

Florida Fish and Wildlife News



Florida Wildlife Federation

Keeping the Wild in Florida since 1936!

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Buy the Land for the EAA Reservoir

History has shown that Florida has an abundance of water during the rainy season and not enough during the dry; therefore, when rain falls, water levels rise in Lake Okeechobee, putting the 70-year-old dike at risk for failure. In response to Lake Okeechobee rising and in the interest of health and human safety, water managers send polluted water from the lake through the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers because there is nowhere to store the water, damaging the local economies and ecosystems, and wasting billions of gallons of water each year.

However, the State of Florida through the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), if supported by the Florida Legislature and Governor Scott during the 2015 Legislative Session, has the historic opportunity to acquire land to build a reservoir that has been scientifically vetted and approved by state and federal governments as part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). The SFWMD's current option includes a number of parcels, the most important of which is a 26,100 acre area just south of Lake Okeechobee. A reservoir on this site could store one foot of water off of Lake Okeechobee. Further, as a CERP project, this reservoir would qualify for a 50/50 cost share with the federal government. The reservoir project will aid in Everglades restoration and will benefit the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers and Indian River Lagoon, which have been severely damaged by polluted discharges from Lake Okeechobee.

By using this key parcel contained within the purchase option for construction of a reservoir, we can help alleviate and ease the current water crisis in Florida, and make a good investment in our state's future by providing the following specific

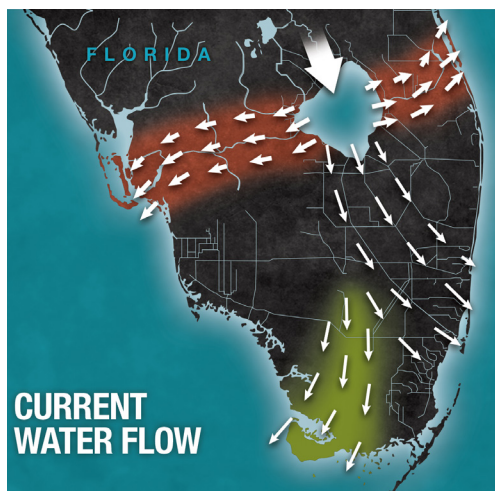
benefits:

- Protect health and human safety by reducing failure risk of the Herbert Hoover Dike
- Provide water supply for the natural system and agricultural users
- Recharge the Biscayne aquifer that provides the water supply to more than 8 million Floridians
- Considerably reduce the volume of polluted water being discharged from Lake Okeechobee to local communities along the eastern and western coasts
- Significantly decrease fire risk in the Everglades by reducing dry outs
- Result in significant cost savings over the alternative of aquifer storage recovery (ASR)
- Qualify for cost sharing with the federal government as part of the CERP

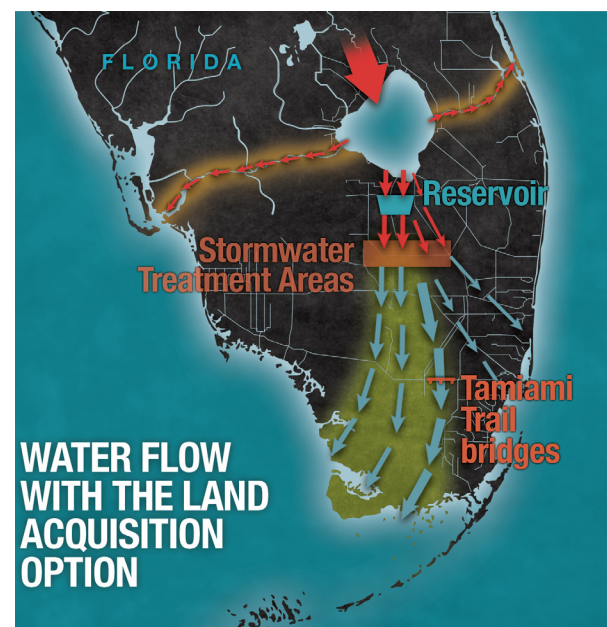
For more information visit www.supporteaareservoir.com.

The Florida Wildlife Federation is seeking businesses or civic groups who support EAA Reservoir Project funding to improve water quality, further Everglades Restoration and provide increased protection for the Caloosahatchee Estuary and Indian River Lagoon from high water discharges. If you have, or know of, a business or civic association in favor of this project, please email Manley at wildfed@gmail.com. Thanks!

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CURRENT WATER FLOW



WATER FLOW WITH THE LAND ACQUISITION OPTION

Announcing the 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet, June 13, 2015 at the St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club.

Please mark your calendars and see back page for further information about the events June 12-14, 2015.

If you would prefer to receive this publication via email instead of print, contact dannygs@fwfonline.org. Please include your name and address with your request.

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

by Steve O'Hara



Each member of the Florida Wildlife Federation's Board of Directors is a passionate conservationist. This is about one of them, Jim Thomas.

I'm singling out Jim Thomas for several reasons, including his recent role in hosting the Board of Directors meeting we held in January in Central Florida. More specifically, we met in Oakland, Florida.

On Friday evening, Jim Thomas and his wife, Peg, hosted dinner in their home for the Directors. So I begin with "Thank you" to both.

Jim helped arrange a place for the Saturday portion of the meeting – at the Oakland Meeting Hall next to the historic town hall. The setting was made perfect with a pair of eagles feeding their eaglets in their nest in the oak tree in the yard of the meeting hall.

The Sunday portion of the meeting was held at The Oakland Nature Preserve (www.oaktownusa.com/Pages/Preserve/index). Jim Thomas is one of the Preserve's founding members. He and Peg both serve on its Board of Directors. Jim is also President and long-time member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Lake Apopka.

The Friends of Lake Apopka (www.fola.org) is the main citizen ad-

vocacy group for the lake. While others may have had a role, as far as I'm concerned, Jim Thomas is the founder of the Friends.

A newspaper article in 1991 declared that Lake Apopka was under a "death warrant." But, Jim Thomas's passion and leadership has brought the lake back from the brink of death. Today, the lake is not yet fully restored, but it is alive and kicking. Phosphorus levels are substantially reduced. Surrounding wetlands have been restored. Mercury contamination is significantly lower than other Florida water bodies. The list of bird species observed on the lake's north shore is the highest for any site in Florida, even greater than Everglades National Park.

Restoration of Lake Apopka had begun by the middle of the 1990s. The Friends found a tract of land on the lake which could be opened to the public and provide a place to demonstrate and interpret the restoration process. The Friends assisted in the formation of the Oakland Nature Preserve. Jim Thomas and other dedicated volunteers, with community support, raised and invested over \$3 million in the Preserve, acquiring 128 acres of land, constructing several pavilions and a boardwalk to the lake that is almost 3000 feet long. They planted native species and opened Interpretive trails.

The Oakland Nature Preserve is well worth a visit. It is open 365 days a year from sunrise to sunset. The address is 747 Machete Trail, Oakland, Florida.

Thank you again, Jim Thomas. It is my honor and my privilege to serve on the Florida Wildlife Federation's Board of Directors with conservation heroes like you.

Steve



Above: FWF Vice-President Preston Robertson speaks at the Floridians for Clean Water & Amendment 1 Rally on February 18, 2015. Photo by Lou Kellenberger.

Below: FWF staff joined a great rally crowd that came out in a strong showing of support. Photo by Claudia Farren.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Manley Fuller



Hello, as you know, FWF is actively engaged with other pro Amendment 1 advocates in working to see that Amendment 1 dollars are spent for approved purposes. There are many ideas out there as to what is and is not an appropriate use of Amendment 1 dollars. Please see the graphic below from the Amendment 1 steering committee, of which FWF is a member, about how we think funds should be allocated.

The estimates of available funds are based on real estate transactions and will no doubt be adjusted before the 2015 legislative session ends. There are many important needs in the environmental area which FWF supports but which we believe fall outside the bounds of Amendment 1 funding, such as construction of new sewer plants and

payment of salaries now funded from other sources. Please see other articles in this issue of *Florida Fish and Wildlife News* which discuss Amendment 1 priorities.

One priority is the potential to fund an Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir site which FWF believes should be funded from **bonding** Amendment 1 dollars. This issue is time sensitive as the option contract must be exercised by the government by October 1, 2015 with dollars approved in the 2015 session. In our opinion, Amendment 1 dollars should also prioritize funding Florida Forever for both public and private land conservation. Management funding for our state and water management district land managers is very important as is springs protection. We all have our work cut out for us in getting Amendment 1 right this session. FWF will be covering Amendment 1 and other critical legislative matters in our *Capitol Watch* updates and on our website www.fwfonline.org. Stay tuned!

I wanted to note some of FWF's other critical projects. One is our joining with our friends in Siesta Key in opposition to the proposed dredging of the naturally navigable Big Sarasota Pass which has never been dredged. This proposed project would dredge a natural pass which has never been done previously. It would degrade important fish habitat and expose Siesta Key property owners to more direct wave action by removal of an extensive sand bar which helps protect their property. Please check out the Save Siesta Sands coalition at www.soss2.com. FWF has filed objections to the US Army Corps

of Engineers draft permit for this project and we should soon see their public response to our comments. Attorney Tom Reese and I recently met with FWF member Peter van Roekens and his colleagues to go over this proposal and do a site inspection. FWF opposes this project and will keep you posted on this issue. Big Sarasota Pass, by the way, is an important natural channel to and from Sarasota Bay.

The FWF views with dismay portions of the recently introduced water bill which would among other things slow our ability to reduce the ever-growing build up of nutrients in Lake Okeechobee and to prohibit the water management districts from cleaning up canal waters. Please see the press release by Earthjustice, which often represents FWF on water quality cases, on the serious problems with House Bill 7003.

I want to compliment FWF director Bobbie Lindsay for her hard work on behalf of protecting the Palm Beach Inlet from a very destructive proposed port expansion which would destroy critical habitat for manatees, fish and other marine life and as well as create serious turbidity problems and degrade the vicinity including a very popular recreational area known as Peanut Island. After an introduction from FWF Director Joe Atterbury I was able to discuss the problems of port expansion as well as issues of Lake Okeechobee discharges to the St. Lucie and Southern Indian River Lagoon and west coast estuaries on the show "Fishing Headquarters" with Pete and Tommy Schulz aired on ESPN West Palm 106.3 FM on February 14. We will post that interview podcast on our site as well.

