



# Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission 2018/19 Legislative Budget Request

*Agenda Item 4 B – December 5, 2017*

## I. Strategic Initiative Support

Working to Keep Florida Native	\$	1,500,000	TF
Derelict Vessel Removal (FCO)	\$	1,000,000	GR
Florida Black Bear Conflict Reduction	\$	500,000	GR
Fisheating Creek WMA (FCO)	\$	1,100,000	TF
Invasive Plant Management	\$	2,000,000	TF
Nuisance Alligator Trapper Stipends	\$	90,000	TF
Lake Restoration and Enhancement Projects	\$	1,500,000	TF

## II. Operational Support

LE Enhanced Patrol & Support - 25.0 FTE	\$	5,541,341	TF
LE Officer Reserve Program	\$	243,052	TF
Bryant Building Facility Maintenance (FCO)	\$	750,000	TF
Cybersecurity Remediation	\$	200,000	TF
LE Body Worn Cameras	\$	735,760	TF
Replacement Funding for Vehicles and Vessels	\$	2,766,235	GR/TF
Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center Renovations (FCO)	\$	900,000	TF
FWRI Facility Safety and Security Repairs	\$	497,000	TF
Stone Crab Research and Monitoring	\$	300,000	TF
Southwest Regional Office Flood Abatement (FCO)	\$	150,000	TF
Enterprise Mobile Development Initiative	\$	488,000	TF
Youth Conservation Education Donations	\$	150,000	TF
Realign Funding	\$	0	TF

## III. Optimize Federal and Grant Funding

Boating Access (FCO)	\$	3,900,000	TF
Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park (FCO)	\$	3,000,000	TF
Florida Boating Improvement Program (FCO)	\$	3,842,600	TF
Artificial Reef Construction and Assessment (FCO)	\$	600,000	TF

3,500,000	GR
28,653,988	TF
32,153,988	Total

## I. Strategic Initiative Support

### Working to Keep Florida Native

**\$1,500,000 (R)**

Funding Source: \$1,075,000 Land Acquisition Trust Fund

Funding Source: \$ 425,000 Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

This request is for an increase in spending authority for a comprehensive, three-pronged program designed to help Keep Florida Native while increasing our ability to provide wildlife conflict response capabilities. Multiple nonnative species are emerging as threats to human health and safety, the environment and the economy of Florida. The resulting human-wildlife conflicts are increasing in Florida as both human and wildlife populations come into closer contact. Conflicts range from general negative interactions between humans and wildlife which can result in property damage or injury to pets, to significant public safety threats which potentially could lead to human injury or death. Call volume the FWC receives on all conflict species, including pythons, iguanas, tegus, bears, alligators, American crocodiles, coyotes, raccoons, sandhill cranes, etc., has increased over the last three years, from 7,534 to 12,486, or approximately 66%. Addressing human-wildlife conflict is recognized as one of the strategic initiatives outlined in the FWC Agency Strategic Plan. This request will expand multiple programs, including the Wildlife Assistance Program and the Statewide Nuisance Alligator Program, which provide technical guidance and information to help prevent human-wildlife conflicts as well assistance to the public when they experience human wildlife conflict. This request will also provide for a comprehensive program to address expansion of non-native wildlife in Florida through the development of a Nonnative Species Rapid Response Network (NSRRN), a cost-sharing program with HOAs and local government agencies, funding for private contractors to assist with removal of exotics on public lands. High priority species for management include lionfish, Burmese pythons, African rock pythons, monitor lizards, Argentine black and white tegus, and green iguanas. This request recognizes the need to address nonnative species in Florida and that the resultant human-wildlife conflict is a permanent aspect of life for many Florida residents. Funding will improve FWC's capacity to deal with nonnative species and human-wildlife conflict through education, outreach and technical assistance, and by working proactively with the state's residents, local governments, and businesses. (DHSC)

