

# Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

## FY 09-10 Legislative Budget Issues

### SUMMARY

Issues	FTE	GR Portion	All Funds
Base Recurring Budget	1,946	\$45,622,876	\$286,288,313
<b>Law Enforcement</b>			
Law Enforcement Pay Parity			\$2,993,229
<b>Land Management</b>			
CARL Land Management & Public Use	5.0		\$3,223,102
CARL Land Improvement – FCO			\$2,435,000
Non-CARL Natural Resource Mgmt			\$400,000
Mitigation Park Land Management	2.0		\$335,595
Lake Restoration – FCO			\$2,000,000
<b>Wildlife Conservation</b>			
Wildlife Assistance Program	5.0		\$1,066,538
Florida Panther Conservation Program	2.0		\$388,382
Sea Turtle Conservation	2.0		\$504,387
Alligator Management Program			\$225,000
Scientist Competitive Area Differential			\$312,618
Chinsegut Public Use Facility			\$565,000
<b>Hunting and Fishing</b>			
Marine Fish Hatcheries Construction			\$4,964,942
Marine Fish Hatcheries Operations	3.0		\$550,428
Artificial Reef Construction - FCO			\$700,000
Youth Hunting & Fishing Program			\$150,000
Blue Crab Effort Management Program			\$118,000
<b>Land Acquisition</b>			
Florida Forever Land Acquisition – FCO			\$4,500,000
<b>Grants</b>			
Fish and Wildlife Federal Grants	1.0		\$3,898,286
Boating Access Federal Grants			\$3,206,342
LE Mobile Computer Support	3.0		\$1,540,875
Law Enforcement Fuel Costs			\$450,000
<b>Boating</b>			
Boating Improvement Program - FCO			\$7,350,000
Derelict Vessel Removal Program			\$850,000
<b>Agency Operations</b>			
Relocate Agency Headquarters			\$2,013,888
Human Resources Contract Change	1.0	\$85,314	\$85,314
Convert OPS to FTE	69.0		(\$37,680)

Vehicle & Vessel Replacement			\$681,907
Information Technology Consolidation			(\$1,000)
License Sales System Costs			\$180,000
Increased Office Lease Costs			\$202,133
Repair Degraded Facilities -FCO			\$702,850
<b>Other</b>			
Alligator Trapper Assistance			\$55,000
Eliminate Double Budget Transfer			(\$880,000)
Reduce 2005 Hurricane Recovery			(\$1,815,000)
Eliminate Interim Land Management			(\$2,280,122)
<b>Total Budget Request</b>	<b>2,039</b>	<b>\$45,708,190</b>	<b>\$327,923,417</b>

General Revenue Issues:

Issues		GR Portion
Base Recurring Budget		\$45,622,876
Human Resources Contract Change	1.0	\$85,314
<b>Total Budget Request</b>		<b>\$45,708,190</b>

**Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Budget Issues for FY 2009-2010**

**Law Enforcement**

---

**Law Enforcement Pay Parity**

**\$2,993,229 MRCTF (R)**

**Funding Source: vessel fuel tax, recreational license fees**

This request is for an increase in salaries and benefits appropriation from the Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund to provide funding for pay parity with other State of Florida law enforcement agencies, primarily the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP). Our hiring standards, level of training and risk levels in our work environment is more aligned with FHP than any other state law enforcement agency. Paying sworn employees less than others who are at the same level of government, and perform the same or similar duties, is a significant issue that can destroy morale and cause good employees to reduce productivity or seek employment elsewhere. There are three elements to this pay increase: (1) includes a variable adjustment to the salary of all officers and investigators employed with the agency. This represents the difference between salaries of FWC officers and FHP officers through 2007. (2) It includes the equivalent 5% pay adjustment given to the Florida Highway Patrol during the 2008 session. (3) It provides for a \$5,000.00 a year increase in base salary for all lieutenants. This funding will significantly improve morale and assist in retaining valued employees. (#4404A00)

**Land Management**

---

**CARL Land Management and Public Use**

**5 FTE, \$3,223,102 CARLTF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: recurring dedicated documentary stamp tax**

This request for \$3,223,102 (including \$151,939 non-recurring) from the CARL Program Trust Fund is to develop and provide public-use opportunities and conduct natural resource management on Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) managed by the agency. This request is pursuant to provisions of Section 259.032(11)(b), F.S., and includes funding for 5 new employees. This issue addresses current staffing deficiencies on newly acquired CARL lands, it provides funding for requisite resource management activities, and it allows the agency to meet its land management obligations. (#4402640)

**CARL Land Improvement**

**\$2,435,000 CARLTF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: non-recurring dedicated documentary stamp tax**

