



This presentation will provide a high level review of FWC's listing process. Today we will present the final management plan for the Florida manatee and provide a progress report on the management plan for the bald eagle. In June you directed us to bring the final plan for the Panama City crayfish for consideration at the February 2008 meeting in Panama City.

Process overview

- Phase I – Biological status review
 - Recommendation approved June 2006 and staff directed to proceed with development of a management plan
- Phase II – Management plan development
 - Extensive stakeholder input: 3 meetings of the manatee forum, 1,400 public comments received on draft plans and a public workshop May 2007
 - Draft plan and rules given conceptual approval by Commission in June 2007
 - Management plan and accompanying reclassification rules being considered today



In April 2005, FWC adopted a revised listing process and directed staff to proceed with Phase I of the listing process for four species that had petitions on hold while the process was being revised. FWC staff receives petitions for listing or reclassifying species, determines if the petitions are sufficient, and if the request is warranted, staff then seeks approval from the Commission to proceed with Phase I. The first phase of our listing process consists of the biological status review which is conducted by a panel of scientists, chaired by a FWC biologist. The panel evaluates data about the species against the five listing criteria and makes a recommendation that is then peer-reviewed by independent scientists. Staff brought the recommendation to reclassify the manatee from an endangered to a threatened species to the June 2006 meeting. The Commission approved the reclassification recommendation and directed staff to proceed with Phase II of listing which is development of a management plan. The reclassification of the species does not occur until rules in the management plan are approved. Public comment was solicited before and during plan development. In summary, staff received a tremendous amount of input through formal written comments as well as through interactive dialogue with individuals and groups in order to create these plans.

Each phase of the process can take six months to a year or more. It is important to note that our new listing process now allows us to develop rules and protections that will best allow Florida to conserve the individual species. In the past, listing status conferred protection under blanket rules and prohibitions for each listing category. Having clear separation of listing status from protections allows more flexibility and for us to tailor our approaches to the species and the needs of the public.

Process overview

- Draft plans developed according to standardized template developed by staff
 - 45+ day public comment period
- Draft plans revised
 - 45+ day public comment period
 - Public workshops
- Presented twice to Commission
 - Draft for conceptual approval (June 2007)
 - Final plan for approval



FWC's management plan process is summarized here. The draft plans were developed by a team ranging from 5 to 8 members after a minimum 45-day public comment period to solicit input as to what needed to be included in the plan. Specific emphasis in the solicitation was for information relating to social and economic factors.

The management plan team spent over a year developing the plan and met several times monthly in person or via tele- or video-conference. The plan was developed based on a template created by staff in June 2006 that included all topics required by rule. The template provided for a standardized approach for all the plans under development. An editor was hired to ensure readability and to help comply with the governor's new plain speak initiative.

Our listing rule requires public input on the management plans before and during the process. We solicited input from June-August 2006 as to what should be included in each of the plans to conserve the species and ecological, social, and economic impacts that needed to be considered. Draft plans were produced by FWC staff with significant input from stakeholders and the public. The first draft management plan was released for 45+ days of public comment in November, 2006 (manatee plan). Press releases were sent out when each public comment period opened in order to generate interest in the plans. Staff decided to add an additional public comment period when the revised drafts were released in May. This additional public comment period closed June 14 for the Florida manatee. Public workshops were held for all plans in May to solicit input. Staff directly contacted many of our partnering government agencies to encourage them to provide input on the plans. The Florida manatee draft plan was presented to the Commission in June 2007. The plan and rules were given conceptual approval by the Commission and staff were directed to bring the plan and rules for final public hearing in Sept.

Conservation blueprints

- Plans for Florida
 - Not staff plans!
 - Represent best available science and are conservation blueprints not prescriptions
 - Most of our management challenges are adaptive as opposed to technical which means periodic assessments and changes to the plan will be needed and will be brought before the Commission for review
 - Reviewed every five years
 - Plans contain accountability measures and benchmarks



These plans are conservation blueprints that will direct management activities for the species

The plans are not staff plans – they have been developed with significant stakeholder interaction and input. Implementation of the plans will require active partnerships in order to conserve the species in Florida. FWC staff recognizes they cannot manage Florida's wildlife alone.

Plans call for review every five years but can be sooner if warranted. The eagle plan will be reviewed every ten years or sooner if warranted. In June 2007, the Commission directed staff to bring any changes to the management plans to the Commission for approval.

The plans have measures associated with the conservation objectives that will demonstrate progress towards reaching the species goal defined in the plan.

S u m m a r y

- The management plan and rules are being presented for your consideration today.



- For additional information, visit [My FWC.com](http://MyFWC.com)

The manatee management plan and rules have been placed on the agenda for your consideration.