

# Imperiled Species Management Planning



*Implementing a new  
conservation model for  
Florida species*



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Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation  
Commission

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Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

1

The FWC adopted a management system in September 2010 to conserve threatened and endangered species. A component of this new conservation model for Florida species is the development of management plans for the state's listed species. This presentation provides an update on the Imperiled Species Management Planning effort that is underway.

## Rules Relating to Endangered or Threatened Species, Ch. 68A-27, F.A.C.

- Passed in September 2010, effective November 8, 2010
- Provides for better conservation of Florida's listed species
  - All federal species listed in Florida
  - Single category of state listed species
  - Clear criteria to evaluate risk of extinction
  - Biological review of existing listed species
  - Management plans for all listed species



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2

Another important component of this new conservation model relates to the updates made to the rules for Florida's endangered and threatened species, Chapter 68A-27, Florida Administrative Code, which were approved by the FWC Commission in September 2010. The rule, which took effect in November 2010, is important for identifying and protecting Florida's imperiled species.

The process for updating 68A-27 was lengthy and sometimes controversial. Ultimately the input from the many interested parties provided for a rule that will continue to provide protections for Florida's imperiled species.

In the updated rule, the federal and state listed species are combined into a single category for state-listed species. All federally-listed species automatically make the state list. Additionally, State listing criteria are based on an evaluation of the risk of extinction and a species need only meet one of five criterion to be considered for listing. A Biological Status Review (BSR) is to be conducted on all currently listed species, as well as those species requested for evaluation and meeting the specified requirements. Before a species can be removed from FWC's threatened or species of special concern lists, staff must develop a management plan, with input from stakeholders and the public, and the Commission must approve the plan.

## Biological Status Review



- 61 species evaluated
- Final BSRs approved in June 2011
  - 40 species = keep on state list
  - 16 species = remove from list
  - 5 species = remain Species of Special Concern
- Final changes in listing status pending management plan approval



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3

Biological review groups appointed by the Commission evaluated 61 species grandfathered on the FWC's imperiled species lists in the fall of 2010. Groups of FWC staff and external experts completed a biological status review (BSR) for each of these species.

The biological status reports were completed in December 2010 and sent out for peer review. Based on the status reviews and additional information, staff recommended that 40 of the species be included on Florida's Threatened list in addition to the three species (gopher tortoise, Miami blue butterfly and Panama City crayfish) that were reviewed in the past decade. Staff recommended that 16 species be removed from the existing list. Three of these are currently classified as threatened species, and 13 are classified as species of special concern. Five species were recommended to remain as species of special concern (SSC) due to the need for additional information before making a final determination.

The final reports with staff recommendations were presented to the Commission at the June 2011 meeting in St. Augustine. The Commission voted to approve staff's recommendations and directed staff to continue working on management plans. The changes to a species' listing status will not be made until management plans are presented and approved by the Commission.

## Imperiled Species Conceptual Framework

|                       | State  | State-Federal Interplay  | Federal  |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Listing Status        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biological Status Reviews (BSRs)</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FWC adopts all federally listed species</li> <li>- MDL settlement</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Five factor listing process</li> <li>- Candidate species</li> </ul>             |
| Management Planning   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Imperiled Species Management Plans</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual FWC/FWS meeting</li> <li>- Periodic regional meetings</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Species Recovery Plans</li> <li>- Critical Habitat Designation</li> </ul>       |
| Action Implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Species/ habitat management</li> <li>- Research</li> <li>- Permitting</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section 6</li> <li>- HCPs</li> <li>- Safe Harbors</li> <li>- CCAAs</li> <li>- BMPs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recovery teams</li> <li>- Regulatory review</li> <li>- Species leads</li> </ul> |

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Referring back to the Imperiled Species Conceptual Framework that was presented earlier today, biological status reviews have been completed for all 64 currently state-listed species and they are available at [myFWC.com](http://myFWC.com). Three species (Miami Blue butterfly, the gopher tortoise, and the Florida black bear) have Commission approved management plans. The Panama City crayfish has a drafted management plan that will be presented to the Commission in April 2013. The remaining 60 species are in the process of having a management plan developed.

