters and infrared camera systems will increase the capabilities of the aviation unit and enhance pilot safety while also increasing the probability of success during search

and rescue operations. The type of helicopter selected for acquisition will depend on the types of missions the division is required to conduct. The FWC Aviation Unit recommends purchasing 2 Bell 407 helicopters. The helicopters that are replaced with this funding will be used for surplus parts.

**Aviation Operations**

**\$ 200,000 (GR)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

None of the Division aircraft have been replaced since 2006 and our aging fleet requires an increasing amount of funding to operate and maintain. Approximately \$2.4M was spent for aviation operations this past fiscal year. The primary missions of these aircraft are to conduct search and rescue operations (SAR), assist in disaster relief, and increase the efficiency of water and land patrols by acting as an observer for officers in the field. FWC completed over 1,000 search and rescue missions last calendar year. (DLE)

**Apalachicola Field Lab Modular Building**

**\$ 85,100 (FCO)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

The FWRI Apalachicola Field Lab located in Eastpoint had 4 feet of floodwater surge through it during hurricane Michael. The building is on a septic system so in addition to floodwaters, sewage poured into the building and settled. Extensive damage was done to both the facility and equipment. Eleven years earlier, similar flooding occurred due to hurricane Dennis. After extensive delays, damage to the facility has been largely remediated but given the critical importance of our fisheries and oyster work in Apalachicola Bay, we are requesting funding to develop architectural/engineering plans, including geotechnical coring, survey and permitting for new office space for the 23 staff housed there that would be protected from flood and wind damage. Funds are requested to develop building plans to use in a later phase to construct a wind-hardened 1700 sq. ft. modular building that would be elevated 6 to 8 ft above grade on pilings or raised fill. (FWRI)

**FWRI Headquarters HVAC Replacement Phase I**

**\$ 2,950,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

The FWRI Headquarters building in St. Petersburg is 26 years old and its HVAC system is past end of life stage. The facility totals 100,000 sq. ft. and houses 340+ scientists, administrative and support staff. Recently, the facility has experience multiple chiller and boiler failures which create unworkable conditions during warmer months and temperature and humidity fluctuations cause analytical and monitoring instruments to give erroneous readings. The annual HVAC maintenance contracts have increased in price to the age of the system and difficulty in finding parts for repairs. In addition to being more reliable, upgrading to a modern HVAC system will consume at least 40% less electricity than our current system. Phase 1 funding includes replacement of the building automation system controls, replacement of major system components, including: Chiller #3, Air handlers, Variable Air Volume Devices, Pumps, Variable Frequency Drives and includes a major refurbishment of Cooling Tower #2. (FWRI)

**Marine Navigation Repair and Management**

**\$ 566,000 (R)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

Due to the emergency response demands placed upon the waterway management unit within the Boating and Waterways Section during the 2017 and 2018 hurricane seasons, normal maintenance schedules have had to be adjusted to prioritize hurricane response needs. Because of this hurricane response and a reduction of \$300,000 in waterway

management budget 2 years ago, 4,222 signs and 402 damaged pilings have been identified as needing to be repaired or replaced. The hurricanes also resulted in additional damaged signs which were prioritized for replacement. If left unresolved this backlog of damaged regulatory signs could become navigation hazards to the boating public statewide. Additional funding is needed requests are needed to address the backlog of maintenance issues and to prevent future maintenance problems. Traditionally, the state has set the standard in the way regulatory markers should be maintained for the safety of the boating public. Municipal and local governments have also been required to model their own maintenance of waterway markers permitted through the Agency as a condition of their permit based upon this standard. This funding is critically important, not only to ensure the safety of boaters upon our state waterways but also to continue to set the standards for other governmental bodies to emulate.