Regarding opposition to the proposed Port expansion in Palm Beach Inlet and Lake Worth, FWF is part of a coalition of groups, like the West Palm Beach Fishing Club, surfing and diving groups, local businesses including shippers, civic associations and Congresswoman Lois Frankel, who support regular channel maintenance but not port expansion. The Everglades Law Center prepared excellent comments on the legal and habitat problems of expanding the port and will represent FWF and other project opponents.

FWF continues to advocate for important Gulf restoration projects in partnership with the National Wildlife Federation and others from Pensacola to the Keys including but not limited to oyster restoration projects, ecological enhancements in the Apalachicola Riv-

Pace of Everglades Restoration Threatens to Harm Estuaries

By Martha Musgrove

Reprinted with permission from the Sun Sentinel.



Spooked by warming currents in the Pacific known to presage heavy rains in Florida, the Army Corps of Engineers has been lowering Lake Okeechobee

by discharging water into the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries. Coastal residents are none too happy about it.

But 15 years after adoption of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan to clean and send water south, there's still no choice but to discharge east and west to lower the lake. Neither the Corps nor the South Florida Water Management District is going to risk letting Lake Okeechobee rise above 16 feet and possibly trigger a catastrophic failure of the Herbert Hoover Dike.

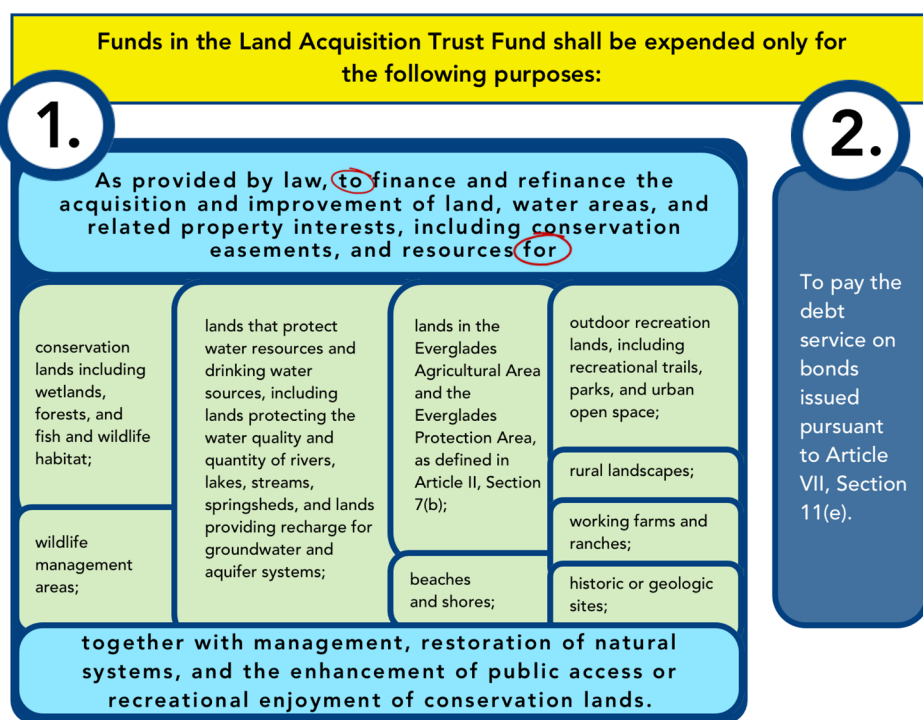
The dike doesn't meet national "dam safety" standards. It is under repair, but runoff from rain in the Kissimmee Valley flushes into the lake six times faster than it can be released. To maintain a margin of safety, releases must start before the rain. The lake is now at about 15 feet.

Keeping water low has been good for Lake Okeechobee and its rebounding bass fishery. It's murder for the estuaries. And the bitter irony is: This is happening in the dry season.

The Caloosahatchee River and its estuary, on Florida's west coast, handle lake releases better than the St. Lucie on the east coast. The St. Lucie neither needs nor wants lake water, and is still recovering from the 2013 lake dump during summer's "rainy season." That discharge uprooted and washed away grass beds, killed the oysters and shellfish and fed an algal bloom so toxic that health officials were warning: "Don't touch the water."

Protesters chanting "Send It South" don't want any repeats.

Historically the water of the Kissimmee-Lake Okeechobee-Everglades did flow south. There are no natural links



FLORIDA'S
Water & Land Legacy

Amendment 1 Sponsor Committee
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MUSGROVE con't page 8



More Panthers, More People, More Challenges

2014 was a noteworthy year for the State of Florida and Florida panthers.

Florida surpassed New York State to become the third most populous state, almost 20 million people. California is number one in population and Texas is number two. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Florida added 293,000 new residents between July 2013 and July 2014.

In June, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission issued the following statement: “Biologists have updated their ‘population range estimate’ to reflect an increase to 100-180 adult panthers in Florida. Based on this estimate and habitat availability, **panthers likely have reached their carrying capacity south of the Caloosahatchee River.**” (emphasis added) Go to <http://myfwc.com/news/news-releases/2014/june/19/panther-report> for more information.

The combination of more people, more vehicles, and more panthers resulted in a record-breaking number of Florida panthers killed on Florida’s roadways. Below is a chart, prepared and distributed by Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission biologists, detailing 2014’s Florida panther deaths. Note that road deaths are the vast majority, 25 of 33, of last year’s known deaths for panthers. Vehicle collision is also the leading cause of Florida black bear deaths.

| Date | PantherID | Sex | Age | Location | Cause |
|------------|--------------|-----|----------|---|--|
| 1/2/2014 | UCFP203 | M | 2-3 | I-75 near MM 111, Collier County | Vehicle |
| 1/4/2014 | FP223 | M | 2yr 8mo. | Private Land, Hendry County | Pneumonia |
| 1/22/2014 | UCFP204 | M | 1.5 | SR 29, Owl Hammock Curve, Collier County | Vehicle |
| 1/24/2014 | FP175 | F | 6.5 | BCNP Addition Lands, Collier County | Peritonitis (aborted fetus found next to carcass) |
| 3/1/2014 | UCFP206 | M | 3yrs | SR80, Lee/Hendry Co line | Vehicle |
| 3/8/2014 | UCFP207 | M | 1.5 yrs | CR 833, Hendry County | Vehicle |
| 3/17/2014 | FP228 | M | 4 yrs | Everglades/Francis Taylor WMA, Broward Co. | Vehicle |
| 3/29/2014 | UCFP208 | U | 2 yrs | Concho Billy Trail, SBCNP | Intraspecific Aggression |
| 4/3/2014 | UCFP209 | M | 3-5 yrs | CR 833, just S of CR 832, Hendry County | Vehicle |
| 4/8/2014 | UCFP210 | M | 2-3 | CR 846, 6 miles E of Immokalee, Collier County | Vehicle |
| 4/11/2014 | UCFP211 | M | 8-10 mo. | Belle Meade, PSSF, Collier County | Intraspecific Aggression |
| 4/14/2014 | UCFP212 | M | 4-5 | US27, north of Lake Placid, Highlands Co. | Vehicle |
| 4/25/2014 | FP163 | M | 7yr 2mo. | Co Line Rd, Collier/Hendry Co. Line | Vehicle |
| 5/1/2014 | UCFP213 | F | 3 | I-75 near MM 134, Lee County | Vehicle |
| 5/16/2014 | UCFP214 | M | 14 mo. | Oil Well Rd, east of Pacific Grade, Collier Co. | Vehicle |
| 6/12/2014 | K390/UCFP215 | F | 1-2 | US41, SE of Collier Seminole SP, Collier Co. | Vehicle |
| 6/25/2014 | UCFP216 | F | 1 | Corkscrew Rd, near CREW gate 5 | Vehicle |
| 7/16/2014 | FP177 | M | 7 | BCNP - North Addition Lands | Intraspecific Aggression |
| 8/4/2014 | FP231 | M | 2.5yrs | Golden Gate Estates, Collier County | Unknown |
| 8/6/2014 | UCFP217 | F | 2 | CR833 | Vehicle |
| 8/24/2014 | UCFP218 | F | 4 mo. | Immokalee Rd/Wildwood Blvd | Vehicle |
| 8/24/2014 | UCFP219 | U | 4 mo. | Immokalee Rd/Krape Rd | Vehicle |
| 9/2/2014 | UCFP220 | F | 3-4 yrs | CR833, N of BCSIR | Vehicle |
| 10/20/2014 | UCFP222 | M | 3 | Florida’s Turnpike, MM 192, Yeehaw Junction | Vehicle |
| 11/13/2014 | UCFP223 | F | 3-4 yrs | County Line Rd, south of CR846, Collier County | Vehicle |
| 11/14/2014 | FP229 | F | 4-5 yrs | Northern Addlands, BCNP, Collier County | Unknown |
| 11/28/2014 | UCFP224 | M | 6 mo. | Golden Gate Blvd/6th St NE | Vehicle |
| 12/18/2014 | UCFP225 | M | 4 yrs | Flaghole Road, 8km S. of US27, Hendry County | Vehicle |
| 12/18/2014 | UCFP226 | M | 3 yrs | Collier Blvd, 2.4km S. of US41, Collier County | Vehicle |
| 12/19/2014 | UCFP227 | M | 2 yrs | US41, MM 57, 3.8 km W. of the Oasis Center | Vehicle |
| 12/28/2014 | UCFP228 | M | 2 yrs | Golden Gate Blvd/10th St NE | Vehicle |
| 12/31/2014 | UCFP229 | F | 2.5 yrs | 16th St SE, Golden Gate Estates, Collier County | Vehicle |
| 12/31/2014 | FP213 | F | 5.5 yrs | Dinner Island Ranch WMA, Hendry County | Unknown |



FP 224 was saved by a phone call. She was struck by a vehicle and rescued in Collier County, having suffered a fractured right hind leg, rib fractures, and bruising around the lungs. Rescuers took her to the Animal Specialty Hospital of Florida in Naples, where she had surgery that used a steel plate to mend the bone together. After recovering from surgery, the panther was transported to White Oak, a conservation center in Yulee, where she received care until ready for release to the wild. This photo was taken by a Florida Wildlife Federation member whose rural home is in FP 224’s home range. Look closely, a surgical scar is visible on her thigh.



Here are suggestions on how motorists can reduce the risk of panther and other wildlife road deaths.