This request is also for funding for the Division of Marine Fisheries Management (DMFM) to enhance current capabilities of the agency to address invasive lionfish issues. This funding will help address a critical need to improve agency responsiveness to emerging issues related to lionfish in Florida. FWC staff will work with organizations and individuals that are developing innovative strategies to harvest lionfish from deep-water reefs. The economic contribution by saltwater anglers in Florida is estimated at \$7.6 billion. The dockside sale of commercially caught fish in Florida is valued at \$250 million. Not only do reef fish fisheries contribute a large percentage of

state fishery landings and associated revenue from both recreational and commercial fisheries, but non-extractive reef- fish activities, such as ecotourism and diving, also contribute greatly to Florida's economy. One of the greatest threats to these natural treasures and economic engines are invasive lionfish. Lionfish prey on reef-fish species that are important to Floridians. Invasive lionfish could also potentially affect habitats for these important reef fish species. The funding of this request would enhance the coordination of local/regional lionfish issues; proactively address emerging lionfish issues; help evaluate local lionfish populations and their potential impacts; and help develop innovative gears that could remove lionfish. (DMFM)

**Derelict Vessel Removal**

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

Funding Source: General Revenue Fund

In FY 2016/17 the Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) was appropriated \$1,400,000 for derelict vessel removal and removed 134 vessels. In the current fiscal year, the Division received \$1,488,550 for the derelict vessel removal program, and expects to remove 150 vessels. An additional \$1,000,000 non-recurring budget authority from General Revenue (GR) FCO funding is being requested for FY 2018/19 to continue the derelict vessel removal program. With a Commission approved grant rule that requires a 25% match by the applicant, the requested amount would allow DLE to continue the cleanup of all currently known derelict vessels in state waters. In conjunction with local governments, the DLE has identified 431 known derelict vessels in Florida waterways.

**Florida Black Bear Conflict Reduction**

**\$500,000 (R)**

Funding Source: General Revenue

This request is for \$500,000 in recurring spending authority from General Revenue funding to cost-share the purchase of bear-resistant garbage containers to reduce human-bear conflicts. Funding will be used for match grants to local and county governments to purchase bear proof garbage receptacles for mitigating food attractant conflicts. FWC would leverage this funding to help purchase and deploy as many bear-resistant garbage containers as possible. In this regard, FWC will continue to work with local governments, the waste management industry and other partners to utilize this appropriation to increase the number of bear proof containers used in conflict areas. We would use these funds within the 16 priority counties where 90% of human-bear conflicts occur. Within these counties, funds would be focused on the highest priority areas with the best opportunities for current impact to reduce bear conflicts where waste management is the critical factor. Additionally, we would leverage the availability of this funding to help negotiate the most favorable cost sharing waste management agreements possible. Bear-resistant garbage containers cost about \$200 each. For example if all agreements were under a 50/50 cost share agreement, these funds would purchase at least 5,000 containers. These should leverage the use of thousands more that would be deployed in the areas where they are needed most. (DHSC)

**Fisheating Creek WMA****\$1,100,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: Land Acquisition Trust Fund

Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Campground Environmental Safety and ADA Project - Phase 1: This request is from available revenues dedicated to land management activities pursuant to s. 379.212, Florida Statutes. Fisheating Creek WMA in rural Glades County (population of about 13,000) generates an average of 50,000 visits per year. The travel-related economic impact of these visitors is approximately \$4,300,000 (Rob Southwick, Southwick and Associates, 2010; "Economic Impact per Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Viewing Trip in Florida".) The FEC campground is a main destination for these visitors. This campground is a 30-year old heavily used facility with water, sewer and electric systems that due to their age and material type, have far exceeded their usable service life. These antiquated facilities routinely break and/or flood which create unsafe conditions. Such conditions include:

- Groundwater contamination from sewer line breaks
- Lack of potable water due to water line breaks
- Electrical hazards due to insufficient campsite connections elevation above flood water

Phase 1 funding will replace and upgrade about half the campground utilities and retrofit several camp pads for ADA to bring the campground in compliance with Federal requirements for outdoor recreation facilities. Complete replacement of the water sewer, electric services and raising of camp pads will ensure environmental compliance and safety for users. Improvements are consistent with the adopted management plan and provide a non-hazardous, environmentally conscious, accessible campground for the public. FWC has invested \$400,000 to masterplan, design and permit the needed improvements and to reconstruct the main lift station and force main into a full code compliant, visually and auditory alarmed, sewer lift station.

