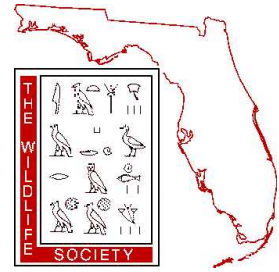


Florida Chapter
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
www.fltwss.org



14 October 2008

The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society (hereafter Chapter) is an organization of over 300 wildlife professionals. Founded in 1968, the Chapter consists of members who are dedicated to sustainable management of wildlife resources and their habitats in Florida. The Chapter is involved with many of the environmental issues facing Florida, and is recognized as a proactive group that develops its positions based on sound scientific principles.

The Chapter wishes to express our members' concern regarding President Bush's proposed changes to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) titled "Interagency Cooperation Under the Endangered Species Act". Allowing federal projects to occur without independent scientific review is potentially deleterious for the wildlife habitat and species that the ESA was intended to recover and protect. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service have missions, personnel, and expertise to provide unbiased, professional opinions for other federal agencies' actions. Placing the fate of already imperiled species into the hands of project stakeholders is analogous to letting the fox guard the hen house. We strongly oppose any actions that would weaken or remove independent scientific oversight from the ESA protocol.

Sincerely,

M. Rebecca Bolt
Wildlife Ecologist

Conservation Committee Chairperson
Florida Chapter, The Wildlife Society
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