1. Drive the speed limit and be alert for wildlife activity.
2. Panther activity is greatest between dusk and dawn when a driver’s visibility is at its lowest.
3. At night watch for wildlife “eye shine” and scan the shoulders for wildlife.
4. Roadways that are frequently crossed by panthers are marked with warning signs.
5. There are road segments that are clearly posted as Florida Panther Speed Zones. From the dusk to dawn speed limit is lowered to 45 miles per hour. Speeding tickets can exceed \$200 and excessive speed requires a court appearance.
6. Driving through a three mile Florida Panther Speed Zone at 45 miles per hour **only takes one minute longer** than travelling at 60 miles per hour.
7. Driving slower gives a driver reaction time if a panther or other wildlife darts into the road.

To report an injured or dead panther, please call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

1. Hotline is **888-404-FWCC** (3922). Cell phone users can dial *FWC or #FWC.
2. The more detailed information provided on location, the quicker biologists and veterinarians can rescue the injured wildlife.
3. Please remain on site.
4. Oversee from a distance, preferably in a vehicle or inside a building.
5. Do not approach the injured animal.
6. A phone call can be the difference between life and death for injured wildlife.

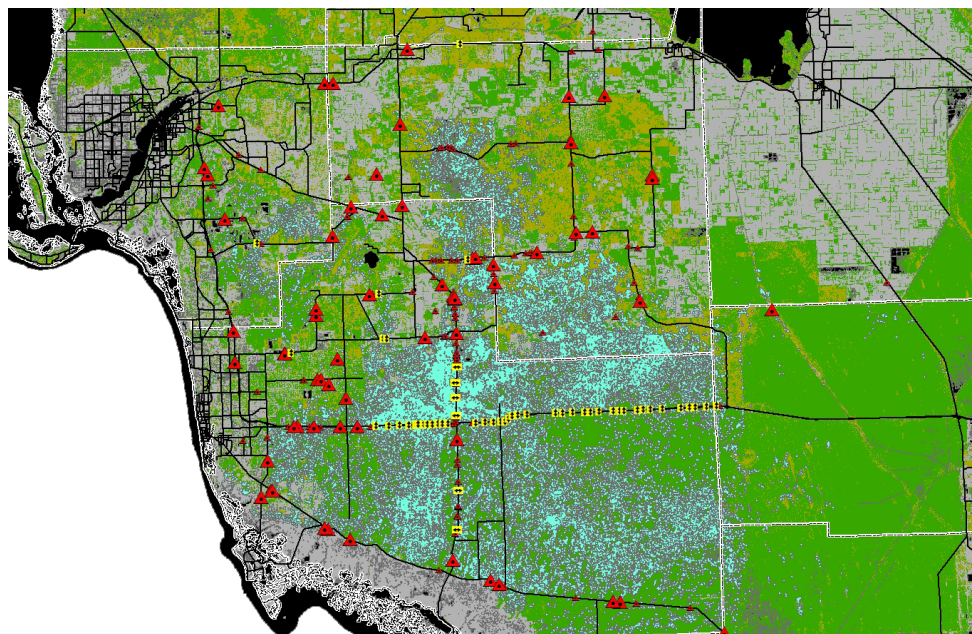
Safer Roads

The Florida Wildlife Federation is partnering with local transportation and land use planners, Florida Department of Transportation, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and other conservation organizations to retrofit the existing highway system and develop a strategy that will ensure that future roadways will not put panthers and other native wildlife at risk of colliding with a vehicle.

Please visit <http://www.fws.gov/verobeach/FloridaPantherRITTransportation.html> for more information about the Florida Panther Recovery Implementation Team's Transportation SubTeam.

Florida Wildlife Federation's Southwest Florida Field Representative Nancy Payton is chair of the Transportation SubTeam.

The Transportation SubTeam meetings are open to the public and time is reserved for public input. To receive email notifications and updates on the work of the Florida Panther Recovery Implementation Team's Transportation SubTeam, please subscribe at <https://www.fws.gov/lists/listinfo/floridapantherrit>.



Florida panther deaths in Southwest Florida through 2014 are noted with a red triangle. The larger triangles denote deaths in the last five years. The yellow boxes are existing panther underpasses. The east-west road with the many yellow boxes is Alligator Alley, I-75. Map produced by Darrell Land, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

FWF is seeking volunteers in the Central Florida area (including Lakeland, Lake Wales and Winter Haven) who might wish to take over the FWF nesting box program from Dr. Bob Taylor. Bob will make his workshop available to local volunteers for this. Bob, who lives near Lakeland, served on the FWF board of directors for several years. He has constructed more than 600 boxes and several have been shipped as far away as New England, Washington State and one to Sweden, where they were readily accepted and used by local birds. Email Diane Hines at dhines@fwfonline.org if you or someone you know is interested in building nest boxes as a way to protect a variety of birds and to help FWF raise funds. **Thanks much to Bob for all his wonderful help!**



NORTHEAST FLORIDA REPORT

by Sarah Owen Gledhill, FWF's Northeast Florida Planning Advocate



with moss. Johnny and Beanie's Kitchen, out of Hastings, will be serving up some Southern and Minorcan dishes using locally grown produce. We will be presenting awards to some very special people who have dedicated their lives to the conservation of Florida's natural resources.

Bring the family! We know everyone will enjoy the hotel, St. Augustine and all the events we have planned. Mark your calendars for June 12-14!

Join Us in St. Augustine to Celebrate Conservation

The 2015 FWF Annual Conservation Awards Banquet weekend will be held in St. Augustine this year June 12-14, 2015. We have big plans in store. Our headquarters for the weekend will be the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel on San Marco Avenue. The hotel is within walking distance of all the activities downtown St. Augustine has to offer.

On Friday evening, we will gather at Genungs Fish Camp and watch the sun set over the Matanzas River while enjoying a delicious local meal prepared by Chef Stephen Woodard. We are hoping to have DJ Chill Will of IDEAS For Us spin some delightful tunes all with his solar powered system. Please come and enjoy good food and friends.

Saturday's Awards Banquet will take place at the St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club. Once the site for cock fighting back in the 40's, the Rod & Gun Club provides the perfect old Florida setting with its majestic oaks dripping

Proposed Restoration a Step in the Right Direction

In January, a big announcement was made concerning the possible restoring of the Ocklawaha River. After months of presentations by experts, the Jacksonville Port Task Force started looking at restoring the Ocklawaha River as possible mitigation for dredging the St. Johns River. In what many called "a very bold move indeed," the Jacksonville Port Authority, the City of Jacksonville and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce have all agreed to push for the de-funding of the Rodman Reservoir and the breaching of the dam. Our allies with the St. Johns Riverkeeper have agreed not to challenge the dredging if the Jacksonville business community will lobby to breach the Rodman Dam and restore the Ocklawaha. FWF hopes this will let the Ocklawaha run free again. It is positive to see the business community of Jacksonville getting behind the restoration of the Ocklawaha River.



New Floridian Gibson Rhodes Gledhill and his Mother.



Preston Robertson
Vice-President for Conservation &
General Counsel

Get Involved In How Amendment 1 Funds Will Be Used

With the overwhelming success of Amendment 1 at the polls last November, we now move to the task of ensuring that the money that comes from the Amendment's provisions actually goes to benefit our lands and waters and keeps Florida a wonderful place to live. Amendment 1 was passed to ensure that 33% of the taxes on real estate transfers (aka documentary stamps) are used for land and water protection and clean up. Exactly how the money is spent will be decided by the Florida Legislature in the 2015 Session that commences at the beginning of March 2015. That said, Legislative committees have already started to meet on this issue, and **now is the time for you to get involved**. Many interests have now come forward with their own ideas on how to spend the Amendment 1 money, and some of them do not correlate with the conservation of our natural resources. We need to let them know this money is to be used to fully fund the successful Florida Forever program, springs and estuary protection, and Everglades restoration. This money should be used to leave our state cleaner and more ecologically sustainable for the next generation. Please take the time to get involved!

GET INVOLVED IN HOW AMENDMENT 1 FUNDS WILL BE USED:

1. Go to "Florida Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee" webpage.
 2. Click on "Water and Land Conservation" at top left.
 3. Scroll to bottom and fill out the form, add comments and submit
- Direct Link: www.flsenate.gov/media/topics/wlc.

SUGGESTED COMMENTS:

1. Fully fund the successful Florida Forever program
2. Fully fund the Rural and Family Lands program
3. Purchase lands to Protect our Springs
4. Purchase lands to Protect the Everglades via bonding

CALL:

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(850) 487-5005
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(850) 487-5032
Senator Wilton Simpson
(850) 487-5018

and

Representatives

Speaker Crisafulli (Brevard)
(850) 717-5051
Ben Albritton (DeSoto, Hardee, Polk)
(850) 717-5056
Tom Goodson (Brevard/Orange)
(850) 717-5050
Kristin Jacobs (Broward)
(850) 717-5096
Katie Edwards (Broward)
(850) 717-5098
Matt Caldwell (Lee)
(850) 717-5079
Neil Combee (Osceola/Polk)
(850) 717-5039

Preston T. Robertson



Claudia Farren
Communications Consultant

Please Send Your Comments to the Florida Senate as Legislation is Developed to Implement Amendment 1!

Senator Charlie Dean, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation, has created a **webpage dedicated to collecting public comment on the implementation of the Water and Land Conservation Amendment** passed by 75 percent of Florida's voters on November 4. The Committee will conduct meetings to review and discuss these comments and other public input as they write legislation to implement the constitutional amendment during the 2015 Legislative Session. All comments will be preserved and maintained as part of the Committee's record. Public comments can be made at the Water and Land Conservation Webpage at www.flsenate.gov/media/topics/wlc. To stay informed and follow the committee's frequent updates, sign up for the Senate Tracker at www.flsenate.gov/Tracker/Signup.

The first meeting of the Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee was held at the Capitol in Tallahassee on January 7. Amendment 1 goes into effect on July 1. Each year, for the next 20 years through July 1, 2035, the Land Acquisition Trust Fund will receive a minimum of 33 percent of net revenue from the Documentary Stamp Tax. Senate staff explained

there are 10 buckets from which those revenues should be expended only for the purposes provided by law to finance and refinance the trust fund. Go to page four of the Post Meeting Packet at www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2014-2016/EP/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_2736.pdf to see the 10 buckets.

