



Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network Commission Update

*“Creating the next generation that
cares”*

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
May, 2012



The purpose of this Commission update is to present progress-to-date on the implementation of the Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network. FWC leadership and staff have been very busy getting the sites established and developing plans and budgets. This presentation is informational and will facilitate discussion among Commissioners providing staff with direction and support.

April 2, 2012 version

New FYCCN Partner Locations

ADDED IN 2012

Museum of Science and Industry
Bill Frederick Park
Mote Marine Laboratory
City of Oldsmar
Polk County Environmental Lands
Riverside Retreat
Sensing Nature
Nature's Classroom
Camp Christina YMCA
Center
Blooming Place for Kids
Oakland Nature Preserve
Circle B Bar
Clearwater Audubon Society
Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranches
Centers
Kids Green Grass Golf
Polk County Extension Service

Trout Lake Nature Center
Lake County Water Authority
Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing
Marion County Parks and Recreation
Florida Oceanographic Society
Tampa Parks & Recreation
Florida Outdoor Recreation Coalition
Glazer Children's Museum
Charlotte Harbor Environmental

A Kid's Place
Joshua House Foundation
St Pete Audubon Society
Polk Leisure Services Association
Volusia Environmental
City of Lake Alfred
Florida Trails Association



Word has spread throughout the state and people are contacting us about FYCCN involvement. Since the beginning of this year, we have added 32 new partners. We are in talks with many additional sites and the list continues to grow.

Summer Camp Expansion Program

Freshwater Fish Camp 52 weeks – 1040 campers

Camp Christina YMCA– Tampa
Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing - Largo
Amelia Earhart Park – Miami
Larry and Penny Thompson Park – Miami
Orange County YMCA - Orlando



Hunt Camp 12 weeks -- 250 campers

Camp Timpoochee – Niceville
Hard Labor Creek – Chipley
Joe Budd YCC – Quincy

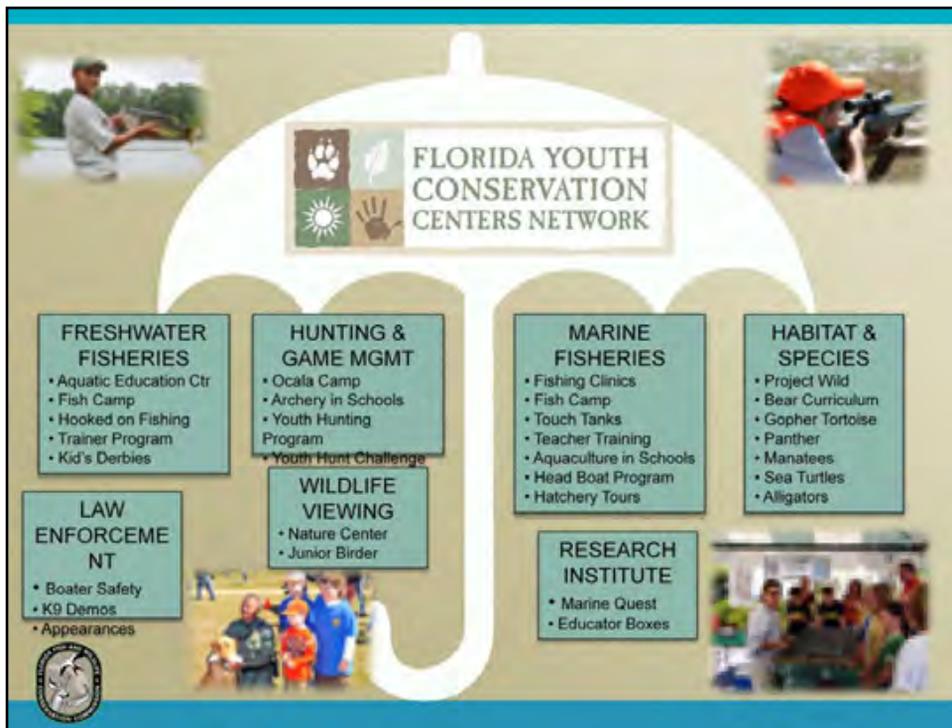


Saltwater Fish Camp 3 weeks – 60 campers (pilot program)