Replacement of 402 damaged, missing or listing (leaning) waterway markers with damaged pilings statewide: \$442,800 Replacement of 4,222 signs identified as damaged or missing in addition to damaged pilings identified above (includes signs and installation): \$1,518,995 Total cost to catch up on maintenance cycle delays caused by subsequent hurricane seasons: \$1,961,795. This will take several funding cycles to catch up with need. (DLE)

**Heavy Equipment Replacement**

**\$ 715,000 (NR)**

Funding Source: Land Acquisition Trust Fund

This request is for the acquisition and replacement of 6 heavy equipment trucks. These trucks are used to increase safety during prescribed burns on over 1.4 million acres of land managed by FWC, repair and maintain 2,150 miles of roads in the Wildlife Management Area system, and to transport equipment needed for effectively managing state lands and provide public access. The replacement criteria for this type of equipment is 10 years or older. Of the 62 within the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation 36 meet DMS eligibility requirements for replacement. The Division requests to replace three dump trucks, one transport, one Type VI wildland fire engine, and we request to acquire one additional dump truck. Depending on the type of equipment, the average cost ranges from \$110,000 to \$140,000 for each unit. (DHSC)

**Fishery Management Council Liaison**

**\$ 103,750 (R)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

This request is for additional spending authority from the Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund (MRCTF) to help fund operations of our Federal Fisheries Section in the Division of Marine Fisheries Management from a dedicated contracted revenue stream. There has been an increase in federal fisheries actions that can impact Florida fishermen and other stakeholders. These increased actions necessitate increasing stakeholder interactions and outreach. Annually, FWC contracts with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council to provide state representatives to serve on these councils and to provide technical support in developing fishery management plans. The expected revenue generated from these contracts for FY 2019/2020 is \$103,750. This request would utilize this revenue stream to support increased stakeholder interactions on federal fisheries issues and to help fund Federal Fisheries Section operations. (DMFM)

**Forensic Support for Law Enforcement**

**\$ 75,000 (R)**

Funding Source: Nongame Wildlife Trust Fund

The FWC Forensics Program's mission is to provide FWC officers scientific analysis of primarily fish and wildlife related evidence. This can include DNA analysis for species identification for whole and partial remains of fish and wildlife species, time of death determination for wildlife, crime scene investigation support, forensics photography, and trace evidence examination. Often the services and capabilities of a traditional forensic lab utilized by other law enforcement agencies cannot meet the unique needs of a wildlife forensic lab. Some equipment and techniques are similar, however, there is specialized training as well as equipment associated with wildlife forensics. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) plans to partner with the University of Florida to increase and enhance the FWC Forensics Program's current capabilities. This funding will provide \$25,000 to pay for DNA testing of evidence, scientific supplies, maintenance of the wildlife DNA database and other costs associated with the program. Additionally, this requests funds one OPS employee that will be collocated on the University of Florida (UF) campus in their forensic wildlife laboratory. This will allow us to collaborate with UF staff and faculty to leverage their knowledge and expertise on wildlife forensics. (DLE)

**Laptop Replacement**

**\$750,000 (NR)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

The Division of Law Enforcement officers use computers as an integral tool to conduct their duties. These computers provide the ability to print citations and warnings, check for warrants, allow for location tracking of our officers, and many other critical law enforcement uses. Half of the Division's laptops are four or more years old and are out of warranty and are beginning to fail. This funding will allow the Division to begin the process of replacing the Divisions laptops. A total of 3 years funding is needed to replace all sworn personnel laptops. (DLE)

**Overtime Pay**

**\$ 400,000 (R)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

The Division uses overtime to address needs such as staffing shortfalls, increase patrols during times of peak activity, respond to increased calls for service, to conduct search and rescue missions, and to respond to natural disasters. During the 2019 Legislative Session, the Division received \$300,000 of additional recurring overtime budget. Even with this increase the Division still needs additional budget to meet staffing demands. In the last fiscal year, we expended our overtime budget before the end of the fiscal year forcing us to limit overtime in May and June. This funding will provide approximately 8,500 additional overtime hours to maintain adequate statewide patrol coverage, throughout the fiscal year. (DLE)

**Optimize Federal and Grant Funding**

**Hurricane Irma Fisheries Disaster Relief - Year 2**

**\$18,880,871 (NR)**

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust fund

DLE - FCO: \$4,338,846 NR: \$62,289

HSC - FCO: \$4,551,583 NR: \$89,135

DMFM - NR: \$7,839,587

FWRI - FCO: \$1,599,431 NR: \$400,000

Year 2 grant budget authority is requested to address some impacts to marine fisheries access infrastructure from Hurricane Irma. A four-year \$44,563,431 grant submitted by FWC to support these expenditures was approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration in June 2019. The 2019 legislature authorized total FWC expenditures of \$23,744,790 in non-recurring funds for the first year of this grant.