Phase 2 will complete the utility replacements in the remaining portion of the RV campground. Phasing of construction is requested to avoid shutdown of this popular campground and impacts to the community and the FWC concessionaire. Total project costs to implement both construction phases of the ADA, utilities, user upgrades, safety elements is approx. \$1.9 million. All plans and permits are in place to begin site work. (DHSC)

**Invasive Plant Management****\$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 to manage invasive plants on public conservation lands and in public water bodies. Excessive invasive plant populations have adverse impacts on recreation such as fishing, hunting, boating, swimming, ecotourism as well as negatively impacting beneficial native habitat that is critical for the management of fish and wildlife. Additional funding would bring more conservation lands into a maintenance state by addressing older untreated infestations and by establishing rotation treatment intervals to maintain habitat quality for the long-term in the most cost-effective manner. Plant control projects

using the additional funding would target Brazilian pepper, melaleuca, and earleaf acacia in the Everglades ecoregion and Old World and Japanese climbing ferns throughout the state. Consistent dedicated funding is important to prevent “losing ground” to invading species. Equally as important, consistent funding allows for the establishment of multi-year contracts that provide a level of assurance to the small business contractors and results in increased private sector job opportunities. (DHSC)

**Nuisance Alligator Trapper Stipends** **\$90,000 (R)**  
Funding Source: State Game Trust Fund

The Statewide Nuisance Alligator Program provides a valuable public service at significant savings to the state utilizing contracted nuisance alligator trappers to address the public safety risk posed by alligators. Contracted trappers are primarily compensated through the sale of meat and hides from the nuisance alligators taken. This stipend, however, serves as supplemental compensation to contracted trappers based on the level of alligators each is handling. This funding, which has been in place since FY 2003/04, has helped to offset increasing operating costs incurred by the trappers and consequently has helped ensure the long-term stability of this important public safety program. The current funding level is insufficient to provide a stipend for all of the nuisance alligators taken each year. Over 9,000 stipends were eligible to be paid for last year, but funding is only available for 7,000 (\$30 stipend x 7,000 = \$210,000 Base Budget). (DHGM)

**Lake Restoration and Enhancement Projects** **\$1,500,000 (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. Each year the Lake Restoration program averages over 60 requests for aquatic habitat restoration and enhancement projects on publicly owned waters throughout the state. These projects are designed to improve habitat conditions and expand public access resulting in greater utilization by fish and wildlife and increased public and business-based outdoor recreation. This funding will be used to manage existing aquatic habitat resources, restore and enhance priority aquatic habitats identified in the Aquatic Habitat Assessment Plan and address critical emerging aquatic habitat resource issues. The increase will be used on publicly owned freshwater and marine aquatic habitats to fund restoration/enhancement projects using a mix of FWC staff and private sector contractors. (DHSC)

## II. Operational Support

### Law Enforcement Enhanced

#### Patrol & Support

**25 FTE; \$5,541,341 (\$2,394,020 NR)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

This request is for 23 sworn law enforcement officer positions and 2 dispatcher support staff, as well as associated operating costs, to be funded from the Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund (MRCTF). Officers are responsible for serving across Florida's 8,400 miles of shoreline, 13,000 square miles of offshore water, and more than 34 million acres of public and private lands, as well as patrolling Florida's 174 state parks. The FWC Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) provides law enforcement patrol and investigative services for laws relating to all wild animal and aquatic resources; boating safety enforcement, law enforcement in Florida's State Parks, the protection of the public in rural, semi-wilderness, wilderness, and offshore areas where no other law enforcement agencies routinely patrol; natural disaster and civil disturbance response; search and rescue missions; dignitary protection; mutual aid requests; domestic security initiatives; and wildlife import/export enforcement in Florida's ports.

In 2012 FWC DLE merged with DEP Law Enforcement and added the responsibility of providing law enforcement in Florida state parks. Since the merger, the parks system has seen large increases in attendance. Additionally, over the past five years the Division has seen a large increase in calls for service, increases in the number of registered vessels, as well as an increase in both population and tourism in Florida. With the exception of the 2012 merger, the number of law enforcement positions has remained the same since 2004. Since 2012, Florida's population has grown by more than one million, to 20 million residents. The number of visitors coming to Florida has increased by more than 20 million people per year to over 112 million annually. Florida also has the largest number of registered vessels of any state in the nation at nearly one million. Since the FWC assumed state park patrol responsibilities, state park system attendance has increased to over 31 million visitors. This is an increase of nearly seven million people per year; an increase of 25%.