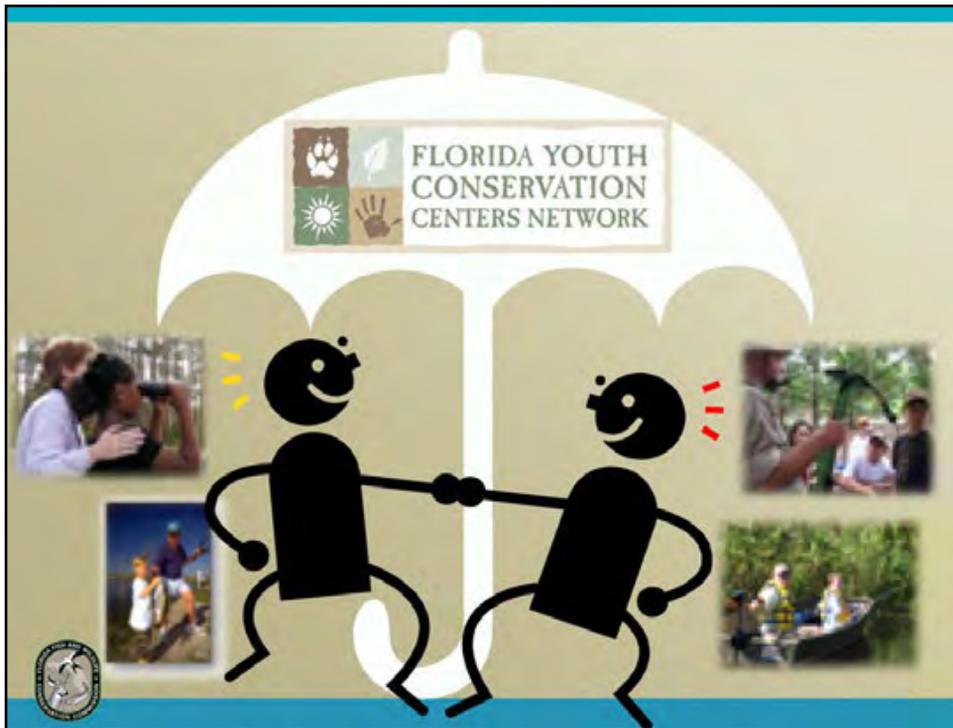
Weedon Island Preserve – St. Petersburg
Marine Discovery Center – New Smyrna Beach
Camp Timpoochee – Niceville



Our summer camp expansions programs are proving to be very popular. We have a proven track record with our 40 hour, comprehensive one skill camp programs and we are expanding them throughout the network. We started the Freshwater Fish Camp expansion program three years ago and have gone from one site offering four weeks of camp to fourteen sites offering 52 weeks of camp. We created a sustainable model for partners to follow so all we have to do is provide the camp startup materials, train their staff, and the partner site runs the camp. It is the perfect partnership. We have taken this model and applied it to saltwater fishing and hunter safety. Hunt camp will be provided at up to 5 locations offering 12 weeks this summer. Saltwater Fish Camp was piloted this spring break at Weedon Island and will be held at two additional locations this summer.



As an agency, FWC has been offering great youth programs for years. The problem has been a lack of centralization. Most of us haven't really known what the others were offering. Our current offerings range from weeklong camps and education center programs to formal school based curricula and species-specific youth activities. One of the goals of FYCCN is to inventory all FWC youth programs so we can provide a consolidated package to our partners.



FYCCN is taking account of all youth programming and current FWC programming partners so that we can ensure maximum exposure for our complete package. I have been surprised to find that what the majority of our partners need most is help with program design. They may currently provide Hunter Safety classes but would love to train fishing instructors as well if they had the curriculum. Most sites have supplies and staff, they just lack the knowledge of how to provide structured programs. By sharing our programs, we are reaching a tremendous amount of children across the entire state.



Tenoroc Youth Conservation Center

- Hunter Safety LBR / WFF match money for Education Bldg
- Sporting Clays and Trap & Skeet ranges under construction
- Community support
- Network of neighboring centers and businesses
- Partnership with Polk County Schools growing:
 - Teacher In-Service
 - FYCCN curriculum in PE classes
 - Boater safety and fishing certifications for teachers
 - Filming Fish Camp to promote outdoor activities in school announcements




Site design and engineering are underway at Tenoroc and we are hopeful for a July groundbreaking ceremony. Our new Hunter Safety Education Building will provide much-needed office and meeting space along with a visitor center. This facility will also allow for summer camps to be held next summer. Construction on the youth ranges has also started and we are targeting a February completion date for both the ranges and the Education Building. We are in talks with Polk County schools regarding the use of Tenoroc as their seventh grade field trip destination. Polk County has also requested that we develop a boater safety and fishing certification program for their teachers. Boating and fishing clubs are becoming widespread in Polk County and the school district is looking to us to help train their club sponsors. The interest in traditional outdoor activities has also led them to request our FYCCN curriculum for insertion in their physical education classes. We are excited with the progress of the Tenoroc YCC and are building stronger ties daily.