DLE – Year 1 funding of \$62,289 will be used to create a grant program to provide funding to county, municipal governments and private commercial businesses for repairs to marine access infrastructure damaged during Hurricane Irma. Year 2 funding will provide for contracts (\$4,338,846) for repairs of these facilities, and for staff, expenses and travel (\$62,289) to manage the program and make site inspections during the second year of the grant.

DHSC – Year 1 funding of \$200,000 will be used to secure professional engineering services, perform necessary design modifications and conduct surveys to implement identified priority mangrove and seagrass restoration projects in areas impacted by Irma. The Year 2 request is to fund operations \$89,135 (personnel, engineering, supplies and travel) for the second year of the contract and \$4,551,583 to contract construction of habitat enhancement projects in selected seagrass and mangrove.

DMFM – Year 1 funding of \$23,182,501 will be used for various fishing related economic losses caused by Irma. Year 2 funding of \$7,839,587 will provide for a cost sharing grant to qualified wholesale dealers to install electric generators in their facilities to help insure against losses during future storms, and to reimburse or partially fund wholesale dealers for improvement or repair to wholesale facilities that may have been damaged during Hurricane Irma. Additionally, non-vessel marine debris will be removed around the state. These funds will also be used to pay for temporary personnel, and their supplies and travel to project sites.

FWRI – Year 1 funding of \$300,000 will be used to support collections of corals from the wild. Year 2 funding of \$1,999,431 will continue to support collections of corals from the wild and includes the hiring of live-aboard dive charters that possess the necessary equipment to keep corals alive during field collections and transport to land based aquariums and to support FWRI staff to perform the collections. Corals will be shipped to approved Association of Zoos and Aquarium (AZA) partners that are participating in the project. Collected corals will also be genotyped and information will be stored into a database online that will allow access to FWC partners. Additionally, one or more AZA facilities will be contracted to increase space needed to store rescued corals. (FWRI)

**Joe Budd Hunter Education Rifle & 5-Stand Shotgun**

**\$ 150,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust Fund

This request will provide for federal grants trust fund spending authority in the amount of \$150,000 for constructing a 5-position small bore rifle range and a 5-position shotgun shooting stand at the education center on the Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area. The \$50,000 in required matching funds is being provided by the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida.

The Joe Budd environmental center has classrooms, restrooms, pavilions, an archery range and administrative building to support fishing and wildlife conservation training. To safely accommodate hunter safety classes, youth hunter education challenge events, summer camps and other introductory efforts to safe firearms handling, a small-bore rifle range and 5-position shotgun shooting stand is needed. (DHGM)

**Paving Entrance Road to J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area and Roads and Parking at Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park**

**\$ 3,000,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust Fund

The paved portion of Seminole Pratt Whitney road stops approximately two miles from the entrance to the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area & the Everglades Youth Conservation Camp. This entrance road is owned by South Florida Water Management District. FWC has an easement to use and make improvements to the road. This road provides recreational and management access for the J.W. Corbett WMA and is the sole access road to the FWC's Everglades Youth Conservation Center. The road also provides the sole access for FWC's new Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park. Road conditions frequently deteriorate due to present vehicle usage and inclement weather. This makes accessing the FWC facilities difficult for vehicles that do not have all-wheel drive and increased ground clearance. Annual usage of this road is expected to increase by more than 120,000 visitation/trips annually once the shooting sports park opens.