The total amount of tax collected is estimated to be approximately \$22 billion over the next 20 years. Approximately \$750 million should be spent in the first fiscal year, 2015-2016. Staff stated the next steps to implement the Amendment should be to restructure Chapter 201, Florida Statutes, to provide for accountability, increase transparency to the public and to comply with the prohibition on commingling with General Revenue.

The main sponsoring organizations of Amendment 1, including FWF, presented a proposal for first-year spending. The proposal is to spend \$177 million for Florida Forever with the balance going to fund Everglades restoration and estuaries, land acquisition around springs; land management, and money for the Rural and Family Lands program.

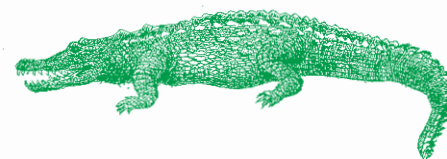
To hear audio or video of the meeting, see the attendance record, or read the Post Meeting Packet go to www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/EP.

Florida Wildlife Federation believes Amendment 1 funds should be used for existing and proven water and land conservation programs such as Florida Forever.

FWF urges our members and supporters to follow the development of this extremely important legislation and send their thoughts and comments to the Senate committee at www.flsenate.gov/media/topics/wlc. You can also receive FWF's Capitol Watch by email to see our comments as the process unfolds and legislation is developed in both the Senate and the House. To receive Capitol Watch, please email Lynn Jones at lynn@fwfonline.org, providing your street address and email address.

Thanks!

Read the text of the Constitutional Amendment at www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2014-2016/EP/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_2736.pdf



6TH ANNUAL KIDS WILDLIFE HABITAT CONTEST...COMING UP!

On Earth Day, April 22, 2015, the Florida Wildlife Federation will again award a commemorative plaque and an age-suitable gardening book to the Florida kid or group of kids 12 years old or under who have helped to establish and maintain a habitat for wildlife at home or on school property. The habitat will also be featured on our website and in our newsletter. Entries close March 31, 2015.

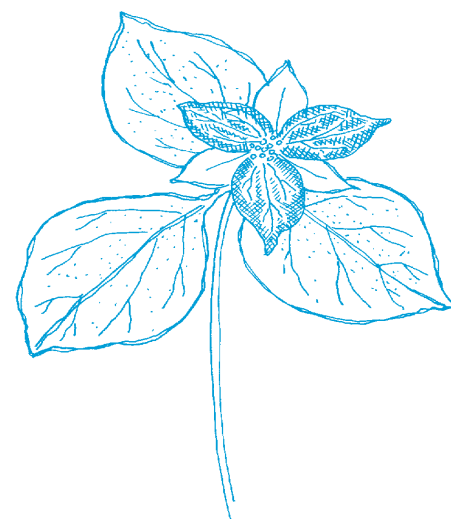
The Florida Wildlife Federation is dedicated to encouraging young Floridians to be good environmentalists and to care for our native animals and plants. We believe that time spent outdoors working on a habitat project is of great value in encouraging young people to learn about nature. Experts say that lack of active outdoor play and projects contributes to many childhood health problems.

Entering is simple. Just tell us how the habitat provides the following four elements for critters you want to attract: food, water, cover and a place to raise young. Send some photos of your habitat, preferably with children working there.

Teachers, please note that it is not necessary for schoolyard habitats to be certified by National Wildlife Federation or any other organization, just that they provide the four necessary elements for a good wildlife habitat. We are especially interested in the science that students learn in the habitat. IF YOU HAVE ENTERED BEFORE, AND DID NOT WIN, PLEASE ENTER AGAIN!

A description and photos of your habitat can be e-mailed to patricia@fwfonline.org or mailed to Florida Wildlife Federation, 2545 Blair Stone Pines Drive, Tallahassee FL, 32301.

Email patricia@fwfonline.org or call the FWF office at (850) 656-7113 for more information, if needed. See our website at www.fwfonline.org for photos and information about previous winners, and the PowerPoint and videos there for general habitat information. We look forward to hearing from you.



New Eagle Club Members:

Stephanie Pew, North Palm Beach

Mr. & Mrs. Lee Klingler, Boca Raton

Jay Freeland, Merritt Island

Rosemarie Williams, Brandon

New Life Members:

Sherrie Ault, Englewood

Michael & Elizabeth Tiernan, Delray Beach

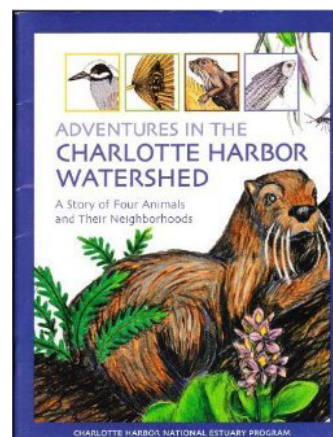
Judith Peters, Vero Beach

Alex & Sue Williams, Clearwater Beach

Harold & Ellen Leibowitz, Boca Raton

Thank you for your generous support!

*Legacy Club Members are those who have donated \$5,000 or more in a single gift.
Eagle Club Members are \$1,000 donors and Life Members are \$500 donors.



Adventures in the Charlotte Harbor Watershed: A Story of Four Animals and Their Neighborhoods

Learn about the environment of southwest Florida through the adventures of four animals: a yellow-crowned night-heron on the Caloosahatchee River, an alligator in the Peace River, an otter on the Myakka River, and a mullet in the estuaries.

If you are interested in receiving a free copy of this publication, it's primarily for third graders or similar age groups. Email: tessa@fwfonline.org; with full mailing address.

FWF co-sponsored this publication with generous support from the Stanley and Mildred Zamo Charitable Trust.



FLORIDA KIDS' QUIZ



1. Are swans considered native to Florida?



2. What can Floridians do for the wonderful Monarch Butterfly?



3. What is Earth Day, and why is it important?

**See page 14 for answers, and
more information.**

between Lake Okeechobee and the coast, only canals.

“Send It South” resonates well with in the Everglades Coalition, which adopted it as the theme for its recent annual conference in Key Largo. There, the steadfastly bi-partisan coalition of 57 organizations urged attending members of Congress, state and federal officials to speed up implementation of the restoration plan adopted in 2000 by Florida’s Legislature and Congress with near unanimous support.

The plan laid out 68 projects to get the quantity, quality, timing and distribution of South Florida’s water “right.”

The basic principles are:
Store freshwater in the rainy season for use in the dry season.

Clean it up so the Everglades River of Grass doesn’t turn into a stagnant cattail marsh.

Re-establish the seasonal shallow-sheet flow south through the Water Conservation Areas into Everglades National Park.

Assurances were also included that the region’s then-existing flood protection and water supply for urban, agriculture and commercial use would be maintained. Implementation of the plan has been painfully slow. As repeated “emergency” water discharges from Lake Okeechobee to the estuaries attest, there is now an urgent need for places simply to store water.

There was no doubt Gov. Rick Scott

would press the Legislature for funds to complete his “Restoration Strategies” program to expand the filtration marshes, called Stormwater Treatment Areas, south of Lake Okeechobee and resolve longstanding lawsuits over water-quality issues. Tuesday, the governor made a welcome commitment to a much larger restoration program — \$5 billion over 20 years. The South Florida Water Management District and Legislature must follow through, exercising the state’s option to buy 46,000 acres of U.S. Sugar-owned land for a reservoir adjacent to Lake Okeechobee to increase storage and conveyance, initiating construction of the long-planned Caloosahatchee Reservoir, and completing construction of the St. Lucie Reservoir.

Total costs on those water projects alone are estimated at \$1.8 billion. So, bond-financing for such projects must be on the agenda too.

With 19 million people, Florida is now the nation’s third most populous state. That’s 19 million reasons to finish Everglades Restoration and to protect the state’s other endangered waters resources — springs, rivers, lakes and estuaries. Florida has the financial wherewithal. What we need is the sustained bi-partisan political will to do so.

**Editors Note: Martha Musgrove is a Director of the Florida Wildlife Federation from West Palm Beach and is FWF’s alternative representative to the Everglades Coalition.*

Remembering the Federation

If you wish to name Florida Wildlife Federation in your will or estate plan, please use the following language:

The Florida Wildlife Federation, a nonprofit cooperation, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Florida, with principal business address of PO Box 6870, Tallahassee, FL 32314-6870.

Our federal tax identification number is 59-1398265.

Help Us Plan

If your plans already include a gift for Florida Wildlife Federation, please let us know. We will honor all requests for anonymity, and you can always modify your gift if your circumstances change.

For more information please contact **Tim Bachmeyer**, FWF Development Consultant, at **561-801-5752** or **Diane Hines** at **850-656-7113**.

FWF PARTNERS PROGRAM

The Florida Wildlife Federation announces a new and exciting dimension to its fundraising program — FWF PARTNERS!

Wildlife Sustainer

Alex Sink

Wildlife Advocate

Rosemarie Williams

Wildlife Steward

Howard Kessler and Anne Van Meter

Bailey B. Sory

Judith S. Schulte

Friend of Wildlife

Eugene J. Detmer

The Rose Family

Richard Hamann

FWF PARTNERS is an annual donor recognition program designed to provide a continuing stream of unrestricted support to FWF year in and year out. PARTNERS gifts will support FWF’s most critical priorities.

A PARTNER pledges to make a gift each year to join one of the PARTNERS gift clubs. PARTNERS names will also be acknowledged regularly in FWF communications including the *Florida Fish and Wildlife News*, the FWF website and our annual report. Of course, any PARTNER may choose to remain anonymous.

As an FWF donor, member, or friend you **are now invited to join one of the PARTNERS clubs** according to your capacity and to what FWF’s conservation action means to you. The giving clubs are:

| <i>FWF PARTNERS</i> | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Conservation Visionary</i> | <i>\$25,000</i> |
| <i>Conservation Hero</i> | <i>\$10,000</i> |
| <i>Conservation Champion</i> | <i>\$5,000</i> |
| <i>Wildlife Sustainer</i> | <i>\$2,500</i> |
| <i>Wildlife Advocate</i> | <i>\$1,000</i> |
| <i>Wildlife Steward</i> | <i>\$500</i> |
| <i>Friend of Wildlife</i> | <i>\$100</i> |

To become an FWF PARTNER, to receive a pledge form, or for more information, contact **Diane Hines** at dhines@fwfonline.org or **850-656-7113**.