These positions would be added in locations where the Division needs to increase our level of service. These staffing shortfalls can create public safety concerns, officer safety issues, as well as reduced services to the public. These positions will be allocated across the state in the following regions; 8 in South B, 4 in South A, 5 in Southwest, 5 in Northeast, and 1 in the Northwest. To determine the location of these positions, we analyzed standard law enforcement benchmark data at the county level: land area, coastline, water area, licenses sold, state park attendance, calls for service, protected lands, registered vessels, shellfish areas, manatee areas, and population.

The DLE has proactively attempted to address these issues internally by both moving positions to areas of greatest need and by reducing management positions and increasing officer level positions. The Division has moved 20 positions to the

southern part of the state to address staffing issues. Additionally, the Division aggressively streamlined its rank structure and downgraded 19 sworn positions including a deputy director, majors, captains and lieutenants.

**Law Enforcement Officer Reserve Program** **\$243,052 (\$31,984 NR)**

Funding Source: \$121,256 Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

Funding Source: \$121,256 Land Acquisition Trust Fund

This request would provide budget authority to allow retired/former FWC officers who have left the agency in good standing and wish to be a reservist, the option to return to work an average of 192 hours (two 8 hour shifts per month in a 12-month period) per year. These funds are necessary to help address a growing concern and risk within the overall law enforcement field. The area of risk identified by the agency is the lack of tenure among our officer corps. Currently, 55% of officers have fewer than five years as an FWC officer. A large number of relatively new officers increases the level of risk incurred by the agency. This risk can be mitigated through the use of retired, experienced officers who can mentor and train less experienced officers. These OPS officers would concentrate on several issues that are important to the agency:

- Mentoring less experienced officers
- Patrolling in state parks during peak times
- Augmenting current officers during busy times, such as holiday weekends

Trends in law enforcement show that seasoned and tenured officers are aging out of the workforce after a career with one agency. This trend, along with generational trends of moving and changing employers, creates a gap in experienced officers. Additionally, FWC prides itself on focusing on recruiting those re-entering civilian employment, after retiring from our armed forces. It is important to establish good work habits, learn key skills and develop institutional knowledge early in an officer's career. Having a large percentage of the Division's work force with a short tenure makes this difficult. This problem is compounded when junior officers are forced into training roles for newly hired officers, as has recently been the case. For Academy Class 31, 45% of their field training officers (FTOs) had fewer than 5 years' experience as an FWC officer. This perpetuates a lack of institutional knowledge and necessary skills which would typically be passed down by senior officers during initial training and on-the-job mentoring. By retaining senior officers on a part-time basis as reservists, we can bridge the experience gap with our less tenured officers. Passing on job skills and knowledge is key to providing efficient customer service.

**Bryant Building Facility Maintenance** **\$750,000 (FCO)**

Trust Fund: Administrative Trust Fund

Funds are requested to make critical repairs to the Bryant Building, which is owned by the FWC and serves as the location for headquarters. \$450,000 is requested to address the replacement of the original elevator system and renovation needs in areas of the first and third floors. The elevator system is an antiquated system dating back to the original construction of the building (i.e. 1964) and uses electric switches that spark at each use and represent a present fire hazard. The system

has been repaired multiple times and is so out of date that parts are difficult to acquire. Failure to have the elevator in use will hamper service and result in non-compliance with the American Disabilities Act.

\$300,000 is requested to address the replacement of the chiller. The chiller was installed in 1999 and now faces serious mechanical issues. The system has been repaired multiple times and recent issues with the control board are irreparable due to the inability to obtain replacement parts from the manufacturer.

**Cybersecurity Remediation** **\$200,000 (R)**

Funding Source: Administrative Trust Fund

This initiative will help ensure that FWC complies with Information Technology Security Rule 74-2 of F.A.C, and the findings and recommendations stemming from Auditor General Report No. 2017-201 (Mobile Device Security Controls). In addition, this funding would address recommendations stemming from other internal and 3<sup>rd</sup>-party partial security risk assessments. Additional advanced threat protection would be provided as an add-on to our Office 365 email environment, against malware and other security threats in real time (\$74,000 annual subscription), equip every field office with a security appliance (firewall) to harden our internet connectivity and exposure, as well as provide tools for content blocking and filtering, traffic classification and prioritization, and intrusion detection and prevention (\$20,000 annual maintenance). Additionally, this funding would support necessary Mobile Device Management tools and services to address audit findings and to support and enforce existing policies, protect data and resources used by our mobile workforce (\$106,000 annual subscription). (OIT)

