

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

From: Nick Wiley, Executive Director

Date: June 23, 2015

Subject: Florida Panther Research, Management and Recovery Update and Policy
Direction for Program Strategic Priorities

Purpose:

To provide the Commission a status report on Florida Panther research and management as context for Commission discussion to provide policy direction on program strategic priorities.

Summary:

Over the past several years, the Commission has received an in-depth annual update on Florida Panther research, management, and recovery. The scope, scale and complexity of Florida Panther management are much different today than what they were 20 to 30 years ago; more specifically the population has significantly increased accompanied by increasing interactions between humans and panthers. The management dynamics associated with these trends, along with limited state resources, requires careful alignment of FWC's responsibilities and priorities regarding research, management, policy, and continuing close coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Based upon past Commission discussions during Panther updates, current management and research needs/ gaps, and liaison work with Commissioner Liesa Priddy, Senior staff developed a draft policy position to support consideration and adoption of policy guidance by the Commission as part of the June 2015 meeting discussion item: Florida Panthers: Research, Management, and Recovery Update and Policy Direction for Program Strategic Priorities.

Staff Recommendation:

This staff report is provided as information to assist the Commission with deliberation on policy formulation and to request Commission direction on implementation of draft policy.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter

Kipp Frohlich, Deputy Director, Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

Attachment: Draft Position Statement: Florida Panther Recovery and Management: Strategic Priorities