

# MEMORANDUM



**To:** Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners  
**From:** Colonel Curtis Brown, Director, Division of Law Enforcement  
**Date:** July 23, 2020  
**Subject:** Staff Report – Marine Debris Presentation

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**Purpose:**

Provide an overview of marine debris types and impacts, FWC related projects and programs, current funding and hurricane response, as well as on-going projects.

**Why:**

Marine debris is an important topic that has generated interest from the Commission.

**Top Points:**

1. Marine debris and its impacts are widespread and reduction efforts are complex, requiring extensive collaboration and coordination.
2. FWC has numerous marine debris related projects and programs throughout the agency.
3. July 1, 2019 the FWC Marine Debris Coordinator position was created, leading intra-agency coordination of efforts, providing stakeholder engagement and subject matter expertise, and working towards program and enhanced partnership development

**Affected Parties:**

All residents, stakeholders, and visitors to Florida as well as regional and international partners.

**Summary:**

Over the past decade, the agency has become increasingly involved in marine debris research, removal, and prevention efforts throughout the state and Gulf Region. This involvement has led many stakeholders to view FWC staff as resource impact subject matter experts. FWC also manages several large-scale statewide federal disaster grants to address hurricane generated debris and is involved in numerous inter-agency collaborations and stakeholder partnerships to reduce marine debris and its impacts. Marine debris is a complex, universal and growing global threat to fish and wildlife and people. FWC is working to increase intra-agency coordination of marine debris efforts, furthering FWC's capacity to lead, serve as resource experts, and partner in statewide and regional marine debris management.

**Staff Recommendation:** None

**Staff Contact and/or Presenter:**

Major Robert Rowe, Section Leader, DLE Boating and Waterways Section  
Dr. Jennifer L. McGee, FWC Marine Debris Coordinator (SME)