

# Commission Agenda Work Plan

## Fiscal Year 2010-2011

### Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management

"Managing, Enhancing and Preserving Florida's Freshwater  
Aquatic Life for Public Benefit"



In Fiscal Year 2010-2011, the Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management will make recommendations or present information to the Commission in three primary areas. These three areas will be discussed in the presentation and proposed times presented for when recommendations or information may be expected.

## Development and Presentation of Proposed Rules for Freshwater Fishing.

- DFFM staff may develop proposed freshwater fishing rules received from fishermen and other freshwater fisheries stakeholders, such as guides, tournament anglers, fish camp owners, or commercial fishing interests. However, proposals will not be solicited and must meet stringent criteria to be considered.
- Staff will present a conceptual review of any rule change proposals at the September 2010 Commission meeting and a more detailed review at the December 2010 Commission meeting.
- Rule change proposals will be presented for consideration for final adoption at the February 2011 Commission meeting.



We are moving away from the traditional “off-year” and “on-year” cycles for rule development. Rule change proposals will be accepted for review from the public, other freshwater fisheries stakeholders, such as guides, tournament anglers, fish camp owners, or commercial fishing interests on a year-round basis. Staff will review these and bring forward for Commission review and approval at the appropriate times throughout the year. DFFM does not anticipate many rule proposals will be required during the coming year.

A conceptual review of any major proposed rule changes will be presented in September 2010. A more detailed review summarizing input received from the public, stakeholders and others on specific proposals will be presented in December 2010 and any proposed rules will be presented for final adoption in February 2011.

## Proposed Establishment Orders for Fish Management Areas (FMAs)

- DFFM staff will present proposed establishment orders, which would add or delete FMAs to the fish management area system to meet landowner requests or to create new fishing opportunities for freshwater fishermen.



Changes in rules on Fish Management Areas (FMA's) normally are done through the biennial rule development process. However, throughout the fiscal year staff may present proposed establishment orders that create new fish management areas or delete areas from the Fish Management Area system. This may be done as a direct presentation to the Commission or through the Commission's consent agenda.

## A Proposal for a Long-term Black Bass Management Plan for Florida



The prominence of Florida's Black bass fisheries cannot be taken for granted. Participation in freshwater fishing has been affected by societal changes related to urbanization and changing demographics. Freshwater fishing license sales have shown an overall decline since the 1980's although sales have stabilized over the past 10 years. Development of land and water resources to support our current and projected population growth threatens lake, river, and associated wetland habitats. The uncertain impacts of climate change on freshwater habitats and bass fishing require investigation and adaptive management. To meet these challenges, this proposal outlines a 14-month process to involve the public in the development of a long-term management plan for Florida bass species. This plan will provide strategies and programs to manage for high quality fisheries, increase opportunities for anglers to pursue trophy Florida bass and build strong stakeholder involvement to ensure conservation and protection of Florida's most valuable freshwater fishes.

## What would plan address?

- Conservation of bass species with limited geographic ranges.
- Protection of unique genetic strains.
- Habitat requirements and enhancement needs.
- Review effectiveness of regulations.
- Special management projects for increasing opportunities to catch trophy bass (over 10 pounds).



## Plan Objectives

- Improve fishing for all bass species.
- Long-term sustainability of black bass populations.
- Increase and document trophy bass catches.
- Involve stakeholders in the process.
- Assemble a Florida Bass Management Council.



## Plan Approach

- Form an integrated team of DFFM, HSC, FWRI, CR, and LE (complete by January 2010).
- Assemble stakeholder Florida Bass Advisory Council to provide input (by March 2010).
- Hold public workshops and use website to provide information and receive comments (March – December 2010).
- Present proposal at Florida Sportsman Shows, Tampa Tribune Outdoor Expo, Bass Pro Shop events, bass clubs, etc. (January – December 2010).
- Prepare draft plan and receive public comment through website (by December 2010).
- Present draft plan for Commission review and public comment (December 2010).
- Finalize plan for Commission approval (February 2011).



The Black Bass Long-term Management Plan development will be a highly-transparent process. We will invite stakeholders to participate in plan development, evaluate existing bass regulations and public support for possible alternative regulatory and non-regulatory approaches, engage media (print and television), discuss sponsorship opportunities with corporations, conduct public workshops, and post draft plan language on the internet for public comment. We anticipate constituents may approach Commissioners with questions and comments. For this reason, DFFM staff which may provide or present to you reports of progress for your information, direction, or concurrence as we go through this process in the coming year. .



Fisheries management is actually management of three major components involving: people, fish, or habitat.

Examples requiring management of people include: need for bag or length limit regulations, the stakeholder initiative or boating access.

Habitat management issues include: water quality, water quantity, water fluctuations/flow, or structure or aquatic plant management.

Fish management includes: fish stocking, fish diseases issues, or population dynamics or fish genetics issues.

For 2010-2011, what I have presented to you for consideration mostly concerns people management or regulatory issues.

DFFM staff, as well as other Divisions and Offices, also are focused on issues in these other two components, which we may present to you in the form of reports for your information, direction, or concurrence.