This issue requests Fixed Capital Outlay funds from the CARL Trust Fund pursuant to provisions of Section 259.032(11)(b), F.S., which provides management funds for lands purchased through the Florida Forever program. This request will be used to fund multi-year and multi-party improvements to lands within the Wildlife Management Area (WMA) system. Specific uses for these funds include land restoration and enhancement activities that correct problems caused either by past land alterations or spread of exotic and invasive plants. It also includes construction of a 9,000-square-foot visitor center, equipment maintenance, and storage facility on the Aucilla WMA. This facility will create a consolidated operational and administrative work center for DHSC and Division of Law Enforcement staff tasked with land management, public recreation, and resource protection across a multi-county area, nearby waterways, and 70,000 acres of public land

that include the Aucilla, Flint Rock, and L. Kirk Edwards WMAs. (#990E000/085020) and (#990S000/085000)

**Non-CARL Natural Resource Management** **\$400,000 SGTF (R)**

**Funding Source: land revenues from leases, sales, and concessions**

This issue would increase spending authority in the State Game Trust Fund by \$400,000 to be used for land management operations. Funding for this request is derived from the revenue received through cattle leases, timber sales, and concession contracts. Section 259.032(11)(d), Florida Statutes, requires revenues derived from management of public lands be expended on those lands. This request is needed to assure agency compliance with statutory requirements. (#6303000)

**Mitigation Park Management** **2 FTE; \$335,595 LATF (R,NR)**

**Funding Source: mitigation compensation interest earnings**

Section 372.074, F.S., provides for funds deposited into the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (LATF) to be used for the acquisition and management of lands important to fish and wildlife habitat protection. This issue requests spending authority to fund start-up operations at five new Mitigation Park facilities comprising 5,668 acres. It provides for necessary personnel, administrative support and management funds to implement resource protection, imperiled species recovery, and public-use amenity development on lands purchased with LATF funds. Elements of this package include two new employees, security fencing, signage, management support equipment, and recurring management funds. The new employees are critical to this issue due to staffing limitations that are already stretched beyond acceptable limits. New acquisitions covered under this request include Watermelon Pond (1,306 ac.), Davidson Ranch (720 ac.), Janet Butterfield Brooks (320 ac.), Dunham Ranch (1,200 ac.), and ITERA (2,122 ac.). (#4403150)

**Lake Restoration & Enhancement Projects** **\$2,000,000 SGTF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: non-recurring dedicated documentary stamp tax**

This issue seeks spending authority to use accumulated revenues dedicated to lake restoration/enhancement to partially fulfill lake restoration and enhancement commitments for multi-year, multi-agency projects such as efforts on Lake Trafford, Upper Peace River, Apalachicola River, Lake Tsala Apopka, and Lake Okeechobee. All of the spending authority in this request will be used on aquatic habitat restoration and enhancement projects. (#990E000/080950)

---

**Wildlife Conservation**

**Wildlife Assistance Program** **5 FTE; \$1,066,538 SGTF (R, NR)**

**Funding Source: license fees and available non-recurring trust fund balance**

This request is for five biologist positions and \$1,066,538 to fund development and implementation of the Wildlife Assistance Program. A total of \$526,233 is requested as recurring. As Florida's population grows, conflicts between humans and wildlife are inevitable. There have been an increasing number of encounters with wildlife, including imperiled Florida panthers and black bears, as well as problematic introduced species, e.g., green and spinytail iguanas and Burmese pythons. Many of these incidents are perceived as threatening to humans and their property, particularly encounters with the expanding coyote and black bear populations. It is essential to have experienced dedicated staff located in high encounter areas to deal with these complex and

controversial issues. This issue would fund five biologists to maintain a full-time, experienced staff with biological knowledge and requisite social skills to handle these potentially volatile interactions. These field-based positions would be able to respond rapidly to serious incidents and identify potential problem areas, e.g., recent residential or commercial development or incipient populations of non-native wildlife such as Burmese pythons. The Wildlife Assistance Biologists would interact with local government and neighborhood associations to educate the public about Florida fish and wildlife and seek cooperative solutions to reduce conflicts. This issue would fund activities (primarily through contractual services) to protect the public and native wildlife, including management of non-native species. (#4406000)

### **Florida Panther Conservation Program**

**2 FTE, \$388,382 FPRMTF (R, NR)**

#### **Funding Source: panther license plate fees**

Three new positions are needed to effectively address Florida panther recovery objectives. Specifically, the Commission needs an FTE Biological Scientist III (panther/human conflict and outreach biologist), an FTE Diagnostic Veterinarian Manager (panther field veterinarian), and an OPS Biological Scientist II (database manager/field biologist). These positions are essential for responding to reported panther/human interactions to ensure public safety and for acquiring and disseminating information necessary for conservation of the Florida panther. Office space for the Big Cypress Field Office has become insufficient for the current number of FWC staff assigned to this facility (9 employees), their vehicles and equipment. Additional funds are needed to lease a larger, hurricane-resistant office and warehouse to replace the currently leased aluminum-sided metal building. An increase in expense funds is needed to cover increased costs of utilities and fuel, and associated increases in cost of aircraft services for panther monitoring. Lastly, a major overhaul is necessary for a 1984 model swamp buggy, used to access panther habitat for monitoring and management actions. The total amount requested for these items is \$263,236 (recurring) and \$125,146 (non-recurring). The Panther program is supported by proceeds from the sale of the Florida Panther specialty license plate deposited into the Florida Panther Research and Management Trust Fund. Based on current plate sales, revenue projections indicate the trust fund can support both the recurring and non-recurring budget request. (#4603000)