FWC's Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park is designed to be a world-class shooting sports destination. Funding was provided from Wildlife Restoration federal grants to construct 300-, 200- and 100-meter rifle ranges; 50- and 25-yard pistol ranges; 9 skeet fields, 6 American trap fields, 5 Olympic bunker traps, a compact sporting clays course, a 15-station sporting clays course and two supporting administrative buildings. Once complete, this will be the largest public shooting sports park in Florida and the largest combination of Olympic bunker traps in the US. Paved access and paved roads and parking for the shooting sports park is needed to support users of the facility and the adjacent WMA and Youth Conservation Center. The \$1,000,000 in required matching funding is being provided from FWC's existing state budget. (DHGM)

**Boating Access**

**\$3,900,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust Fund

This request is comprised of two established programs: (1) Boating Access (BA), with \$1,700,000 in authority requested to provide recreational boaters with access to Florida waterways by developing new access facilities and renovating or improving existing facilities; (2) Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIGP), with \$2,200,000 in authority requested to provide grant funds to local governments for facilities that support transient boaters in vessels 26 feet or more in length. DLE is requesting \$3,900,000 in fixed capital outlay budget authority in the Federal Grants Trust Fund for grant opportunities associated with the Wildlife & Sportfish Restoration Program (WSFR). This authority will be used to leverage Federal apportionment funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through the Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) program. WSFR works with states, insular areas and the District of Columbia to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, their habitats and the hunting, sport fishing and recreational boating opportunities they provide. Annual apportionments are based on a federally approved formula consisting of land size and paid license sales. The Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIGP) projects \$2.2 million (which is a competitive grant program for transient vessels 26 ft. or larger facilities) and the Sportfish Restoration Program (SFR) projects \$1.7 million (Florida SFR Boating Access apportionment for 2018 is over \$1.8 Mil. (DLE)

**Florida Boating Improvement Plan (FBIP)****\$3,006,175 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund \$1,756,175 (FCO)

Funding Source: State Game Trust Fund \$1,250,000 (FCO)

Funding is requested to continue a long-term program of providing grants to local governments for boating improvement projects. Section 328.72(15), Florida Statutes, provides vessel registration revenues to the MRCTF to fund a grant program for public launching facilities, pursuant to Section 206.606, Florida Statutes, giving priority consideration to counties with more than 35,000 registered vessels. In addition, Section 206.606(1)(b)1, Florida Statutes, provides that \$1.25 million annually from fuel tax revenues in the State Game Trust Fund (SGTF) are to be used to fund local projects that provide for recreational channel marking, public launching facilities, derelict vessel removal and other local boating related activities. 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. Pursuant to Section 328.72(15), Florida Statutes, \$1 is directed from the county portion of vessel registration fees and deposited into MRCTF to be used to fund a competitive grant program for local projects providing public launching facilities. (DLE)

**Artificial Reef Construction and Assessment****\$600,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund \$300,000

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust Fund \$300,000

Funding is requested 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. Revenues to fund this request are from Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration grants from the USFWS and from the sale of recreational saltwater fishing licenses (a portion of which serves as the match required to receive federal funds). This request supports a strategy identified by the Marine Fisheries Management Innovative Tools strategic initiative to prioritize, implement, and support habitat restoration. According to socioeconomic studies conducted from 1998 to 2011, for every dollar spent on artificial reef construction an average of \$261 is spent annually by those that use artificial reefs. 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. The Artificial Reef Program has funded more than 1,500 artificial reefs since 1986. Funds are allocated to projects in compliance with federal regulations governing state use of Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration funds. (DMFM)

**Marine Debris Removal- Year 2****\$ 1,026,000 (NR)**

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust fund

A two-year grant submitted by FWC to support these expenditures was approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in November 2018. The 2019 legislature authorized expenditures of \$3,251,960 in non-recurring funds for the first year of this grant. Of this total the Division of Law Enforcement received authority to expend \$144,412 in non-recurring funds and \$3,000,000 in fixed capital outlay Derelict Vessel Removal Program for the first year of the grant. Those funds will be used to provide funding for a project coordinator (OPS) position, to facilitate the removal of trap debris, displaced and derelict vessels, and other marine debris post Hurricane Irma, create a derelict vessel database and contract with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) for aquaculture debris project. This request is to fund contracts for debris removal, continue to create the derelict vessel database, facilitate the removal of derelict vessels, and other marine debris, continue assisting with the marine debris

assessment, and a project coordinator (OPS) position, expenses and travel (\$1,026,000 NR) to manage the projects, coordinate the removal debris, and perform site inspections during the second year of the grant. (DLE)

**Hurricane Michael Fisheries Disaster Relief**

**\$ TBD (NR)**

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust Fund

This is a placeholder until we learn how much federal aid will be allocated to the State of Florida. (DMFM)