

**Public Input Summary
Agenda Item 11B
April 15th, 2015**

**Public Input on Proposed Changes to Bear Management
Received by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
January 1 to April 3, 2015**

Table 1. Public interaction with FWC at 2 public webinars and 7 Bear Stakeholder Group (BSG) meetings.

Total participants	244	90	334
Total participants with questions and/or comments	69	90	159
Total questions	182	NA	182
Total comments	20	628	648

Table 2. Public input received by FWC.

Website	655
Emails	355
Calls	219
AskFWC	49
Letters	10
TOTAL	1,288

Table 3. Repeated themes from public input related to proposed bear hunt received by FWC.

Protect bears/never kill bears/against hunting	Frequent
Hunting will not reduce human-bear conflicts	Frequent
Open a limited bear hunting season	Frequent
Overpopulation of bears/bear numbers can withstand hunt	Frequent
Bear population not stable enough to withstand hunt/State Threatened until 2012	Frequent
Hunt will manage population/benefit both humans and bears	Frequent
Lottery/tag system for chosen units open for hunt	Frequent
Hunting/dogs will re-install fear of humans in bears	Frequent
Wait for updated population estimates before considering hunt	Frequent
Do not allow dogs	Common
Allow use of dogs for running/tracking bears	Common
Hunting will reduce human-bear conflicts	Common
Allow Baiting	Common
Allow Archery	Common
Mandatory bear check-in stations	Rare
Do not allow baiting	Rare

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(Table 3. Continued)

Comment Theme	Frequency
Permit fees will contribute towards bear management and conservation	Rare
Restrict bear hunt to Florida residents only/residents given priority	Rare
Feel unsafe with bear hunters in woods	Rare
Bear hunting season should be longer than one week	Rare
Introduce younger generation to hunting/hunting is tradition	Rare
Lower the proposed bear harvest objectives	Rare
Lower the proposed permit price	Rare
Bear hunters should receive specific training before acquiring bear permit	Rare

Table 4. Repeated themes from public input unrelated to proposed bear hunt received by FWC.

Comment Theme	Frequency
Habitat loss/overdevelopment/too many people are causing human-bear conflicts	Frequent
Educate homeowners who choose to live in/move into bear country	Frequent
Provide bear-proof trashcans/make mandatory in bear country	Frequent
Stricter regulations on waste management/fines for leaving trash unsecure	Frequent
Poor waste management/feeding bears is the cause of human-bear conflicts	Frequent
Prevent development in bear country/increase conservation lands/wildlife corridors	Frequent
Increase public knowledge on how to secure attractants/deter bears	Frequent
Relocate bears involved in human-bear conflicts	Common
Provide education and outreach to neighborhoods in bear country	Common
Scaring bears with less-than-lethal methods will re-instill their fear of humans	Common
Euthanize habituated bears in neighborhoods	Common
Provide food for bears in natural habitat/plant fruit-bearing trees	Common
Prevent prescribed burns/palmetto berry harvest/removal of natural foods	Common
Trap, neuter and release bears	Common
Create stronger connection with media/more news updates	Rare
Should have land/lease owner permit to remove/scare bear from property	Rare
FWC professionals should be the only ones allowed to kill bears	Rare
Should have state law against feeding feral cats	Rare
Put bears involved in conflicts into zoos or rehab facilities	Rare
Lower the fines for people who make mistakes in managing their waste	Rare

Table 5. Petitions against the proposed bear hunt received by FWC.

Petition Origin	Number of Signatures
Care2	34,000
Humane Society	3,000
Total	37,000