**19th Annual
Tenoroc Youth Fishing
Derby**

- 457 kids, 341 adults – 798 total
- Pulled from six surrounding counties
- 14 FYCCN partner exhibits
- K9 Demonstration
- Casting Contest
- Hayride and History Tour
- Senator Dockery

The annual Tenoroc Fishing Derby was held on April 7, our spring Free Freshwater Fishing Day. Since Tenoroc is one of the Youth Conservation Center hubs, we decided to use the annual derby to introduce the area to FYCCN. Normal attendance at the derby is around 400 people so we promoted this event to our regional FYCCN partner sites as an outreach opportunity. Fourteen partners attended with hands-on fishing related activities and we provided a casting contest, K9 demo and numerous other youth activities. By including partner sites in the event, we received event promotion from each of their sites. Attendance was shocking. We anticipated a jump in numbers, but never figured we would double the previous record. We surveyed guests and partners alike and found that everyone appreciated the opportunity to learn about all the region has to offer in regards to outdoor recreational opportunities. We successfully introduced FYCCN to the community and gained many new participants and supporters of our programs.

One of our new partners, Kids Green Grass Golf, offered the most diverse opportunity. They use oversized clubs and tennis balls to teach golfing techniques to youth. While they focus on golfing, they also promote the green areas, ponds, and wildlife that are seen on courses. By partnering with FYCCN, they now have access to our wildlife viewing curriculum and outdoor activities, and we get the opportunity to introduce our audience to another way of enjoying the great outdoors.

Everglades Youth Conservation Center



“Success Story”



- Hired Education Coordinator
- Curriculum development
- Charlie Pierce Day program implementation
- Self-sufficient – Coordinator employed by Florida Atlantic University now



Everglades YCC is a FYCCN success story. As I reported last year, FYCCN placed an Education Coordinator at the Everglades YCC to work on curriculum development and program integration. Our first FYCCN education program, Charlie Pierce Day, was piloted last spring. Due to the success of that program and the demand for a middle and high school version of the Charlie Pierce Day, FAU decided they would assume the responsibility of the program. Our Education Coordinator is now employed by FAU and our FYCCN specific program is being provided by FAU. It has been very rewarding to know that FYCCN was able to come in, develop a program, pilot test and evaluate the program, then hand it off the partner site. This is a true example of how partnerships should work. We are looking to replicate this success at other sites.

Miami/Dade Parks and Recreation



- Summer Fish Camp expansion to Amelia Earhart Park, Larry and Penny Thompson Park, and Tropical Park
- Incorporating Charlie Pierce Days into their park offerings
- Identifying sites for FYCCN program delivery



Miami/Dade Parks and Recreation continues to express interest in partnering with FYCCN. Our Freshwater Fish Camp summer program is expanding into three county parks this summer. We are also working on incorporating our Charlie Pierce Day program into their park offerings. Popular parks such as Crandon Park and Castellow Hammock have been offered as locations for additional FYCCN program delivery.

Museum of Science and Industry - Tampa

- Almost 1 million visitors a year
- Proposed Backwoods Outdoor Experience
- Fishing, Archery, Wildlife Viewing, and Camping



We are also partners with the Museum of Science and Industry in Tampa. MOSI is the sixth largest science center in the United States and has almost one million visitors a year. MOSI currently has and is expanding their Outdoor Science Park which consists of a 3 story Sky Ropes Course, playground, water splash area and various exhibits. This area sits between the IMAX Dome and the Science Center. They also have 25 acres of undeveloped woods in the back portion of their property that is not being used. MOSI has created a business plan and feasibility study to develop this Backwoods area for outdoor recreational activities. This plan includes a fishing pond, archery ranges, primitive campsites, nature trails, and an Environmental Center. We are excited to partner with MOSI and will work closely with them to incorporate FYCCN components into their programming.