**Law Enforcement Body Worn Cameras** **\$735,760 (R)**

Funding Source: \$367,880 Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

Funding Source: \$367,880 Land Acquisition Trust Fund

The Division of Law Enforcement (Division) is requesting recurring funding to provide Body Worn Cameras (BWC) to all patrol positions in the division. Other agencies' use of BWC programs has been shown to be a promising practice to improve law enforcement's interactions with the public. BWC are an important tool that could be an integrated with part of the divisions problem-solving and community engagement strategy, helping to increase both trust and communication between the members and the stake holders we serve. BWCs can be highly effective, providing an objective audio and visual record of interactions that can capture empirical evidence in the event of a crime, citizen interaction, or use-of-force incident. Preliminary research indicates that departments that have effectively implemented BWC programs have received fewer public complaints, file fewer use-of-force reports, and show a reduction in adjudicated complaints resulting in a decrease of settlements.

The funding requested would provide the costs of the cameras and associated management software, cloud based storage of recorded videos, and required support staff. Based on research from other agencies that have implemented a

BWC program additional staff is required for support of the cameras and for the increase in public records request for videos. The public records staff is also responsible for redacting portions of the videos that contain confidential information, which is a time-consuming task.

**Replacement Funding for Vehicles and Vessels** **\$2,766,235 (NR)**  
 Funding Source: Various Trust Funds

This request includes spending authority for the acquisition and replacement of vessels, motors and trailers. The replacement criteria for vessels is 10 years or older. Of the nearly 600 vessels within the Division of Law Enforcement, 238 meet DMS eligibility requirements for trade. The Division has typically purchased 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 \$28,000 to \$140,000 for each unit. This request also includes spending authority in other Divisions to replace those vessels and vehicles for which there is a most critical need for replacement; these include vehicles that have become otherwise inoperable.

Division Breakdown:

OED – 1 Vehicle (ATF)	(\$30,454)
DLE – 20 Vessels (GR)	(\$2,000,000)
HSC – 1 Vehicle (NGTF)	(\$30,369)
FWRI – 8 Vehicles (Various)	(\$272,905)
FWRI – 29 Boats, Motors, Trailers (Various)	(\$432,507)

**Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center Renovation Request** **\$900,000 (FCO)**  
 Funding Source: Land Acquisition Trust Fund

Florida has over 3 million acres of freshwater in 7,700 lakes and 12,000 miles of fishable rivers, streams and canals that support important sport fish, non-sport fish, and imperiled fish species. Recreational freshwater fishing is a \$1.8 billion industry in Florida supporting over 14,000 jobs. Florida's 1.2 million freshwater anglers (residents and visitors) enjoy world class fishing opportunities that contribute to the state being recognized as the "Fishing Capital of the World". FWC operates two freshwater hatcheries, the Florida Bass Conservation Center and the Blackwater Hatchery, that support these diverse fishing opportunities by providing up to five million sportfish species annually for stocking in public waters. Both facilities are integral in ensuring that the Commission meets the objectives identified in the EPIC Strategic Initiative, FYCCN, R3 programs, and restoration projects.

The Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center in Holt, Florida assists with meeting annual statewide production goals by providing up to one million largemouth bass, blue gill, catfish, crappie, striped bass, and hybrid striped bass. Blackwater has also partnered with the USFWS and Southeastern states on the restoration of native striped bass. The native striped bass had virtually disappeared from rivers in Florida and neighboring states but through the multi-agency

partnership this trophy fish is on the road to recovery. As indicated by population assessments and reports from anglers, this successful program is now producing catches in the 30+ pound class. Over the last 25 years, Blackwater hatchery has produced over 14 million fry that have been used to enhance or reestablish striped bass populations in panhandle rivers and Lake Seminole and Lake Talquin in Florida, as well as other river systems in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

This funding request would allow for the hatchery to continue to meet the needs of current production requests by restoring the outdoor ponds and constructing an outdoor fish harvest and quarantine area. It also includes a request to make improvements to the 35-year-old hatchery building. Hatchery tours are routinely provided to the public and the facility hosts events for outdoor recreation groups and the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail; improvements would ensure that the facility complies with ADA standards and provides equal access for all visitors.

