

Florida black bear status and management before and after approval of the draft Bear Management Plan

| | Before Plan | After Plan |
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| What is the status of bears? | Bears are classified as State Threatened. | Bears are classified as wildlife. |
| What level of protection do bears have? | It is illegal to injure or kill bears. | No change. |
| What is the penalty for injuring or killing a bear? | You can be charged with a felony and/or up to \$5,000 fine and/or up to five years in prison. | You can be charged with a misdemeanor and/or up to a \$500 fine and/or up to 60 days in jail. |
| Can I feed bears? | It is illegal to feed bears if the feeding is likely to cause a conflict. | No change. |
| What is the basis for the FWC's bear policies, rules and management actions? | The FWC bases its bear policies, rules and management actions primarily on Threatened Species guidance and internal reports and documents. | The FWC bases its bear policies, rules and management actions on the objectives of a comprehensive statewide bear management plan created by internal staff with external review. |
| Can I hunt bears? | Bear hunting is illegal. | No change. |
| How does the FWC conserve and protect bear habitat? | The FWC provides proactive technical assistance and comments on land-use changes to landowners and regulatory agencies to determine if the changes comply with State Threatened Species requirements. | The FWC will provide proactive technical assistance and comments on land-use changes to landowners and regulatory agencies to determine if the changes are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Bear Management Plan. |
| How are stakeholders involved with bear management activities? | The FWC periodically consults with stakeholders on an informal basis. | The FWC has a formalized bear stakeholder group at the statewide level and will develop seven local bear stakeholder groups, one for each bear management unit. |
| Do bear management activities vary depending on where I live in Florida? | Bear management activities follow Threatened Species guidance, with some variability based on whether you are in bear country. | The FWC will operate under a statewide bear management framework, with the flexibility to manage seven bear management units based on the unique characteristics of those bear subpopulations and local stakeholder input. |