Jay Liles
FWF Policy Consultant

First world problems verses third world problems

There is a phrase I am currently fond of using – “first world problems verses third world problems.” You may also be using this phrase because it so aptly describes what kinds of problems we deal with regularly and what the undeveloped world has to focus on daily. For instance, a first world problem might go something like this: “What color should my next new car be? I like black but it shows dirt and white offers more resistance to heat buildup inside the car.” That’s a real first world problem.

A third world problem is: “Where will I get food for my family today? Or, is this water safe to drink?” These kinds of survival issues face the vast majority of people who live on this planet. Those of us who live in the developed world have come to rely on governments to make sure the mechanics of food and water are so well engineered and behind the scenes that young children oftentimes are unaware that a farmer’s livestock gave the ultimate sacrifice for their meal, and it is safe to eat, and that water doesn’t just come magically from the tap. We have the luxury, at least on a surface level, to take these things nearly for granted. It is only when you take a deeper dive that you realize how pervasive technology and engineering is in making this all possible.

Some interesting facts I gleaned from an article written for *Bloomberg Businessweek* by Amanda Little:

- 8.6 trillion gallons of water worldwide are lost to leaks each year.
- For every \$1 spent on reducing water leaks, \$5 worth of water can be saved.
- 30-35 percent of water pumped through the pipelines of utilities worldwide is lost to leaks and bursts.

Those of us who focus on environmental issues know that we cannot take

things like clean water for granted. We see the damage dirty air does to children’s health and the mercury threat it creates in fish that many in our society depend upon as a food staple. I am starkly reminded of this disconnect almost every time we hold a legislative session in Tallahassee. Many of our politicians give lip service to the need for clean air and water but where the rubber meets the road, making sure our environment is safe and clean is not a high priority. In fact, in recent years it has been characterized as the primary inhibitor of economic recovery; protections we have fought long and hard for have been eroded and environmental permitting has been “streamlined” (read eliminated) to make development and business decisions easier. I often wonder why any business person with a family and employees with loved ones to nurture would give up these protections! But that just makes my head hurt.

We start each New Year with the resolve to fight for environmental safety and all the beautiful things that a healthy environment can bring us. Soon the tension that fuels debates about the costs associated with keeping our environment clean begins to wear many of us down. As I get older (like, *way* older) I find myself wondering if we have been duped by our own cause. Can the larger world’s near deity-like belief that technology is capable of fixing *everything* – yes, polling shows that this is a strongly held conviction among younger, smart phone-armed voters – in fact save the day? Will we have endless water and sustainable food supplies even as we destroy our springs and pollute our water and air? I think not. I don’t think it worth the risk to find out and I can’t, for the life of me, think that this is the kind of world I or any business owner wants to pass on to the next generation.

That takes me back to Amanda Little’s article. In it she reports on a device being used in Israel and developed by TaKaDu, a water network management company that tracks leaks in pipes using data collected by sensors. TaKaDu primarily works with desert countries, or countries that have been experiencing drought conditions for decades. In those places, their pricing structures penalize improper water use. This differs from water use in the United States, which encourages *more*, even wasteful uses of water! The article relates the fact that while California was suffering through its worst drought on record, a main water line leak in LA spewed millions of gallons of water before it was capped. The TaKaDu approach would have detected the leak long before it reached such proportions; a technological approach to a nationwide problem.

Technology is helpful, but will not solve all our problems. Indeed, my long-

held assumption that we could save our planet (or at least this part of it) is being sorely tested these days. We are moving from addressing sea level rise to mitigating against its worst impacts. We are fighting special interests who, contrary to what their own eyes tell them, continue to say that our drinking water is fine even as our fresh water lakes and streams have turned to a milky green soup. There are people like you who know this is not right and that we should not rely so much on a techno-fix. Please try to educate those who represent you in Congress and in our

state and local governments that turning on the tap and expecting clean water or living in an air conditioned box is not a substitute for environmental health and safety. We cannot leave that legacy for future generations to fix. If we do, I fear their first world problems will quickly become third world problems.



Crystal Clear, by Jeff Spence

IN MEMORIAM

Donations have been received in
memory of:

Mary Sue Thompson

by Maureen Donnelly

Dorothy “Dottie” Long

by Jill Burgess

Rick Farren

by Claudia Farren

F. Browne Gregg

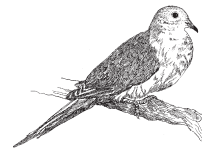
by Gwendolyn F. McLin

Jeffrey Cherry

by Gwendolyn F. McLin

Joy Ann Wettstein Griffin

by Gwendolyn F. McLin



The Federation thanks you for your thoughtful contributions. We express our sympathy to family and friends of those who have passed away.

Call For Director Nominations

If you are interested in serving as a director of the Florida Wildlife Federation during the September 2015 to September 2016 term, or if you wish to nominate someone to fill one of these positions, please write to the Florida Wildlife Federation Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 6870, Tallahassee, FL 32314-6870; FAX (850) 942-4431.

Nominations must be submitted by

May 1, 2015.

To be eligible, a candidate must be a resident of Florida and a member in good standing of the Florida Wildlife Federation. District and Regional Directors must reside in the region or district for which they would serve. Officers and At-Large Directors may reside anywhere within the state.

Federation Directors are expected to

regularly attend Federation meetings, participate in Federation activities, assist in building Federation membership, be actively involved in fund-raising efforts, attend public workshops, act as a liaison with other conservation organizations, and generally promote and lead statewide conservation activities through the Florida Wildlife Federation. Being an FWF Director requires a substantial

commitment of time and resources but will give the individual an opportunity to be a conservation leader in Florida.

Also, if you are interested in assisting the directors in your region, or in serving on one of the Federation's committees, please contact Diane Hines at the Federation office in Tallahassee at (850) 656-7113 or dhines@fwfonline.org.

Northwest Region

District I

Escambia, Santa Rosa, Walton, Holmes, Bay, Okaloosa, Washington

District II

Jackson, Calhoun, Gulf, Franklin, Liberty, Gadsden, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson

Northeast Region

District III

Madison, Taylor, Hamilton, Suwannee, Lafayette, Dixie, Columbia, Union, Bradford, Gilcrest, Alachua

District IV

Baker, Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns, Putman, Flagler, Volusia

Central Region

District V

Marion, Lake, Seminole, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Brevard, Indian River, Sumter

District VI

Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Levy

Southern Region

District VII

Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte, Hardee, DeSoto, Highlands, Glades, Okeechobee, St. Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, Lee

District VIII

Hendry, Collier, Broward, Dade, Monroe

Whooping Cranes return to eastern North America

*Guest Column by George Archibald
International Crane Foundation*

When the Whooping Cranes were more abundant in former centuries, they wintered from the Chesapeake Bay to the north Mexican plateau, and nested on the Great Plains of Canada and the U.S. and in southern Louisiana. By 1940 they were reduced to a flock of fewer than 20 wintering on the coast of Texas at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. The last time a Whooping Crane had been seen in Louisiana was in 1950.

Starting in the mid-1960s, the governments of Canada (where the cranes nested) and the U.S. (where they wintered), started a captive breeding program at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (PWRC) in Maryland by taking one egg from several two-egg nests of the wild cranes in Wood Buffalo National Park, Canada. Today the population of wild cranes migrating from Canada to the U.S. has increased to about 300, and the captive flock to about 160 at several centers.

Between 1993 and 2006, 289 birds reared in captivity at PWRC, the International Crane Foundation (ICF) in Wisconsin, and other centers, were released into the wild in central Florida with the hope of establishing a non-migratory population akin to the resident Florida Sandhill Cranes. Because the total mortality of released Whooping Cranes and

those hatched in the wild outweighed the natural recruitment in the wild, the experiment was discontinued in 2006. Problems included loss of wetlands to drought and development, collision with power lines, and predation, especially of cranes which were flightless during the natural cycle when they replace their wing feathers.

In 2001, the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in central Wisconsin and the Chassahowitzka NWR on the Gulf Coast of Florida were selected respectively as the release and wintering areas for a new migratory flock in eastern North America. Initially, costume-reared cranes were taught to follow ultra-light aircraft operated by a non-profit organization, Operation Migration (OM), to teach the young cranes the migration route. Later, newly-fledged captive-reared cranes from ICF were also released with wild Whooping Cranes and also Sandhill Cranes at Necedah and other locations in Wisconsin. In recent years OM has led cranes to other locations in the southeast U.S., including St. Marks NWR in the panhandle of Florida.

Today there are about 100 cranes in this new eastern migratory population. They breed in Wisconsin, and spend their winters from southwestern Indiana to northern Alabama, and into northwestern Florida. Although these cranes have been nesting at and near Necedah NWR, they have not been very successful at hatching and rearing chicks, apparently because black flies that hatch in spring in this area parasitize the incubating cranes and cause them to desert their nests. Since 2011, releases have shifted to eastern Wisconsin, where black fly

populations are much lower.

Also in 2011, a new Whooping Crane reintroduction project was started in southwest Louisiana where hundreds of thousands of acres of fresh water wetlands once supported both breeding and wintering Whooping Cranes. There are now about 40 birds in this non-migratory flock; in spring 2014, one pair incubated eggs in a nest on a crawfish pond – the first nest of eggs documented in Louisiana since 1939!

The Louisiana Whooping Cranes were likely driven to extinction by shooting. Shooting of cranes by vandals is now a significant problem for all the Whooping Crane populations. For the new eastern migratory population, shootings account for at least 20% of the total mortality, an unsustainable loss for this precious resource. We all must work together to address this threat to the cranes; raising community awareness and pride, engaging citizen scientists to monitor and look out for the cranes,

and working with the justice system for stiffer penalties for those who harm the cranes are all important to this effort.

**Editor's Note: Dr. George Archibald's visionary leadership in international conservation efforts over the past 40 years has given flight to crane conservation worldwide. In 1973, when cranes were on the brink of extinction, Archibald, along with Cornell University colleague, Ronald Sauey, Ph.D., established the International Crane Foundation (ICF) in Baraboo, Wisconsin as the world center for the preservation of cranes. Dr. Archibald is a true conservation ambassador who has used his unique brand of crane diplomacy to work in sensitive places across the globe. He completed his Ph.D. at Cornell University in 1977 and has received numerous awards and honorary degrees for his outstanding conservation work and is considered to be one of the leading crane experts in the world.*



Photo by Karen Willes

River Kidz book educates and engages students on the environment

Guest Column by Crystal Lucas

The River Kidz workbook is back and better than ever! 2,000 second grade students in Martin County are about to learn all about the Indian River Lagoon, the Saint Lucie River and the issues related to Florida's development and changes over the past 150 years starting in February when the book is released district wide. The second edition River Kidz workbook is unique in that it was truly a kid driven project this time. Students in my marine science II class in 2014-2015 were responsible for the content of this book from start to finish. These students spent their senior year learning about Everglades restoration, the history and the future tasks at hand. As their capstone project they took the original book and with the new state standards in science developed a book that could be adopted by the local school district. Local Stuart artist Julia Kelley was commissioned by a private donor to create the stunning images that grace the book and add to the learning process; some of the images were from the first edition, but many were created especially to represent the material in the new book.

