

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

From: Jackie Fauls, Director, Office of Legislative Affairs
Major Brian Smith, Division of Law Enforcement

Date: June 24, 2015

Subject: Legislative Update

Purpose:

To brief Commissioners on the status of FWC's legislation during the 2015 Session. Also to advise Commissioners on an item that will come before them at their September 2015 Commission meeting; staff will present suggested changes to the Florida statutes on penalties associated with fish and wildlife recreational violations.

Summary:

Each Session, the Commission may submit proposed changes to the Florida statutes that pertain to fish/wildlife/boating law. FWC's 2015 Session legislative package passed the Legislature and is awaiting action by the Governor. It is anticipated that the Governor's action will take place by the time of the Commission's June meeting. In summary, the bill consists of:

- Modifications to the tarpon tag
- Repealing criteria for the Restricted Species endorsement
- Modifications to life vest labelling requirements (consistent with Coast Guard changes)
- Modifications to alligator statutes
- Modifications to penalties for violating feeding wildlife rules – includes bears, alligators/crocodiles; also includes foxes, raccoons, bald eagles, pelicans, sandhill cranes
- Modification to FWC's citizen support organization's relationship – to allow them to provide fiscal and administrative services

Penalties Preview – Commissioner Priddy requested staff to review some of the fish and wildlife recreational penalties to consider strengthening them. As a result, staff has been reviewing the current penalties for *all* of the recreational violations located in s. 379.401, F.S – in an effort to keep the penalties for similar violations (game/wildlife, fresh fish, and salt fish) consistent. The last review of these penalties was 2006.

Staff Recommendation:

This presentation is for informational purposes.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter

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