## Management plan to include:

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Biological status                                   | Recommended rules             |
| Measurable conservation objectives                  | Permitting standards for take |
| Conservation actions                                | Any exempt activities         |
| Incentives  | A revision schedule           |
| Anticipated economic, ecological and social impacts |                               |



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5

A management plan in Rule 68A-27 is defined as a document approved by the Commission with the purpose of providing guidance for the management of the species. The intent of the management plan is to conserve species so that their status improves and the species can be removed from the list, as well as to provide guidance to conserve the species so that it will not again need to be listed. The management plan may be single or multi-species focused, may reference applicable rules, or may reference a federal recovery plan. The management plan should address biological status, measurable conservation objectives including a time frame, conservation actions, incentives (if appropriate), recommended rules (if warranted), permitting standards for incidental and intentional take, exempt activities (if appropriate), and a revision schedule. Anticipated economic, ecological, and social impacts should be considered and evaluated within the management plan as well.

## Imperiled Species Management Planning – 2011-2012

- Species goals and objectives set
- Two coordinators hired
- 49 FWC teams for 60 species
- Species teams developing conservation actions
  - Why important? How urgent?
  - How to implement and by whom?
  - Will implementation result in objective achievement?



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6

Following the Biological Status Report Commission approval in June 2011, staff began management planning efforts. Species goals were set based on the species recommended listing status. The developed objectives focus on addressing the criterion that triggered listing. A State Wildlife Grant funds two coordinator positions – one for management plan coordination and one for stakeholder coordination. 49 teams of FWC staff have been assembled and are simultaneously working on management planning for 60 species. Teams are focusing on the core threats and needs of each species and are developing recommended conservation actions. The rationale for each recommended action is to include why the action is important for species conservation, include the urgency for completing the action, should identify how the action may be implemented and by whom, and describe how the implementation of the action will result in objective achievement.

# Imperiled Species Management Planning – 2011-2012

- Tiered approach
- Adaptive management
  - Encourages innovation
  - Seeks diverse input and collaboration
  - Recognizes stakeholders contribute solutions, not policy makers alone
  - Adjustments expected
  - Feedback feeds process improvement



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7

A tiered approach to the plan development seeks to avoid both staff and stakeholder fatigue. The use of adaptive leadership principles that led to the successful update of the threatened and endangered species rule, Ch. 68A-27, are being continued in the management plan development. Adaptive management seeks new ideas from a diverse audience and encourages collaboration. The stakeholders ability to provide viable solutions are recognized and valued. Adjustments are expected with adaptive management and feedback is considered and incorporated to improve the process.

## Imperiled Species Management Planning – 2011-2012

- Rule and permitting standards for take
- Economic, social, ecological impacts
- Implementation considerations
- Identify commonalities
- Align resources

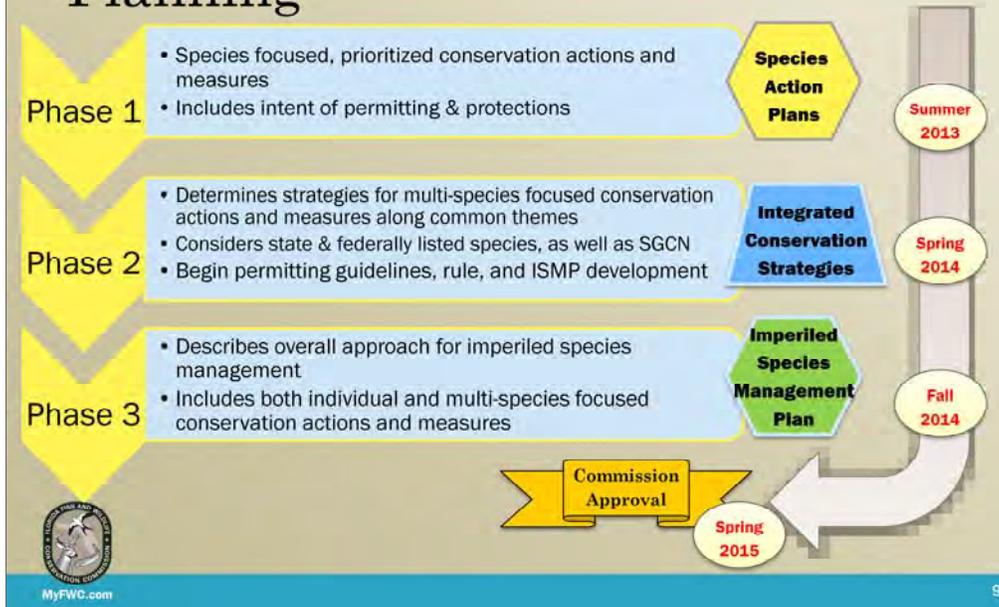


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8

Initially, we began generating individual species management plans, but soon realized a few things. The first was that while it would be fairly easy to identify measurable objectives and conservation actions for each species, it was going to be harder to identify what rules and permitting standards for take that we would recommend, and what anticipated economic, ecological and social impacts would be. We also wanted to have the ability to consider earlier and collectively how to implement management activities for these 60 species. Resources are limited, even with partners, and would not allow for implementation of all actions for all species. We know that some actions will benefit multiple species and wanted the opportunity to explore how to achieve efficiencies by addressing as many of those common themes as possible collectively. So we stepped back and decided our approach needed to shift to get us where we desire to be.