The second edition introduces a new character who tells the story of the Indian River Lagoon and St. Lucie River. He is Marty the Manatee and was modeled after local Jensen Beach resident and Indian Riverkeeper Marty Baum. Marty the manatee introduces the plight of his friends from seagrass to oysters and talks about how he has watched his home ecosystem change from a place of clear water with an abundance of life to an area of pollution and excess freshwater discharges. Topics such as taxonomy and extensive vocabulary are used to help teach students as well as maps where they actually plot the canals and waterways that are now interconnected. Students learn about how the hurricanes experienced in the 1920's led for a call to dike Lake Okeechobee and the role that the Everglades Agricultural Area has played in our state. The magnificent custard apple swamp of days gone by is depicted and students are taught about how the Army Corps of Engineers and South Florida Water Management District are both responsible for where



Local River Kidz rallying, bringing attention to the need to send the water south so the harmful discharges can stop.



River Kidz workbook developers gather for a group picture. Left to right: Nicole Mader, Crystal Lucas, Valerie Gaynor and Jason Leonard. Not pictured is Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch.

we are today and also responsible for helping to restore the system as much as possible. The book is careful not to lay blame but instead focus on inspiring students to use their voice and find their place in speaking up for their lagoon and rivers. The end of the book emphasizes ways that students can become involved in the process of restoration and encourages them to participate in beach clean-ups, oyster reef building and even letter writing to their elected representatives.

The goal of the River Kidz book and the Kidz organization overall is to inspire and encourage students to speak up and learn about their environment, especially the Indian River Lagoon and the St. Lucie River. By teaching the generation of tomorrow that they have the power to speak up, they will grow into active citizens who vote with science in mind and help protect their waterways. This book would not have been possible without the tireless dedication of Nicole Mader, Jacqui Thurlow Lippisch, Martin County Schools science coordinator Valerie Gaynor and Jason Leonard. The books were printed by Blue Water Graphics and countless local individuals donated to help make their printing and distribution a reality.

The books will be released to second grade classes after teachers participate in a fun, hands on training that is taking place February 28th at the Environmental Studies Center in Jensen Beach.

To get a copy for yourself email me at crystalmills1@yahoo.com!

THE MONARCH NEEDS HELP - Plant Milkweed!

By Patricia Pearson, Habitat Coordinator

The amazing monarch butterfly, (*Danaus plexippus*), native to North America, is in trouble.

The monarch's migration, one of the world's great wonders, is considered by most all experts to be an "endangered natural phenomenon."

The monarch is one of the family Danainae (the milkweed butterflies), and is the only butterfly species in the world to undertake long-distance migrations, covering thousands of miles over several generations. Although the migration story is unique and fascinating, the loss of milkweed plants due to use of herbicides for commercial agricultural purposes has drastically impacted the butterflies' journeys. The milkweed is the exclusive host plant for monarch caterpillars. Climate change, loss of milkweed habitat to urban and suburban development and roadside mowing have also contributed to milkweed loss along the butterflies' migration routes.

While there are populations of monarchs that breed and stay in Florida, there are also migrating groups that stop and rest here, such as those who congregate at the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge in Wakulla County each fall before continuing across the Gulf to their winter habitat in Mexico. Studies of the migrating abilities of the monarch are still on-going, as well as efforts to replace milkweeds lost to the practice of spraying herbicides along migration routes.

What can we in Florida do to help? The Monarch Joint Venture (www.monarchjointventure.org) recommends NOT planting a variety of milkweed

called "Tropical milkweed" north of Orlando. Non-migrating monarch populations south of Orlando can use it, but are better off with other, native milkweeds. Tropical milkweed (*Asclepias curassavica*), is popular and commonly available in nurseries. Scientific studies are now in progress to assess the probability that Tropical milkweed harbors and spreads a serious disease known as "OS" that is devastating to monarchs. If you already have this milkweed growing on your property north of Orlando, trim it back to about six inches throughout the fall and winter, or better yet, replace it with another, and native, milkweed.

There are native milkweed varieties suitable for different areas of Florida. Your local County Extension Agent is a good source of information about what variety is best for you. The five milkweeds that can be grown in Florida are *Asclepias incarnata* (Swamp Milkweed), *Asclepias perennis* (Aquatic Milkweed), *Asclepias tuberosa* L. (Butterfly Weed), *Asclepias variegata* (White Milkweed), and *Asclepias viridis* (Green Antelopehorn Milkweed). You can find a list of them with a description and photos at www.monarchwatch.org/bring-back-the-monarchs/milkweed/milkweed-profiles.

Think about spreading the word. Tell your friends and neighbors not to plant Tropical milkweed in your area because of the disease it is suspected of carrying that may cause monarchs that feed on it to become unable to fly and even to die.

Native milkweeds are easy to grow. Plant them to the back of your beds or gardens to make them less noticeable as the leaves will be eaten safely at the proper time by butterflies, and the plant can get a little scraggly.

1. After a 90 % decline, Federal Protection Sought for Monarch Butterfly, The Xerces Society, August 26, 2014.

2. Monarch Butterfly's Reign Threatened by Milkweed Decline, National Geographic, August 19, 2014, The Missing Monarchs, Slate, January 29, 2014. Financial Highlights, Monsanto Annual Report, 2013.



Photo by Lou Kellenberger

er and Bay, protecting important watersheds by expansion from willing private landowners of the St Mark's National Wildlife Refuge, buffering West Bay by significant permanent conservation projects in that Bay's watershed and fostering conservation land linkages across the state.

I spoke and participated at the recent day-long meeting of the FWC Commission in Jacksonville regarding Florida black bear management and problems. The topic of resuming bear hunting in portions of Florida drew a lot of the attention and focus. It was pointed out in the discussion by many speakers, by the commission staff and by the commissioners themselves that whether or not Florida establishes a bear hunting season, which they will address at their April meeting, the vast majority of negative interactions between people and bears are attributable in large measure to bears becoming habituated to human food sources. Unless we get very serious about requiring bear-resistant trash receptacles for individuals and businesses in bear country, these problems will worsen. Florida banned bear hunting 20 years ago when bear numbers were significantly lower than today. We continue to believe that hunting of bears in rural areas will do little to lessen the problem of human food habituated bears.

The last two years have seen several violent encounters between bears and people and this has stimulated attention to bear issues. We have a growing number of bear road kills and increasing numbers of bears being euthanized that were in proximity to people. Relocation programs for bears have not been totally successful. The Commission intends to also ramp up its hazing programs of bears seen in developed areas to try to reduce their chances of relying on human food sources. The FWC is also in the process of completing its statewide bear population surveys and has the state's bear population divided into sub populations with local bear stakeholder groups for each subpopulation. These stakeholder groups will meet before the April FWC meeting. I received a call from a member concerned about potential bear mortality from bears frequenting bee yards to get at the honey. There are ways of reducing bear bee keeper conflicts by use of electrified fencing and elevating the bee hives so that it is difficult for the bear to get at the hives. To get the official FWC positions on bear management and background,

please go to the Commission's website for further information, www.myFWC.com.

FWF will be featured in two upcoming videos, one on the Panhandle dune lakes where we worked with Elam Stoltzfus, and another regarding the Coastal Barrier Resources System as an example of adaptation to sea level rise with FWF director Tom Evans and videographers Sharon Baker and Pascal Dieckmann. We will post these videos as soon as they are available.

I would like to express our appreciation to Jim and Peg Thomas for hosting a wonderful Central Florida FWF board meeting at the Oakland Nature Preserve and a visit to Lake Apopka. I would also like to thank Director Alex Sink for reaching out to her friends and for encouraging them to become FWF members. Thank you to director Tim Bachmeyer for playing a critical role in the launch of our FWF Partner's Program. We would like to encourage all of our FWF members to join the FWF Board members by becoming FWF Partners and committing to an annual donation to FWF. Doing so will greatly help FWF in many ways. To learn more about Partners, please see page 8 of this issue or contact dhines@fwfonline.org. All of our volunteer board members and I are FWF Partners.

I appreciate greatly the dedication of our Board members and the critical support of FWF members like you. You are critical to the success of our mission of "Keeping the Wild in Florida."

Thank you,

Manley



Fish Habitat at Lake Worth Inlet, by Wolcott Henry

These Critical Projects Need the Strong Support and Commitment Of the Florida Legislature During the 2015 Session

By Manley Fuller, FWF President

One of the greatest challenges faced in restoring the Everglades is the need to store, treat and move water south and to reduce the instances where we have to release deleterious flows to the east and west coast estuarine habitats, hold too much water in Lake Okeechobee damaging the great littoral marshes there, or hold too much water in conservation lands to the south. Increased flows of clean water are needed south to Everglades National Park and beyond to the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, Biscayne Bay and the Keys.

How do we solve these problems? By significantly increasing water storage capacity throughout the greater Everglades. To really address the problem of too much water, significant expansion of water storage capacity south of Lake Okeechobee in the Everglades Agricultural Area can be achieved by purchasing strategically located agricultural land as called for in the existing option contract between the State of Florida and US Sugar Corporation. This option expires in OCTOBER 2015. To do this requires the strong support of Governor Scott, who has already called for spending \$5 billion over the next 20 years on critical Everglades projects just like the EAA reservoir. The Legislature now needs to get behind the pur-

chase of the EAA reservoir. Bonding of a portion of the Amendment 1 dollars for the Everglades, coupled with other available sources of funds, can finance the purchase of a 26,000 acre reservoir which would allow much more flexibility in managing high Lake Okeechobee conditions in a manner compatible with Florida's environment and our economy, much of which is nature-based.