(1) ADA Accessibility / Renovation: This request would provide funding for facility upgrades at FWC's Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center in Holt, Florida. In addition to producing sport fish to benefit anglers and FYCCN, the hatchery plays a critical role in the multi-agency Gulf Striped Bass Recovery Program, and serves as a destination for many visitors. Tours are provided throughout the year to schools and community groups; the facility is also open to wildlife viewers traveling along the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail. Modifications to the doorways, reception area, and restrooms would improve accessibility and ensure that the path of travel is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs.

Office space at the hatchery consists of two buildings, the main hatchery building and the research office. Both buildings are over 35 years old and require renovations. The office space within the facility is shared with FFM, HSC, FWRI, and LE. Renovations to improve ADA accessibility include:

- Widen front entry door and replace front step with ramp access
- Renovate reception area to improve maneuverability with wheelchairs
- Renovate restroom to widen doorway, relocate sink, and install handicap bars
- Widen doorway into the fish production area and replace threshold
- Construct ramp to provide access to research office
- Retrofit the research office bathroom to improve accessibility

(2) Renovation to Earthen Production Ponds: Six of the production ponds at the hatchery are 1.75 acre earthen ponds that average 4 feet in depth. The ponds were originally constructed in the 1940's and have not undergone any major renovations or repairs to stabilize the banks. The ponds are in need of re-sculpting and bank stabilization to prevent further erosion. The ponds are used to produce largemouth bass, striped bass, hybrid striped bass, bluegill, and catfish. Fish production is based on the needs of the multi-state striped bass conservation project, the angling community, FYCCN, and aquatic restoration projects. The

estimated cost of the pond renovation is \$100,000/pond. This request is to renovate three of the six ponds for a total of \$300,000 with plans to complete the remaining renovations in future years. A multi-year request would allow for renovations to be completed in a phased approach to reduce impacts to the production schedule.

(3) Construction of Fish Harvest and Quarantine Area: This proposal is to construct an outdoor harvest and loading dock at the Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center to use for transfer of fish and to serve as a quarantine area. A harvest structure is needed for stocking trucks to transfer fish directly into four raceways, to sort fish and to hold fish for quarantine purposes. Being able to hold fish in quarantine reduces the potential of introducing infectious disease to the indoor facility, allows new fish to acclimate, provides a recovery area for fish, and can double as treatment tanks to isolate infected fish. The construction of a harvest and loading dock increases operational efficiency, decreases handling time, and reduces fish mortality. The proposed cost reflects the labor and materials to install plumbing lines, construct the covered loading dock/platform, and raceways. (DFFM)

**Fish and Wildlife Research Institute**

**Safety and Security Repairs**

**\$497,000 (FCO)**

Funding Source: \$335,000 Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

Funding Source: \$162,000 Nongame Wildlife Trust Fund

This request would provide for critical safety and security repairs at several facilities. Funding in the amount of \$162,000 is requested to replace failing roofs on two structures at the Freshwater Fisheries Research Laboratory in Eustis. Most of the roof material on the larger 9450 square feet facility is more than 20 years old. Leaks in seams where sections of roof connect have allowed water to intrude, generating mold issues and potential health concerns for staff. Additionally, the boat storage warehouse has a roof surface of 3,120 square feet with an equally poor roof structure that we intend to replace. Funding in the amount of \$110,000 is requested for critical safety and security repairs consisting of the following: emergency generator replacement/repair at FWRI Headquarters and the Marine Mammal Pathobiology Laboratory in St. Petersburg and the FWRI field Laboratory in Charlotte Harbor. In addition and to protect state assets, funds in the amount of \$65,000 are included in this request for security fencing replacement at the FWRI field lab in Tequesta and the installation of security cameras at the FWRI Charlotte Harbor field lab. This request also includes funds (\$160,000) for replacement of one of the air handlers and two boilers at the FWRI Headquarters in St. Petersburg. This equipment is over 20 years old and has shown signs of failing, creating high humidity environments conducive to mold growth in the facility. (FWRI)