### **Sea Turtle Conservation Program**

**2 FTE, \$504,387 MRCTF (R,NR)**

#### **Funding Source: sea turtle license plate fees**

This is a request for two FTE's and two OPS positions, a total of \$273,239 in recurring funds and \$231,148 in non-recurring funds to improve FWC's ability to assess in-water threats and impacts to all five species of marine turtles within Florida waters. These funds will be used to assess population trends; to recover sick and dead turtles, and determine mortality sources; to develop recommendations and procedures to minimize impacts from threatening activities along Florida's shores; to develop a GIS-linked database of the distribution of marine turtles in Florida waters; to more fully participate in state, regional, and national working groups and committees involved in activities with the potential to impact all threatened and endangered marine turtles. Part of this funding will be used to issue a one-time grant to develop new coastal armoring standards and guidelines that will protect vulnerable coastal properties while minimizing their impacts to the beach and sea turtle nesting habitat. This will help address a longstanding, difficult public policy issue – balancing property owner's rights to protect their property with ecologically sound beach management. This request includes 2 FTEs: Assistant Research Scientist and Environmental Specialist III; and 2 OPS: Biological Scientist I and a Biological Scientist

III. In 2006, the Legislature approved an increase in the sea turtle license plate fee intended to increase available funding for sea turtle conservation. Based on current plate sales, revenue projections indicate the trust fund can support this proposed legislative budget issue. Approval will assure revenues are expended consistent with statutory requirements. (#4605000)

**Alligator Management Program**

**\$225,000 SGTF (R)**

**Funding Source: alligator harvest license & permit fees**

A comprehensive review of the Commission's Alligator Management Programs was completed in 2007. This review brought to light deficiencies in these programs. This request is for funding to implement enhancements to alligator management programs and other hunting-related programs. These enhancements include human-dimensions research to refine programs; development of issue-specific public service announcements, educational strategies, and promotional/outreach materials; research/analysis of population status and trends; and support for addressing nuisance alligators and crocodiles. Significant increases in annual revenue into the SGTF began in FY 2006-07 due to changes in statewide alligator harvest programs and associated permit/license fees, and it is anticipated that this increased revenue will continue in future years. The revenue increase exceeds the budget needed to cover this request. (#4403270)

**Competitive Area Differential for Scientists and Technicians**

**\$312,618 TF (R)**

**Funding Source: recreational hunting and fishing license fees**

This request is for increased rate and salaries budget to support a Competitive Area Differential (CAD) for 44 biological scientists and five technicians who work in Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Monroe Counties. CAD increases are given to certain positions located in specified counties to bring the rates of pay for these positions up to a level that is competitive with similar jobs in that area. The cost of living in the CAD counties has risen and employers with whom we compete have increased the salaries of their positions making it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain the level of skilled employees we seek. The employers against whom we compete include the South Florida Water Management District, Dade County Environmental Resource Management Division, Broward County Environmental Resources Division, Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and the Department of Interior Everglades National Park. A CAD adjustment is necessary to assure programs can recruit and retain qualified scientific employees to work in these South Florida counties. (#3003A00)

**Chinsegut Public Use Facility**

**\$565,000 CARLTF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: available non-recurring trust fund balance**

This request is for a multipurpose building to be located on the Chinsegut Wildlife and Environmental Area (WEA) in Hernando County. The 2,400 square foot building will contain restrooms, a utility/storage room and a multipurpose room that can accommodate 100 individuals. The existing facilities do not meet ADA standards and are too small to meet existing demand for programs. Demand is expect to grow. The addition of an 80' X 30' building with six bathroom stalls will allow the center to add 100 programs with 10,000 more people being served each year. Chinsegut WEA offers a range of wildlife viewing skill building and conservation education programs for families and children. This building would also directly benefit Hunter Safety by providing a setting for regional workshops. Currently, demand for hunter safety classes exceeds facility limitations in the

region. This facility is a model that, once developed, can be replicated elsewhere. (#990S000/084080)

## **Hunting and Fishing**

---

### **Marine Fish Hatcheries Construction** **\$4,964,942 MRCTF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: available non-recurring trust fund balance**