The EAA reservoir is critical to dealing with high lake water levels and the proposed C43 project is critical in dealing with low flow conditions in the Caloosahatchee River. Please ask your legislators to fund both of these and related projects, like C44 on the St. Lucie River. FWF supports bonding Amendment 1 dollars and use of other available funding sources to acquire land for the Reservoir this session. If we do not purchase significant additional storage capacity at this point, highly destructive discharges from Lake Okeechobee will continue. FWF and its many allies recently asked the South Florida Water Management District to move forward with the EAA Reservoir purchase. They responded that, "Yes, we clearly need more storage but we don't have the funds or direction to do so. You need to go ask the Legislature and the Governor to make this a 2015 funding priority."

So, to help make the EAA Reservoir purchase happen, please contact Governor Scott, Speaker Crisafulli and Senate President Gardner, your own legislators, both House and Senate, and other legislative leaders asking them to support funding the purchase of the EAA reservoir lands per the existing signed Option contract. This must be done this session or the purchase option expires this October. This is the only option on the table to fundamentally reduce the frequency and duration of the awful problems experienced in 2013 and hence our best opportunity to save our estuaries, the southern Indian River lagoon, Lake Okeechobee's marshes and Everglades habitats south of the Lake.

A poignant reminder of how timely this issue is: the Corps of Engineers just began lake discharges to the estuaries because of concerns that the lake is too high for this time of year. This is the dry season so things could get much worse. A major new reservoir in the EAA near the Lake would give future water managers much better, less destructive choices than what they have available today.

For further discussion of these topics, please see Martha Musgroves insightful article *Pace of Everglades Restoration Threatens to Harm Estuaries* on page 3.

Legislature's Draft Water Policy Bill Benefits Polluters, Hurts Citizens

Earthjustice News Release

The Florida water policy bill, also known as HB 7003, passed by the House State Affairs Committee this week does not protect Florida's citizens, because it lets polluters operate without permits. Instead, compliance with clean-water standards will become voluntary.

"This is legalizing pollution," says Earthjustice attorney David Guest. "Instead of requiring permits, the state would just be asking polluters 'What's your plan?' and that would be considered compliance."

"Large agricultural corporations have convinced the state to let them off the hook. All they have to do is claim they are changing the way they handle manure and fertilizer and they get a get-out-of-jail-free card."

Under the measure, if polluters claim that they have a plan to prevent pollution, the state even exempts them from any monitoring to check if they are actually keeping contaminants out of our

public water supplies.

"It is like taking the radar guns and ticket books away from the Florida Highway Patrol," Guest says. "As long as a driver presents a plan for speed control, they can't get speeding tickets."

"Once again, this puts the cost of pollution cleanup on the taxpayers," Guest says. "The polluter-lobbyists in Tallahassee and their political friends in the Legislature are hoping we won't notice."

"Under the Legislature's polluter-friendly scenario, the only thing you'll get to protect the public is what polluters say they are willing to do, there's no checking up to see if it's done, and there's no enforcement when they turn our waters into green slime."

The bill's provisions regarding Lake Okeechobee are a particular insult to taxpayers. At present, polluters are legally discharging 300 tons over the legal limit, and what the Legislature is proposing is a plan that will only reduce pollution by 100 tons over 10 years.

"Plans are a way to avoid taking action," Guest says. "To add one more plan is to say: 'I give up. Lake Okeechobee is not worth saving.'"

**Editors Note: David Guest and Earthjustice often represent FWF in legal matters dealing with water quality and Lake Okeechobee and recently sent the release regarding this legislation.*

Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition

The Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition is making a second journey hiking, biking and paddling 900+ miles in 70 days across the state of Florida to establish and preserve corridors for Florida's wildlife. They are nearly half way through the expedition now. Wildlife corridors and conservation easements create a buffer zone between human populations and wildlife. This can be helpful to prevent negative human-wildlife interactions such as car accidents.

Visit www.floridawildlifecorridor.org to learn more and follow along!



Florida State Parks App: Pocket Ranger

By DEP Press Office

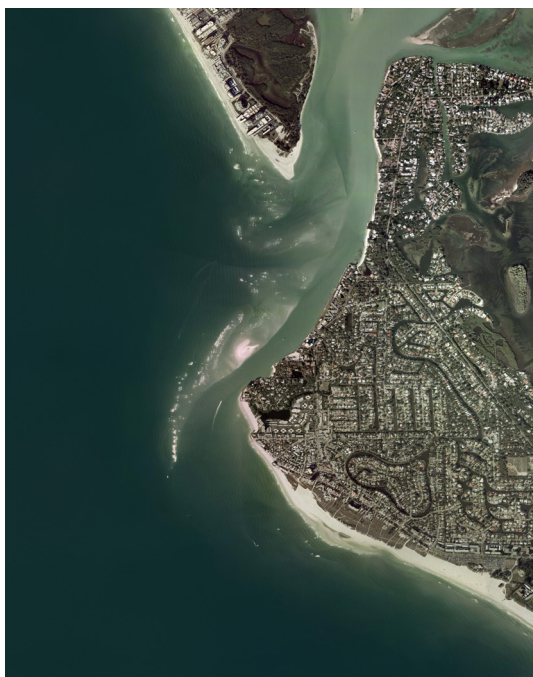
The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Florida Park Service has updated its Pocket Ranger app for smartphones to include every public beach access point in Florida, in addition to information about its 171 state parks, and trails.

Those who have downloaded Pocket Ranger for state park information now have access to locations and amenities about every public beach access point in Florida. More than 2,000 public coastal access sites are included in the coastal section. Divided into three regions – Panhandle, Atlantic coast and Southwest Florida coast – the app provides useful information to help plan trips to the beach.

The Florida State Parks Pocket Ranger® app is available now on iTunes and Android Market by searching "Official Florida State Parks" and is identified under ParksByNature Network. It is also available at www.PocketRanger.com.

Save our Siesta Sands

Florida Wildlife Federation has joined forces with Save our Siesta Sands 2 (SOSS2) to oppose a plan by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Sarasota city council government. The plan is proposing to dredge sand from Big Pass to build up other beaches, potentially risking Siesta Key beach, businesses and residences. Learn more about Save our Siesta Sands: www.soss2.com.



Overhead view of Big Pass

FWF Scholarship Update

February 2015

In April 2015, FWF Scholarship award funds will be presented to students at the UF Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation who have been chosen as this year's winners. The scholarships are merit-based and provided to students who plan to continue with careers in fish and wildlife conservation in Florida after graduation. In the next issue of FFWN, we will have photos and information about this year's winners.

Currently, with the help of an intern from FSU, we are putting together a "Scholars Forum" where past FWF scholarship recipients can stay in touch and provide information about what they are currently working on, their involvement with fish and wildlife conservation and their ideas and solutions to conservation challenges. We have asked them to provide photos or video that may later be posted on our website or social media. We value the work of past FWF scholarship award winners and hope to share their experiences with you in the future. Thank you for all of your past and continued support for the FWF Scholarship Fund.

Manley

To make an online donation to the FWF Scholarship Fund, please go to:

<https://www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/FundDetail.asp?FundCode=013403>

Answers to Florida Kids' Quiz

1. Are swans considered native to Florida?

No, swans are not considered native to Florida, because scientific evidence tells experts that swans weren't here during the time periods which are used to decide which critters should be counted as "Native."

2. What can Floridians do for the wonderful Monarch Butterfly?

People who live in Florida can plant milkweed to help the monarchs along in their migration. Get in touch with your county extension agent's office to find out the best kind of milkweed plant to use in your area.

At this time, it is considered best by scientists NOT to plant the milkweed called "Tropical milkweed" which is readily available at many plant nurseries. There are other milkweeds more suitable for each Florida locality so it is not necessary to use Tropical milkweed, and to NEVER plant this milkweed north of Orlando.

3. What is Earth Day, and why is it important??

Earth Day was started in 1970 as a way to dedicate one entire day each year to celebrate Nature, and think about and plan how we can help Mother Earth to become and remain healthy. Earth Day is celebrated on April 22 every year, but large celebrations are often scheduled to be on the nearest weekend.

How did you do, Florida Kid??!!



Go to
www.fwfonline.org
for great
merchandise!

Florida Wildlife Federation asks:

Do you want to make sure that your children and grandchildren have a healthy environment and can enjoy quality outdoor recreation in Florida?

Do you want to ensure our lands and waters are conserved and available for resource-based public recreation?

If you agree that we must protect the future of well managed outdoor recreation by acquiring public conservation lands, encouraging private-lands conservation, and restoring habitats and populations of fish and wildlife through sound management, then we would like you to become a member of the Florida Wildlife Federation!



By joining with us, you will become part of a dynamic, statewide organization with the goal of conserving Florida's fish, wildlife, water and plant life in the face of rapid loss of habitat statewide. **It is only with the financial support of our members that we may continue to pursue these goals. Please join or donate today!**

**We need your support to conserve
Florida's wildlife and habitat
for the future!**

Don't forget about a gift membership!

Yes! I want to join the **Florida Wildlife Federation** to conserve, protect, and restore Florida's natural treasures such as springs and water bodies, fish & wildlife habitats, and to enhance the public's enjoyment of resource-based, outdoor recreation in Florida. With your membership you will receive the FWF publication, *Florida Fish and Wildlife News (FFWN)* by mail or email (please select your choice below).

- ☐ Student..... \$15
- ☐ Associate..... \$25
- ☐ Family..... \$35
- ☐ Sustaining..... \$50
- ☐ Sponsor..... \$100
- ☐ Life Member..... \$500
- ☐ Eagle Club Member..... \$1,000
- ☐ Wildlife Legacy Club... \$5,000
- ☐ Benefactor..... \$25,000

*A Life, Eagle Club, Wildlife Legacy or Benefactor Membership is a one-time donation.