# Imperiled Species Management Planning



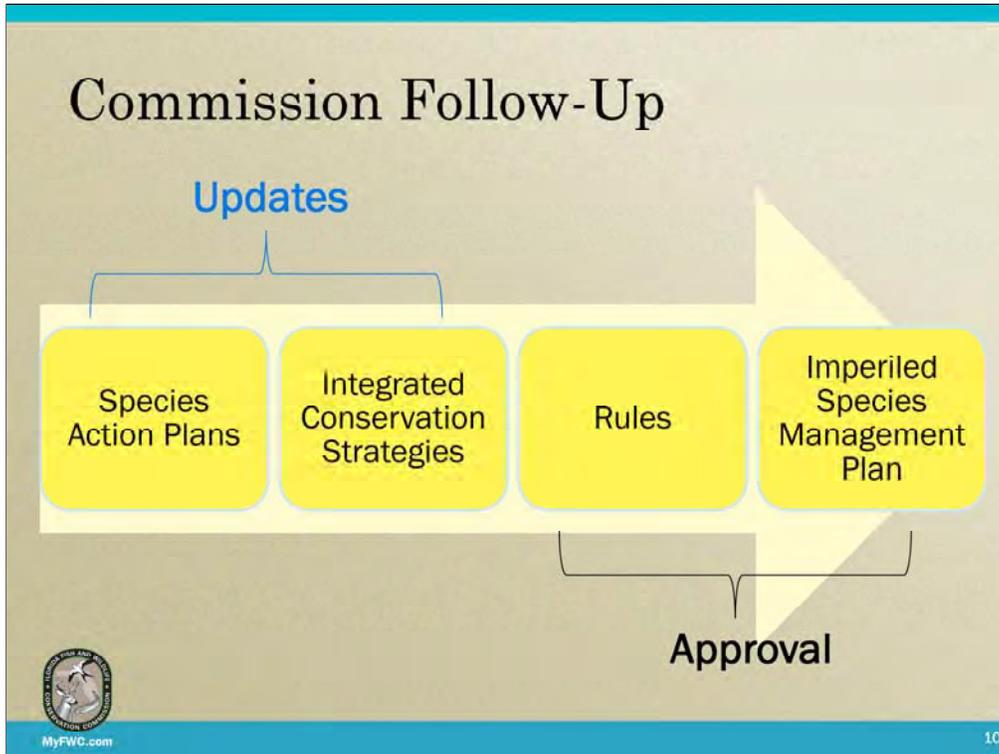
What has been developed is an approach that is focused on integrating the species plans into one final Imperiled Species Management Plan (ISMP), while realistically considering and planning for how implementation across all 60 species will be conducted. The phased approach will focus the allocation of FWC and partner resources much earlier toward imperiled species management.

Phase 1 includes the development of Species Action Plans. Approximately 49 Species Action Plans will be produced and focus on species needs, prioritize conservation actions, and provide rule and permitting intent; but will not have fully drafted rules or permitting guidelines nor include economic/social/ecological impacts.