This request is for construction of a new marine fish hatchery and law enforcement office on land recently donated by Volusia County Schools to the Commission in New Smyrna Beach. This facility will be an important east coast component to an evolving statewide marine fisheries enhancement network in partnership with Mote Marine Laboratory, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University, Florida Institute of Technology, and Hubbs-Seaworld Research Institute. When fully operational, the new saltwater hatchery will provide up to 800,000 sport fish annually for stocking in Florida's east coast marine systems. The construction of modular office space will house 12 employees from the FWRI and 5 employees with Law Enforcement. Eight of these positions will be co-located from their current location in four different cities, which will reduce operational costs and improve program efficiency. (#990S000/080110)

### **Marine Fish Hatcheries Operations** **3 FTE, \$550,428 MRCTF (R,NR)**

**Funding Source: available non-recurring trust fund balance**

This request is for \$377,358 recurring and \$173,070 non-recurring to operate a new marine fish hatchery and law enforcement office in New Smyrna Beach. Since the construction of the new facility is scheduled for completion in January 2010, most of this issue is lapsed by 50%, requesting annualization for the following fiscal year in the amount of \$280,789. Two full time scientific positions, one full time maintenance supervisor, and two research OPS positions are needed to staff the new hatchery operations and conduct stocking activities along the east coast of Florida. (#3000300)

### **Artificial Reef Construction and Assessment** **\$300,000 MRCTF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: 57% federal grant, 43% fishing license fees** **\$400,000 FGTF (FCO)**

This request is for annual spending authority for artificial reef planning, development, assessment, and management. Revenues are from Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration grants from the USFWS, and from the sale of recreational saltwater fishing licenses (a portion of which serves as the match required to receive federal funds). The program has a 20-year history of working in partnership with local governments, recreational fishing interests, and state universities for local reef development and assessment. Funds are allocated to projects in compliance with federal regulations governing state use of federal aid funds, state procurement regulations, and appropriate division rules. The program currently funds a little over one half of the qualified local projects that are submitted each year. (#990E000/140004)

### **Youth Hunting and Fishing Program** **\$150,000 SGTF (R)**

**Funding Source: license sales check-off contributions**

This request supports legislation passed in 2007 which requires voluntary donations made when purchasing a Florida fishing or hunting license be used to fund youth fishing and hunting programs. It increases the current budget from \$50,000 to \$150,000 based on estimates that recurring contributions will exceed \$200,000 starting in FY 2008-09 as marketing efforts gain momentum and the public sees the direct benefits (first year

donations were \$100,262.) Spending plans include coordinating efforts with other government, non-government, university, private and commercial groups that have similar interests in providing youth with opportunities to learn safe, sustainable ways to enjoy Florida's life-time hunting and fishing traditions. Funds will be used solely for the purpose of enhancing youth hunting and youth freshwater and saltwater fishing programs and will serve to introduce youth to hunting and fishing in a safe and sustainable manner, encouraging them to learn, to cherish and to conserve our fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. (#4402900)

**Blue Crab Effort Management Program** **\$118,000 MRCTF (R)**

This request is to increase funding for the blue crab effort management program in response to increased revenue from the sale of blue crab endorsements and trap tags. The 2007 Florida Legislature approved several provisions to aid the implementation of the blue crab effort management program, including establishing fees for blue crab endorsements and trap tags, and penalties for violations. Included in the original legislation was an appropriation of \$132,000 to FWC to purchase trap tags and administer the program. Currently, revenues collected for the 2008/09 license year are in excess of \$225,000. Prior to the deadline for renewing commercial licenses and endorsements (September 30th) it is expected that revenue will approach \$250,000. It was anticipated that as revenue was collected from the sale of endorsements and trap tags, additional revenue would be available to expand program activities in accordance with statutory direction. These activities include operation and administration of the blue crab effort management program; trap retrieval; management of the blue crab fishery; and public education activities, research, and enforcement activities in support of the blue crab effort management program. The FWC will review and consider recommendations of the Blue Crab Advisory Board when preparing annual blue crab spending plans. (#5000700)

---

**Land Acquisition**

**Florida Forever Land Acquisition** **\$4,500,000 FFTF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: 10<sup>th</sup> series Florida Forever bond proceeds**

Section 259.105, Florida Statutes, requires that one and five tenths percent of the proceeds of bonds deposited into the Florida Forever Trust Fund be provided to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The Commission uses these funds to acquire in-holdings and additions to lands managed by the Commission which are important to the conservation of fish and wildlife. This issue appropriates \$4.5 million in funds from the tenth bond series for land acquisition purposes. (#990L000/084108)

---

**Grants**

**Fish and Wildlife Federal Grants** **1 FTE, \$3,898,286 FGTF (R)**

**Funding Source: known and anticipated federal grants**

This issue requests special category spending authority for anticipated new Federal grants. It may only be used for grants for which 100% reimbursement of these funds will be received.