**Please send completed form
with check, money order, or
credit card information to:
Florida Wildlife Federation**

**PO Box 6870
Tallahassee, FL 32314
or**

**Join or Donate Online at:
www.fwfonline.org**

Enclosed is my payment for \$ _____

Please charge my payment to:

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____ Sec. Code _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please send me my *FFWN* by _____ Mail _____ E-mail

_____ Please add me to your list to receive occasional e-mail updates.

☐ This is a gift membership from: _____

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Conservation Calendar

March 27-29, 2015
National Wildlife Federation
Annual Meeting, Shepherdstown, WV
National Conservation Training Center
www.nwf.org/affiliates

April 10-12, 2015
FWF Board of Directors meeting
dhines@fwfonline.org

April 14-16, 2015
FWC Commission Meeting
Tallahassee/Havana
www.myfwc.com/commission

April 22, 2015
Earth Day 2015

June 12-14, 2015
FWF Board of Directors Meeting
& Conservation Awards Banquet
St. Augustine
dhines@fwfonline.org
(see back page of this issue)

June 18, 2015
Fish or Cruise Sweepstakes Drawing
FWF Headquarters – 3 PM
2545 Blairstone Pines Dr
Tallahassee, FL 32301

June 23-25, 2015
FWC Commission Meeting
Sarasota
www.myfwc.com/commission

September 25-27, 2015
FWF Board of Directors Meeting
Tradewinds Resort, St. Pete Beach
dhines@fwfonline.org

Florida Wildlife Federation 3rd Annual “Fish or Cruise” Sweepstakes Gets Underway

By Claudia Farren
FWF Sweepstakes Coordinator

The Florida Wildlife Federation is pleased to announce the 3rd Annual “Fish or Cruise” Sweepstakes which started in January. Here’s your chance to win one of three amazing trips – five days of fishing for you and a companion at the Soldotna Bed and Breakfast Lodge on the Kenai River in southern Alaska, an ocean to ocean cruise through the Panama Canal with Holland America Cruise Lines or a National Geographic tour on the Endeavour to the Galapagos Islands!

If you’d like to stay closer to home

or craft your own vacation, but wish to support the Federation through this program, the 2015 winner can also choose to receive \$10,000.00 in cash in lieu of a trip.

The drawing will be held at the FWF offices on Thursday, June 18, 2015.

To enter the “Fish or Cruise” Sweepstakes or for more information, visit www.fwfonline.org and click on any of the icons for the Sweepstakes located throughout the site, including the Sweepstakes navigation at the top

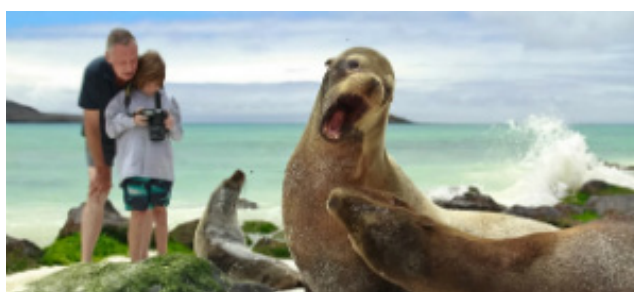
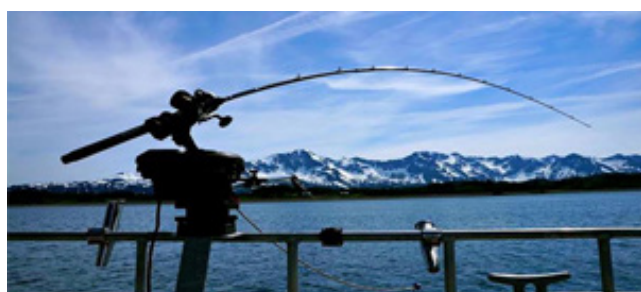
of every page. Then click on “Fish or Cruise” Sweepstakes.

Ticket contributions are \$5 each, or 6 tickets for \$25. You can also order 15 tickets for \$50 or 35 tickets for \$100.

As the state’s population continues to grow, paying critical attention to our remaining natural resources is more important than ever. Since our founding in 1936, the Florida Wildlife Federation has grown in membership and resources, enduring ups and downs, victories and losses. Like many other

non-profit organizations, we rely upon the good will of our supporters and donors to keep the doors open.

If you believe, as we do, that all citizens and visitors benefit from a clean, healthy and productive environment, and that our state’s future will be brighter with natural habitats intact and flourishing, please support the Florida Wildlife Federation by participating in the “Fish or Cruise” Sweepstakes!



Congratulations to the winner of the 24th Annual Boating Sweepstakes. Florida Wildlife Federation’s sweepstakes helped raise funds to pursue vital wildlife and fish programs that ensure that we all continue to enjoy Florida’s wondrous outdoors.

2014 Boating Sweepstakes Winner



Mr. Harold Leibowitz, of Boca Raton, Florida, (left), winner of the 24th Annual Boating Sweepstakes, accepting his Grand Prize certificate from Ned Stone, FWF Vice-Chair.



Claudia Farren, Sweepstakes Coordinator, with Stephen Roeder, CPA at Carroll and Company, who pulled the Grand Prize Boating Sweepstakes ticket at Federation Headquarters in December.



FWF’s 24th Annual Boating Sweepstakes Drawing was held on December 18, 2014 at 3 pm at Federation Headquarters. The drawing was supervised by Carroll and Co., Inc., Certified Public Accountants. Attending the drawing were FWF Staff including: (from the left) Jeannie Scruggs, Bookkeeper/CPA; Danny Gwynn-Shapiro, Florida Fish and Wildlife News Producer and Editor; Tessa Kleck, Administrative Assistant; Ryan Ricciardi, Administrative Assistant; Claudia Farren, Sweepstakes Coordinator; Lynn Jones, Membership Coordinator; Diane Hines, Vice President of Administration; Officer John Beeman, Tallahassee Police Department provided security; Stephanie Zottoli, CPA, Carroll and Company; and Stephen Roeder, CPA, Carroll and Company.

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Florida Wildlife Federation's 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet

June 12-14, 2015. Headquarters: Doubletree by Hilton St. Augustine Historic District
Make reservations for tickets through FWF and overnight accommodations through Doubletree by Hilton.



Doubletree by Hilton in
St. Augustine's
Historic District

**Reserve by May 29th to receive
room rate of \$129 per night.**

The Federation's summer meeting hotel headquarters is the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel. Ideally located in the city center, this inviting hotel is within walking distance of the historic downtown district. Full service hotel with pool & free parking for hotel guests. Hotel located at 116 San Marco Avenue, St. Augustine, FL 32084

Call 904-825-1923 for room reservations. Mention FWF or Florida Wildlife Federation to receive group rate - \$129 per night. Or, visit www.StAugustineHistoricDistrict.Doubletree.com and use Group Code "FWF" for \$129 per night rate.

Friday, June 12th

6:30 pm Fish Fry along the Mantanzas River
Genung's Fish Camp
291 Cubbedge Rd, Crescent Beach
(\$25 per person)

Saturday, June 13th

9:00 am to 4:00 pm FWF Board of Directors/House of Delegates Meeting
Doubletree by Hilton – Anastasia Room

5:30 pm Cocktail Reception/Hors d'oeuvres
St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club
Silent Auction and Art Exhibitions

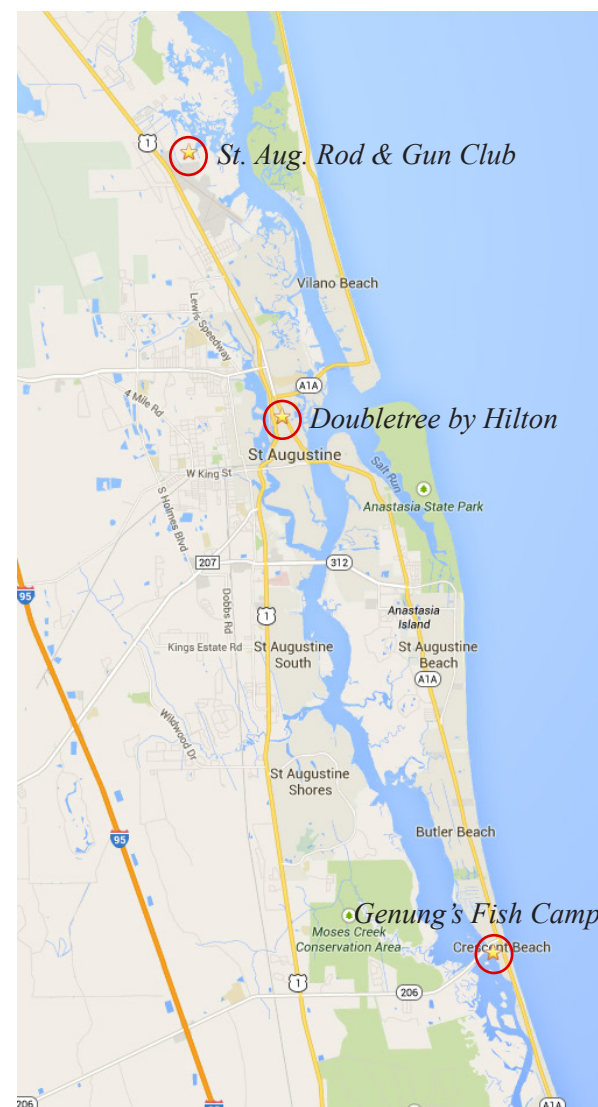
7:00 pm FWF's 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet
St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club
Buffet Dinner & Presentation of Awards
(\$60 per person)

Sunday, June 14th

7:30 am to 8:30 am Life Members' Breakfast
Doubletree by Hilton – Anastasia Room
Tickets and registration below
(\$25 per person)

9:00 am to 12:00 pm FWF Board of Directors/
House of Delegates Meeting
Doubletree by Hilton – Anastasia Room

IDEAS For Us: IDEAS For Us will hold their annual board/staff retreat on June 13-14 at the Doubletree in St. Augustine in conjunction with FWF's meeting. They plan to engage in team-building activities, discuss important updates and milestones across the IDEAS movement and develop action plans for the next academic year to engage students in environmental projects around the world. If you are interested in further information about IDEAS or their meeting, contact Chris Castro at chris.castro@ideasforus.org. IDEAS meetings will be held in the Laurel Room.



Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Bill my Discover, AMEX, VISA, MC #: _____

Exp. Date: _____ Security Code: _____ Total charged: _____

Signature: _____ Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Please reserve your event tickets no later than **June 3!**
Attn. Diane Hines, Florida Wildlife Federation,
P.O. Box 6870, Tallahassee, FL 32314-6870.
Questions? Email: dhines@fwfonline.org.

Registration Form For Events

Friday, June 12th — Fish Fry - *Genung's Fish Camp, Crescent Beach*
\$25.00 per person. Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ persons.

Saturday, June 13th — 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet – *St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club*, \$60.00 per person. Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ people for the Banquet.
Event Includes Cocktail Reception, Awards Banquet and Silent Auction.
Please enter the names of all persons attending with you: _____

Sunday, June 14th — FWF Life Members' Breakfast – *Anastasia Room*
\$25.00 per person. Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ persons.

Total amount: \$ _____
Checks payable to Florida Wildlife Federation