

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Budget Status Report – Week 8

FY 2018/19 Legislative Budget Request

Charlotte Jerrett, March 4, 2018

The Budget Conference held an organizational session on Tuesday evening after the House and Senate reached agreement on the conference budget allocations. Senate and House members were appointed to serve on conference committees shortly before the conference started. The House is hosting conference negotiations this year since the Senate hosted conference negotiations during last Session. The committee handling the FWC budget is the Agriculture & Natural Resources / Environment and Natural Resources Budget Conference Committee (ANR/ENR), which includes 7 Senate members and 15 House members. There are also a number of “at large” members on both sides who may participate in any of the budget conference committee meetings.

The work of the ANR/ENR Conference Committee came to a close Friday morning, with only 5 unresolved issues for FWC. Those issues, along with other unresolved ANR/ENR issues, were “bumped” to the House and Senate Appropriations Chairs. The House and Senate Appropriations Chairs met late Friday evening and agreed upon all “bumped” issues. Details of the agreed upon budget issues are available below and on the attached side-by-side comparison spreadsheet.

While the majority of budget issues that impact FWC have been agreed upon at this time, several subject areas within the state budget remain open.

New Issues:

The budget includes the following FWC Strategic Support initiatives: Working to Keep Florida Native, Derelict Vessel Removal Program, Florida Black Bear Conflict Reduction and funding for Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area ADA Retrofit.

The following Operational Support initiatives were funded: Law Enforcement Body Worn Cameras, Law Enforcement Officer Reserve Program, Aviation Enhancement, DeFuniak Springs Field Office, Bryant Building Facilities Repair and Maintenance, Cybersecurity Remediation, Replacement funding for DLE Patrol Vessels, FWRI Vessels and Critical Vehicle Replacement, FWRI Safety and Security Repairs, FWRI Roof Replacement and Repair, Southwest Regional Office Flood Abatement, Enterprise Mobile Initiative and Youth Conservation Education Donations.

The following Optimize Federal and Grant Funding initiatives were recommended: Boating Infrastructure, Palm Beach County Recreational Shooting Park, Florida Boating Improvement Program and Artificial Reefs.

The following projects were recommended to be funded with non-recurring appropriations: Robinson Preserve Habitat Restoration, Center for Conservation Coral Ark & Guest Experience, Lowry Park Zoo, Mote Marine Laboratory and Palm Beach Zoo.

Reductions:

Reductions of \$1,916,014 of Trust Fund Authority Based on Historical Reversions and \$288,766 for a Reduction of Operations.

Proviso:

Proviso is language included in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) giving specific instruction on certain line item appropriations.

Trust Fund Sweeps:

No Trust Fund Sweeps were recommended.

Employee Compensation:

At this time, pay issues have not been finalized.

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. See links below. At this time, the appropriation bill and conforming bills are still pending.

Senate:

[SB 2500 - Appropriations](#)

[SB 2502 - Implementing the 2018-2019 General Appropriations Act](#)

[SB 2504 - State Employees](#)

[SB 7014 - State-administered Retirement Systems](#)

House:

[HB 5001 - General Appropriations Act](#)

[HB 5003 - Implementing the 2018-19 General Appropriations Act](#)

[HB 5005 - Collective Bargaining](#)

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

Next Steps

House and Senate Appropriations Chairs will continue to negotiate other unresolved state budget issues for final resolution. Employee pay and

benefits are usually also negotiated by the Appropriations Chairs. Once all issues are agreed upon, the Conference bills will be printed and delivered to members to review during a 72 hour "cooling off" period prior to final passage. The House and Senate will then take up the Conference budget bills and, when passed (the budget is the only bill required to pass each Session), will send them to the Governor for final action. After the Governor completes his line item veto list, the State will have its beginning budget for Fiscal Year 2018/19.