Hunter Safety Education Grant \$250,000 FGTF An additional \$250,000 in spending authority is needed to help defray increased expenses in the Hunter Safety program and increase the effectiveness in utilizing federal grants-in-aid from year to year.

The funding to support this request is available from increased grant revenues in federal aid specifically designated for Florida's Hunter Safety program and other programs (e.g., Avian Influenza surveillance project). (#8105100)

Sport Fish Restoration Grant 1 FTE, \$3,648,286 FGTF This issue requests increased federal grant spending authority agency-wide due to the continued increase in funds received from the US Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration Program (SFR Program). Revenue to the SFR Program has continued to come in higher than originally projected when the federal transportation act, which earmarked a portion of fuel tax revenues to the SFR Program, was passed in 2005. Funds will be used for management and monitoring of freshwater fisheries in lakes, rivers, and fish management areas, saltwater hatchery operation, saltwater fisheries data collection and fish health monitoring, artificial reef construction, marine fisheries management and fresh and saltwater aquatic education and outreach activities (such as kids fishing events). Additionally, the Division of Law Enforcement is requesting 1 FTE and \$48,286 for an Administrative Assistant I position to support the boating access program. Duties include assembling contracts and submitting through the review process, processing payments, filing, and coordinating site inspections. This would free the program staff to provide more direct assistance to grantees and institute other program efficiencies. (#8106500)

### **Boating Access Federal Grants**

**\$3,206,342 FGTF (FCO)**

#### **Funding Source: Federal aid, Sport Fish Restoration**

The Division of Law Enforcement requests fixed capital outlay budget authority for \$1,993,342 in order to obligate funds available for various boating access projects. This spending authority will allow Boating and Waterways to request funding from US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through the Sport Fish Restoration Act from the apportioned funds to Florida for boating infrastructure. If the apportioned funds are not spent, the unobligated funds will be reallocated to other states and future apportionments to Florida reduced. This increased spending authority will provide funding for the extensive maintenance and repairs of 252 boat ramps operated and maintained by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, construction of new boat ramps, assistance with the increased responsibility for oversight of waterway markers in Florida, and joint FWC/DEP boat access partnerships on state lands. This request also includes funding for two grants from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIGP): 1) \$500,000 for Martin County Transient Facilities; and 2) \$713,000 for City of Jacksonville municipal marina. (DLE)

### **Law Enforcement Mobile Computer Support**

**3 FTE, \$1,540,875 TF (R,NR)**

#### **Funding Source: boating safety federal grant**

The Division of Law Enforcement requests \$1,408,986 in non-recurring grant funding and \$131,889 in recurring funding for FY 09-10. This funding will finish the division's laptop program approved for FY 08-09. This request completes the deployment of computers to all remaining regions, purchases the licensing and cellular services for laptops, and purchases rugged units that will be used by officers that patrol primarily in vessels. This issue provides each officer with wirelessly connected laptop computers needed to check vehicles, vessels, and people as well as graphically displaying the officer's location, which will be a benefit during critical incidents. Three additional field technical service representatives are being requested. Technical service representatives will be needed in

the regions to provide desktop and network support as well as specialized training for law enforcement field officers in each geographical area. (#36344C0)

**Law Enforcement Operations Fuel Costs**

**\$ 450,000 FGTF (R)**

**Funding Source: vessel registration fees**

The Division was appropriated \$900,000 to help offset rising fuel costs during the 2008 session. Since only \$450,000 was recurring, we are asking for the difference to be recurring. Over the last five fiscal years, DOT fuel costs have increased 139 percent. Last fiscal year alone saw a 56 percent increase in DOT fuel costs. During fiscal years 2002-03 and 2003-04, the Division spent approximately \$2.4 million for fuel each year; for fiscal year 2004-05, \$3,177,014 for fuel; for fiscal year, 2005-06, \$3,378,697 for fuel; for fiscal year 2006-07, \$3,650,580 for fuel; and for fiscal year 2007-08, \$4,918,976 for fuel, a 35% increase from the previous fiscal year. Division fuel costs have increased 105% over the last five fiscal years. Law enforcement expectations have increased over the last several years, and have outpaced funding needed to provide services. Fuel and equipment maintenance costs have continued to increase, and has resulted in a reduction of our ability to provide law enforcement services. The division concentrated on several cost saving measures, and we still have had to reduce high visibility preventative patrols, offshore patrols, manatee patrols, and public hunting and wildlife viewing area patrols. (#445000J)

**Boating**

---

**Florida Boating Improvement Program**

**\$1,250,000 SGTF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: marina fuel tax**

**\$6,100,000 MRCTF (FCO)**

This request is for fixed capital outlay funding in the amount of \$7,350,000 to continue a long- term program of providing grants to local governments for boating improvements. Section 206.606(1)(a), Florida Statutes, provides \$1.25 million annually from fuel tax revenues to the State Game Trust Fund to fund local projects providing recreational channel marking, public launching facilities, derelict vessel removal and other local boating related activities. In addition, \$6.1 million is available from the Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund to further extend the program. \$4.6 million is from marina fuel tax revenues provided by section 206.606 (d), Florida Statutes and \$1.5 million from \$1 taken from each vessel registration fee pursuant to section 328.72(15), Florida Statutes. (#990G000/140270)