**Stone Crab Research and Monitoring**

**\$300,000 (\$200,000 NR)**

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

This request is for funding to enhance monitoring and research support to sustainably manage Florida's third most valuable fishery, Stone Crab, which

generated over \$31 million in dockside revenue in 2016. This request is fully supported by the Stone Crab Industry through the Florida Keys Commercial Fishing Association. Funding for Stone Crab fishery monitoring was last increased in 2006 totaling \$275,000/year and provided for data collection in Northwest Florida but has proven insufficient to cover Southwest Florida between Everglades City and Tampa Bay which represents 30% of the landings and fishery revenue. The current funding request will allow us to close this last major data gap and effect statewide coverage (Steinhatchee to Key West). Closing this data gap is essential because lack of data in this region prevents FWC from fulfilling standing requests from the industry to explain how current and future changes to freshwater inflow quantity and quality, from Comprehensive Everglades Restoration, will impact the core stone crab nursery area located between Everglades City and Boca Grande. Recurring funds are requested (\$100,000) to establish additional personnel (1 OPS staff), equipment, and operational budget to ongoing operations that enhance current fishery-independent surveys and new research to support improved assessment capacity. Non-recurring funds (\$200,000) will be used to purchase one new 25' vessel that allows research in deeper waters and provides the displacement to haul 2,000 pounds of research traps; one new tow vehicle and one replacement truck for transporting field staff for commercial ride-along trips. (FWRI)

**Southwest Regional Office Flood Abatement**

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

Funding Source: Administrative Trust Fund

This project's first phase will design and permit a permanent flood abatement system to relieve chronic flooding at the Southwest Regional Office in Lakeland and to restore the existing stormwater ponds to be in compliance with permit conditions. During heavy rain events, deep water collecting in the parking areas surrounding the building creates dangerous driving conditions and renders the building inaccessible until the flood waters recede. FWC has consulted with Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and they have requested FWC to complete the pond restorations. The flooding retrofit will also correct the significant uneven surfaces to bring the exterior of this publicly accessed site into full compliance with federal accessibility requirements. A future FCO request for construction would follow and is estimated to cost about \$559,000. The total project cost is \$709,000. (OED)

**Enterprise Mobile Development Initiative**

**\$488,000 (R)**

Funding Source: Administrative Trust Fund

This funding request is necessary to ensure that our online applications, whether used by the public or FWC staff, are optimized for mobile use. A significant portion of new information technology projects involve development targeted to mobile and portable devices. Gartner predicts that, by 2018, more than 50 percent of users will access a tablet or smartphone first for all online activities. FWC's own analytics support this trend, as just over 45% of those visiting our online resources are accessing them from a mobile device such as smartphones and tablets. These multiple initiatives not only need to be carefully and skillfully managed, but will

necessitate having the specific skill sets in mobile application development for successful implementation.

As one of its strategic initiatives, FWC has set forth to increase participation in conservation among youth and families through programs that promote fishing, hunting, boating, wildlife viewing, shooting sports and conservation appreciation. One approach has been through applied Citizen Science, where we engage the public in online reporting of wildlife sightings, fish kills, or injured wildlife. Most of these online applications designed to engage with our stakeholders, and many that may be used internally by FWC staff to collect critical data out in the field, are not optimized for use on mobile platforms. For example, users have been requesting that two of our most popular citizen science applications (panther and bear sightings) be made more mobile friendly. (OIT)

**Youth Conservation Education Donations**

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

Funding Source: State Game Trust Fund

In 2007 the Florida Legislature passed legislation that established a method for citizens to make a donation, at the time of the purchase of their recreational hunting or fishing license, toward promotion of youth hunting and fishing programs. FWC's spending authority for the revenue from voluntary donations is currently \$50,000. However, yearly revenues have exceeded that amount and additional spending authority is needed to spend the revenue as intended. Due to increased marketing campaigns regarding this donation, FY 2016/17 revenues from these donations totaled \$242,232. This request is to increase the spending authority by \$150,000 based on revenues that have been received to date. Funds will be used to implement youth hunting and fishing programs; teaching safety, conservation, and encouraging youth to cherish and conserve our fish and wildlife resources. (FYCCN)

