

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Chief Financial Officer 2020 Legislative Session Budget Report - Week 4

SENATE

The Senate Committee on Appropriations took up and passed its General Appropriations Act (GAA), implementing bill, and budget conforming bills this week. One amendment was filed and approved; the amendment increased the overall agency budget by \$250,000 in non-recurring general revenue for an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle NIR Python Detection Camera Project. FWC's new appropriation total is \$405.4 million, with 2,114.50 FTE positions. The GAA (SB 2500) can be found [HERE](#); the FWC budget starts on page 247, line item 1771. Further details on Senate budget recommendations are available below and on the attached side-by-side comparison spreadsheet.

New Issues:

The committee recommended the following *Strategic Support* initiatives: Coral Reef Disease Response and Restoration, State Reef Fish Survey, Combatting Burmese Pythons, Non-Native and Conflict Species Management, Derelict Vessel Removal Program, Enhanced Wildlife Disease Response, Fish Eating Creek Wildlife Management Area - Campground Phase II, and funds for enhanced Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance.

The following *Operational Support* initiatives were funded: Center for Red Tide Research, Long-Term Stored Vessel Study, Replacement of Patrol Vehicles, Cloud Computing Solutions, Network Bandwidth Increase, FWRI - Facilities Repair and Maintenance - Critical Safety & Security, Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area Office, FWRI Repairs – Joint Use Facility HVAC - Phase I, Marine Navigating Repair and Management, Support Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Funding, DeFuniak Springs Field Office and Replacement of Vehicles and Vessels.

The following *Optimize Federal and Grant Funding* initiatives were recommended: Hurricane Irma Fisheries Disaster Recovery – Year 2, Joe Budd Shooting Sports Complex, Palm Beach Recreational Shooting Park – Paving and Access Improvements, Boating Infrastructure Grant Program, Florida Boating Improvement Program, Hurricane Irma Marine Debris Removal, Artificial Reef Construction Program, and budget authority for various National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Projects.



The following issues were recommended to be funded with non-recurring appropriations: Red Tide Research, Mote Marine Critical Marine Habitat Restoration, and ZooTampa – Florida Panther Medical Facilities.

Reductions: No reductions to FWC's budget were recommended.

Trust Fund Sweeps: No trust fund sweeps were recommended.

Employee Compensation: The Senate recommended a competitive pay adjustment of 3.0 percent for all eligible state employees as of June 30, 2020, with a minimum annual increase of \$1,000.

Budget Conforming Bills: Budget conforming bills are bills traveling with the General Appropriations Act (GAA) that contain substantive changes to law that are necessary to support the budget as outlined in the GAA. Implementing bill(s) are available here:

SB 2502 - Implementing the 2020-2021 General Appropriations Act

SB 2504 - State Employees

SB 7004 - State Administered Retirement Systems

HOUSE

The House Appropriations Committee also took up and passed its GAA, implementing bill, and budget conforming bills this week. The House position on FWC's budget remains the same as reported last week with \$405.3 million and 2,104.0 employees. The House GAA for FWC can be found [HERE](#); the FWC budget starts on page 247, line item 1771. Further details on House budget recommendations are available below and on the attached side-by-side comparison spreadsheet

New Issues:

The committee recommended the following *Strategic Support* initiatives: Coral Reef Disease Response and Restoration, State Reef Fish Survey, Non-Native and Conflict Species Management, Derelict Vessel Removal Program, Enhanced Wildlife Disease Response, Fish Eating Creek Wildlife Management Area - Campground Phase II, Expanding Mechanical Control Technology for Invasive Plant Management, and funding for enhanced Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance.

The following *Operational Support* initiatives were funded: Center for Red Tide Research, Long-Term Stored Vessel Study, Replacement of Patrol Vehicles, Cloud Computing Solutions, Network Bandwidth Increase, FWRI Facilities Repair and



Maintenance, Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area Office, FWRI Repairs – Joint Use Facility HVAC - Phase I, Marine Navigation Repair and Management, Support for Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Funding, DeFuniak Springs Field Office, and Replacement of Vehicles and Vessels.

The following *Optimize Federal and Grant Funding* initiatives were recommended: Hurricane Irma Fisheries Disaster Recovery – Year 2, Joe Budd Shooting Sports Complex, Palm Beach Recreational Shooting Park – Paving and Access Improvements, Boating Infrastructure Grant Program, Florida Boating Improvement Program, Hurricane Irma Marine Debris Removal, Artificial Reef Construction Program, and funding for various National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

The following projects were recommended to be funded with non-recurring appropriations: Seminole County Discounted Bear-Resistant Refuse Containers, Parkland Exotic Invasive Tree Removal, St. Lucie County Treasure Coast International Airport Scrub-Jay Habitat, Restoring Central Florida's Urban Wetland Corridor, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Near Infrared Python Detection Camera, Zoo Miami, Zoo Tampa, Bascom Farms, Grants/Aids- Florida Aquarium.

Reductions: The committee recommended the reduction of 10.50 FTE positions that have been vacant in excess of 180 days; they propose eliminating the funding for the Smithsonian Marine Station, the Fostering Success Program, and the Transfer to the Department of Agriculture/Institute of Food and Agriculture (IFAS) for Invasive Exotic Plant Research.

Trust Fund Sweeps: No trust fund sweeps were recommended.

Employee Compensation: The House recommends a competitive pay adjustment of \$1,800 for those eligible state employees making \$50,000 or less on September 30, 2020. For those employees with a base rate of pay greater than \$50,000, but less than \$51,800, an annual increase to achieve \$51,800; provided however, in no instance may an employee's base rate of pay be increased to an annual amount greater than \$51,800.

Budget Conforming Bills: Budget conforming bills are bills traveling with the GAA that contain substantive changes to law that are necessary to support the budget as approved in the GAA. Implementing bills are available here:

[HB 5003 - Implementing the 2020-2021 General Appropriations Act](#)

[HB 5005 - Collective Bargaining](#)

[HB 5007 - State-Administered Retirement Systems](#)



Next Steps

The next step for the Senate and House budgets bills will be the Floor of the Senate and the Floor of the House, respectively, for final passage. The Senate and House will each take up their own budget bills. After passage of House and Senate budget bills, they will hold a Budget Conference to reconcile the differences between their respective budgets. After both chambers pass the conference budget, it will be sent to the Governor. Once the Governor, who has line item veto authority for the budget, takes his action, the State will then have its beginning budget for Fiscal Year 2020/21.