**Derelict Vessel Removal**

**\$850,000 MRCTF (NR)**

**Funding Source: vessel registration fees**

The Division of Law Enforcement is requesting a recurring appropriation of \$850,000 to fund the derelict vessel removal program. The Division was appropriated \$1,550,000 in non-recurring appropriations during the 2008 session. There is an estimated 1,504 derelict vessels on the coastal waters in Florida. Derelict vessels are navigational and environmental hazards and some become dumping grounds for hazardous materials and pose a public safety and health threat to users of our public waterways. Removal of these vessels can take longer than one year due to bidding constraints, inclement weather, coordination with other agencies, environmental permitting requirements, and other factors. Recurring funds would allow the Division to establish multi-year agreements with contractors and local governments for derelict vessel removal and provide sufficient time to complete projects. The appropriation of \$850,000 would provide funds to effectively

deal with the number of derelict vessels we can have removed each year. This funding would continue efforts established in FY 2008-09 to contract with vendors for the removal of the derelict vessels statewide to effectively deal with the ongoing public safety and environmental hazard which derelict vessels pose. (#6502200)

## **Agency Operations**

---

### **Relocate Agency Headquarters**

**\$2,013,888 SGTF (FCO)**

#### **Funding Source: non-recurring trust fund balance (license fees)**

This issue requests FCO funding to renovate and configure office space at 4070 Esplanade Way, Tallahassee, to accommodate consolidation and relocation of agency staff. The Farris Bryant Building, headquarters of the agency for over 40 years, is cited by the Department of Management Services and private engineering firms as having outlived its useful life as a modern, efficient office building. In addition, FWC has over 500 headquarters employees, occupying nearly 121,000 square feet of office space in three separate locations in Tallahassee. The relocation and consolidation of employees into a single, modern office building will result in a 25,000 square foot reduction in leased space while providing a safer, more efficient work environment. After reviewing options and after significant discussion with DMS, staff conclude the most practical and cost saving alternative is to relocate to the Capitol Circle Office Complex (CCOC), to occupy a CCOC facility being vacated by the Department of Revenue upon completion of their project. This request provides \$126,480 for architectural & engineering fees, \$1,581,000 for construction costs to configure the space to meet agency needs, \$1,525,640 for office modular systems and filing systems, \$605,000 for tele/video communications, and \$15,000 for building security. In addition, \$269,100 is needed to expand the North Florida Maintenance Shop to provide secure storage for significant mobile equipment associated with this consolidation effort. It is anticipated the cost of this issue will be partially offset by revenues received from the disposal of the Bryant Building. Savings are realized from not having to spend \$4 million to repair the Bryant Building. (#990A000/083455 Office Space)

### **Human Resources Needs Due to Contract Change**

**1 FTE, \$85,314 GR (R, NR)**

#### **Funding Source: trust fund administrative overhead assessments**

A full-time clerical position and support funding is needed to maintain the agency's personnel files and respond to the numerous public records requests and subpoenas for personnel files received by the Office of Human Resources. These services were previously provided to the State through a contract with Convergys Corporation. To meet certain contract objectives, the State deleted several existing contract obligations which included personnel file maintenance, storage and retrieval. Prior to the Convergys Contract, FWC was staffed to handle these duties internally. Positions and funding were cut when the Convergys Contract was initiated by the State. Now that Convergys will no longer handle this particular task, the agency is requesting reinstatement of a position and funding previously cut. Duties will include maintaining the files, retrieving the files, redacting information not subject to the public records laws (e.g. social security numbers, homes addresses of sworn employees, etc.), invoicing for payment of the records and delivery of the records once payment is received. Non-recurring funding of \$50,000 is included to purchase a system to house the automated personnel files and recurring funding of \$6,000 is included to maintain it. (#3004400 HR Staffing Requirements)

**Convert OPS Employees to Permanent Positions** **69 FTE, (\$37,680) (R)**  
**Funding Source Savings: various trust funds and general revenue**

This request converts temporary (OPS) positions to permanent full-time equivalent (FTE) positions agency-wide, having the effect of moving them from an hourly wage earning position with no benefits to a salaried position with full state benefits. This conversion will stabilize segments of the agency's workforce which perform significant and mission critical duties. Using OPS employees to perform tasks associated with long-term responsibilities, programs and goals affects efficiency because it is difficult to recruit and retain qualified employees in jobs that have no benefits. By converting these OPS positions to FTE positions, the agency will be able to provide stability for employees, which in turn will reduce turnover in professional positions critical to the agency's mission. This request has no added cost associated with it and includes a \$1,827 reduction in recurring general revenue. (#4400300)