**Realign Funding**

**Net Zero**

Funding Source: General Revenue

Funding Source: Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

FWC's Division of Law Enforcement provides wildlife, freshwater and marine law enforcement services throughout the state of Florida. FWC officers undergo rigorous training and certification to be able to safely and effectively operate in all types of outdoor settings. During times of crisis, such as civil and natural disasters, FWC officers are also called upon to provide general law enforcement services. To more effectively conduct their mission, it is important that law enforcement activities not be constrained to specific activities based on funding source. To that end, this request swaps funding between the Division of Law Enforcement (LE) and the Fish and Wildlife Resource Institute (FWRI) to enhance law enforcement effectiveness. Funds in the amount of \$1,925,400 in MRCTF funding will be transferred from LE to FWRI and the same amount in GR funding that support the Red Tide Program, will be transferred from FWRI to LE. This transfer will create additional GR support within LE to allow them to more efficiently and effectively conduct their mission in all areas of the state. It will also move FWRI's harmful

algal bloom/red tide funding to MRCTF from GR, which is an appropriate and directed funding source for this program. (DLE/FWRI)

### **III. Optimize Federal & Grant Funding**

#### **Boating Access**

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

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust Fund

This request is comprised of two successful and 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. The Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) is requesting a total of \$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. (DLE)

#### **Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park**

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

Funding Source: Federal Grants Trust Fund

Spending authority is requested for an anticipated federal grant for Phase 3 construction of the Palm Beach County Public Recreational Shooting Park. This facility is designed to be a year-round shooting sports destination that will provide firearms safety training and attract regional and national competitions. Phase 1 was funded for \$3.2 million in FY 2014-15 and was completed in June 2017. This included major site work on the west side of the 150-acre complex, earth work associated with building rifle and pistol ranges, and the shooting lines and safety baffling for two pistol ranges and a 100-yard rifle range. Phase 2 was funded in FY 2016-2017 for \$3,090,000 and began in August 2017. This consisted of additional site work to address storm water retention as well as construction of sporting clays ranges, a maintenance building, water connection and sewage treatment system, roadways and parking on the east side of the complex. Phase 3 plans include construction of trap/skeet fields, a compact sporting clays range (5-stand), long-distance rifle ranges and supporting restrooms and pavilions. The shooting sports complex will be operated and managed by FWC or its concessionaire, and will provide an opportunity for the public to learn and practice firearms proficiency, provide a destination for state and national competitions, and serve as a training facility to be used by hunter safety students and volunteers. Revenues are

anticipated from a dedicated Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration grant for hunter safety education and public shooting ranges. (DHGM)

**Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) \$3,842,600 (FCO)**

Funding Source: \$2,592,600 Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund

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

This request is for fixed capital outlay funding in the amount of \$2,592,600 in the MRCTF to continue a long-term, successful program of providing grants to local governments for boating improvement projects. Section 328.72(15), Florida Statutes, provides vessel registration revenues to the Marine Resource Conservation Trust Fund (MRCTF) to fund a grant program for public launching facilities, pursuant to Section 206.606, giving priority consideration to counties with more than 35,000 registered vessels. In addition, Section 206.606(1)(b)1, Florida Statutes, provides \$1.25 million annually from fuel tax revenues to the State Game Trust Fund (SGTF) to fund local projects providing 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. (DLE)

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

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

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

This request is for fixed capital outlay spending authority 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 United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and from the sale of recreational saltwater fishing licenses (a portion of which serves as the match required to receive federal funds). 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 1,477 artificial reefs since 1986. Funds are allocated to projects in compliance with federal regulations governing state use of federal aid funds. Funds are allocated to projects in compliance with federal regulations governing state use of federal aid funds. (DMFM)

**Abbreviations**

(R) – Recurring Appropriation

(NR) – Non-Recurring Appropriation

DHGM – Division of Hunting & Game Management

DHSC – Division of Habitat & Species Conservation

DLE – Division of Law Enforcement  
DMFM – Division of Marine Fisheries Management  
FCO – Fixed Capital Outlay  
FGTF – Federal Grants Trust Fund  
FTE – Full Time Equivalent Employee Position  
FWRI – Fish and Wildlife Research Institute  
FWC – Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
FY – Fiscal Year  
GDTF – Grants and Donations Trust Fund  
GR – General Revenue  
Maint - Maintenance  
Mgmt – Management  
MRCTF – Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund  
OED – Office of Executive Director  
NWTF – Nongame Wildlife Trust Fund  
OPS – Other Personal Services (includes part-time & temporary employment wages)  
SG/MR – State Game Trust Fund and Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund  
SGTF – State Game Trust Fund  
TF –Trust Funds (various)  
USFWS – United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
WSFR – Wildlife & Sportfish Restoration Program  
WMA – Wildlife Management Area