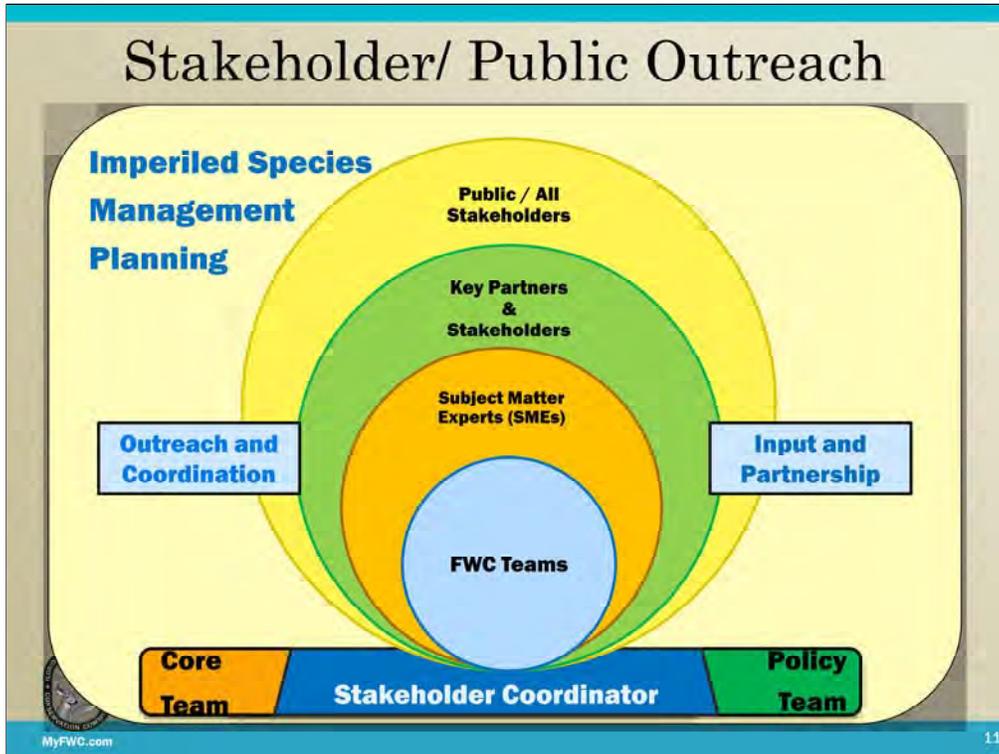
Once the Species Action Plans are generated, in Phase 2 we will look across the plans for common elements and develop Integrated Conservation Strategies to address those common elements. This will aid us in developing efficiencies for species management.

Phase 3 includes the completion of one combined Imperiled Species Management Plan, as described by 68A-27.001(6). When presented, the listing status changes will be addressed with proposed rule amendments. This combined plan will identify the highest priority needs for individual and suites of species and will address recommendations for implementing both priority individual species conservation actions and priority integrated conservation strategies that will benefit multiple species and their habitats.

It is anticipated that the development of Species Action Plans will finish by the summer of 2013. We will allow ourselves about 9 months to look collectively at the species actions, develop integrated conservation strategies and begin drafting the Imperiled Species Management Plan. We will seek to bring the first draft of the Imperiled Species Management Plan along with draft rules in the fall of 2014 and the final ISMP and final rules in the spring of 2015.



To clarify, in this process we will provide periodic updates to the Commission on the Species Action Plan and Integrated Conservation Strategies. Rules or rule changes that may be developed along with the Imperiled Species Management Plan will be brought first in draft and then in final form for Commission approval. The previously approved recommendations for listing status change will be included in the rule change for Ch. 68A-27 and can be promulgated once the Commission has approved the final management plan.



Staff strongly recognize that 1) partnerships are critical because no single entity has the ability to conserve imperiled species across Florida, and 2) without public support there would not be conservation of imperiled species in Florida.

The Stakeholder Coordinator will help facilitate outreach and coordination, as well as solicit input and partnership. There is currently both a broad and species-focused stakeholder coordination effort on-going. We want to continue to involve those stakeholders who have been actively involved, as well as include additional stakeholders – especially those from a species-specific interest. The Stakeholder Coordinator will lead the broader outreach effort. FWC Teams, along with the Stakeholder Coordinator, will lead the species-specific outreach that begins with subject matter experts, then reaches out to key partners and Stakeholders and finally all stakeholders and the public.

## Next Steps

- Continue partner and stakeholder engagement
- Complete species action plans
- Generate integrated conservation strategies
- Develop an implementation-focused Imperiled Species Management Plan
- Bring Plan and rule for final approval by Commission



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12

We believe that partners and stakeholders are essential to the development of an implementable management plan. Therefore, we will continue to engage with stakeholders and existing partners as well as to seek to develop new partners. Other next steps include completing all of the Species Action Plans, allowing for stakeholder review and input, by Summer 2013; generating Integrated Conservation Strategies by Spring 2014; developing an implementation-focused Imperiled Species Management Plan with associated draft rules by Fall 2014; and bringing the final Imperiled Species Management Plan (ISMP) and final rules for Commission approval by Spring 2015.

# Questions?



Photo by Celeste McWilliams



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13

Thank you for the opportunity to present this Imperiled Species Management Planning update to you today. At this time, I can take any questions you may have about the presentation.