**Vehicle & Vessel Replacement Funding** **\$681,907 (NR)**  
**Funding Source: available non-recurring trust fund balance**

This request is for non-recurring spending authority to replace those vehicles and vessels for which there is a most critical need for replacement. These include vehicles and vessels that have been wrecked or become otherwise inoperable, have a history of chronic and costly repair problems, or are unsafe to operate without major costly repairs. This request also includes vehicles with over 150,000 miles and/or showing signs of needing costly repairs very soon. Replacement of these vehicles and vessels will increase efficiency and reduce annual repair costs. (#2401500 and #2402500)

**Information Technology Consolidation** **(\$1,000) (R)**  
**Funding Source Savings: various trust funds and general revenue**

This request transfers one information technology related position from the Division of Law Enforcement and two information technology related positions and an OPS position from the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation to the Office of Information Technology. The consolidation will provide a broader support base for the divisions and offices with greater personnel backup for critical technologies and expanded knowledge of mission essential applications. With combined staffing resources OIT will be able to concentrate on improving existing agency business requirements and support services with greater efficiency. This request has no added cost associated with it and includes a \$64,364 reduction in recurring general revenue. (#8501000)

**License Sales System Contract Costs** **\$180,000 SGTF (R)**  
**Funding Source: license administrative fees**

The Office of Licensing and Permitting requests budget to cover the increase in our vendor contract for license issuance services. In FY 03/04, the Legislature provided a \$1.8 million budget to pay a contract vendor to provide and operate the recreational fishing and hunting Total Licensing System (TLS). There have been no further budget adjustments since that time. By FY 09/10, the contract payment obligation is estimated to be \$1.98 million. An additional \$180,000 is needed to support the contract. The cost is \$0.90 per license or permit issued, supported for the most part by an administrative fee on licenses. The number of licenses and permits issued has increased over the last 6 years due to normal demand growth, new license types (military gold, crossbow, 3-day freshwater fishing) and expanded numbers of limited entry hunts processed through the system. The additional budget in this request is supported by increased administrative fees received specifically for this purpose. If funded, this request will assure the increased license

administrative fee revenue is properly spent and the TLS contract is fully funded to support license sales. (#8502000 Total Licensing System)

**Increased Lease Costs**

**\$202,133 TF (R)**

**Funding Source: recreational license fee increases**

Koger Center, Tallahassee - \$122,133 various trusts - This request covers the Koger Executive Center lease rate increase for 54,320 square feet of office space. Since the inception of the current lease in 2004, the cost per square foot has risen from \$17.02 per square foot to \$19.27 per square foot for FY 09/10. The agency has received no appropriations adjustments for this lease during that period. Therefore, this request is for the full amount of the increase. The trust funds can support the issue due to an increase in recreational hunting and fishing license fees.

Port Charlotte Field Laboratory MRCTF \$80,000 - The FWC Field Lab in Port Charlotte serves both FWRI (marine fisheries and manatee research) and LE. Due to recurring problems with the former office space, we have relocated to a new leased facility. Shortage of suitable commercial space and high demand in the area has pushed rents up significantly higher in the past few years. As a result, the new annual lease cost is \$165,900 which is more than double the previous year's cost of \$82,000. This request is to offset a portion of these increased costs and avoid reductions in programmatic activities. (#4102000)

**Repair Degraded Facilities**

**\$702,850 TF (FCO)**

**Funding Source: available non-recurring trust fund balance**

This issue provides state-wide spending authority to renovate, repair or replace degraded facilities maintained by FWC. These include:

**Ocala Conservation Center \$102,850 SGTF**

Funding is requested for critically needed renovations and repairs that include replacement of damaged roofs (damaged by tree limbs during storms); repair of damaged eaves, decking, soffit and fascia boards; termite damage and prevention: office repair and renovation; and removal of tree limbs to avoid future structural damage. If not corrected, these degraded conditions could result in increased repair needs, emergency repair costs and possible safety issues. Facilities at the Ocala Conservation Center requiring repairs or renovations include 3 dormitory duplexes, 1 maintenance building, 1 bathhouse, 1 cookhouse, and 1 office complex.

**Research Facilities \$600,000 MRCTF & SGTF**

Funding is needed for renovations and repairs that include:

FWRI Headquarters, St. Petersburg - \$210,000 MRCTF

To rehabilitate the existing cooling towers and fan motors. The existing 15-year old cooling towers are original to the Joint Use Building. Due to its constant 24/7 operation and age, the system is in extremely poor condition. Currently, our 130,000 square foot facility, which supports approximately 368 staff, is under a continual threat of having a total air conditioning failure if the existing cooling tower system fails. The scope of this project entails removing and replacing the existing cooling tower fill and fan motors with high efficiency fan motors.

