

Public Participation and Feedback in the Development of the FWC's Wildlife Trapping Rule Updates

Public participation and feedback are a vital component of the FWC's rulemaking process. Below is a timeline of the FWC's public engagement to collect feedback on its efforts to evaluate and modernize trapping rules in Florida.

2021-22

In 2021, the FWC hosted [five webinars](#) to provide participants with information and opportunities to ask questions about wildlife trapping. In addition, the FWC contracted with the University of Central Florida Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences to gather and analyze public input from online commenting opportunities on trapping concepts and possible rule changes. The commenting tool remained available through Jan. 8, 2022. Staff then compiled and evaluated these comments for incorporation in proposed rules.

2023

Following a presentation on the Status of Wildlife Trapping in Florida at the May 2023 Commission meeting, the FWC held an [informational meeting](#) on October 16, 2023, for interested stakeholders to describe the process of forming a Technical Assistance Group and the expectations of members. TAG members included representatives from diverse stakeholder organizations and government agencies involved in, or affected by, changes to regulated trapping in Florida.

2024

In January 2024, the TAG officially formed, allowing for direct meetings between the FWC and stakeholder group representatives until its conclusion in February 2025. The TAG met seven times and facilitated in-depth discussions on this topic to better understand the differing perspectives involved. Participants were able to provide their feedback directly to FWC staff and hear perspectives from fellow TAG members.

2025

In May 2025, the FWC hosted a series of [virtual public meetings](#) and opened an online commenting tool to present updated concepts for potential trapping rule changes based on feedback from the TAG. To further aid in developing proposed rules, the FWC contracted with the University of Central Florida Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences for a second time to capture and analyze public input provided via [online commenting tool](#) in 2025.

FWC Commissioners heard proposed rule amendments at the [November 2025](#) Commission meeting in Belle Glade, FL, voting to approve them for advertising in the Florida Administrative Register.

2026

FWC Commissioners voted to approve final proposed rule amendments at the [February 2026](#) Commission meeting in Tallahassee, effective Dec. 31, 2026. The rule changes addressed allowed trap types, design specifications, placement, check times, and disposition of captured wildlife. The changes more closely align with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' best management practices, which ensure that trapping is humane, species-specific and effective.

In accordance with 120.54(3)(c)1 Florida Statutes, a public hearing on changes to Florida's trapping rules was held on Wednesday, July 8, 2026.