FWRI Wildlife Research Laboratory, Gainesville - \$255,000 SGTF

\$80,000 for asbestos remediation - ceilings of the older part of the facility are covered with asbestos-containing textured acoustical coating. Asbestos presents a potential health hazard to exposed employees and visitors if it is disturbed, which can lead to long-term health problems and legal issues. No construction or repairs can be made to ceiling or ceiling fixtures while this material is present. Approval of

this request will bring this facility up to current building codes and compliance with health and workplace standards.

\$150,000 to replace aging HVAC system - the two main HVAC systems at the facility are 30- and 20- years old and need replacement. The current system produces a foul odor that has led to complaints of health problems by staff and visitors. Remedial measures have failed to fix the problem and personnel with health issues are being asked to work out of their homes or alternative locations. The age of the current system requires constant and costly repairs and some components may not be repairable. Replacement of the current system, including condensers, air handlers, ductwork and controls, with a new, energy efficient system will correct air quality issues, help meet the governor's goal of reducing carbon emissions and significantly reduce operating and repair costs. Approval of this request will bring FWRI facilities up to current building codes and compliances, and allow us to be within ASHRAE air quality operational standards.

\$25,000 to replace roofing on east wing - Current roofing is at least 25- years old, at the end of its serviceable life and not repairable. Because of water leaks and mold/mildew issues, equipment and staff housed in this area are compromised. Roofing system replacement will prevent interior damage to building and potential interior indoor health issues.

FWRI Research Laboratory, Tequesta - \$135,000 MRCTF

\$75,000 to repair and replace roofing. Current roofing is at least 25- years old, at the end of its serviceable life and not repairable. Because of water leaks and mold/mildew issues, equipment and staff housed in this area are compromised.

\$60,000 to remove the septic tank system and tie into the city sewer system. The existing septic tank system is in extremely poor condition. The scope of this project entails removing the current system and connecting all buildings on site to the city sewer system. This requires purchasing and maintaining the low-pressure pump, piping, a connection fee and upgrading the electrical system. (#990M000/080102 Maintenance and Repair)

## **Other**

---

### **Nuisance Alligator Trapper Assistance**

**\$55,000 SGTF (NR)**

**Funding Source: alligator program license fees**

Each fiscal year, the Commission is provided with \$210,000 of recurring budget to pay permitted nuisance alligator trappers for taking nuisance alligators. In fiscal year 2008-09, proviso language was added to the General Appropriations Act specifying how these payments are distributed. An unintended consequence was that some of this recurring budget would go unspent. This request is to allow the Commission to distribute this unspent budget back to the trappers. The total would equal the recurring budget scheduled for this activity that was not expended in fiscal year 2008-09. (#4403280 Alligator Trapper Assistance)

### **Eliminate Cash Transfer From IPCTF to SGTF**

**(\$880,000) IPCTF (R)**

This request shifts \$880,000 invasive plant management costs from the State Game Trust Fund (SGTF) to the Invasive Plant Control Trust Fund (IPCTF) and eliminates a double budget item that resulted from the transfer of the Invasive Plant Management program from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Prior to the transfer of the Invasive Plant Management

program from DEP to FWC, there was an annual transfer of \$880,000 made from DEP's IPCTF to FWC's SGTF to cover invasive plant management activities within the FWC. Now that the program has been transferred from DEP to FWC, it is no longer necessary to fund these costs with a cash transfer. It is much more efficient to shift the costs to the IPCTF which is now to be established within the FWC. (#33V3200)

**2005 Hurricane Recovery**

**(\$1,815,000) SGTF (R)**

The 2007 Legislature provided recurring funding to complete FEMA reimbursable repairs related to hurricane damages suffered in 2005. This issue seeks to eliminate recurring appropriation no longer needed for this purpose. (#33V1000)

**Interim Land Management**

**(\$2,280,122) CARLTF (R)**

Last Session, the Legislature eliminated funding for interim land management. It was their intent to also remove the spending authority from FWC's budget since the revenue to support it is no longer available. This reduction issue carries out that intent. (#33V3100)

---

**Legend**

- CARL – Conservation and Recreation Lands
- FWC – Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- FWRI – Fish and Wildlife Research Institute
- FTE – Full Time Equivalent Employee Position
- FCO – Fixed Capital Outlay
- LE – Law Enforcement
- (R) – Recurring Appropriation
- (NR) – Non-Recurring Appropriation
  
- GR – General Revenue
- TF – various Trust Funds
- ATF – Administrative Trust Fund
- SGTF – State Game Trust Fund
- MRCTF – Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund
- CARLTF – Conservation & Recreation Lands Trust Fund
- FETF – Florida Forever Trust Fund
- LATF – Land Acquisition Trust Fund
- FGTF – Federal Grants Trust Fund
- GDTF – Grants and Donations Trust Fund

Sandra Wilson, CFO  
December 5, 2008