BSG Update

September 2025

Statewide Bear Management Activities

Year	Jan 1 – Aug 31		% Change
	2024	2025	
Calls	3,086	4,470	45%
LE Notices	27	136	404%
Trapping Events	218	247	13%
Vehicle Mortalities	141	143	1%

- Comparing January 1st through August 31st of 2024 and 2025
- Calls were up this year by 45%
- LE notices up by 404% (most given in NE region)
- Trapping events were up 12%
- Vehicle mortalities are pretty much the same

Statewide Calls by Category

Call Category	Jan 1 – Aug 31, 2025
Overall Calls	4,470
Core Complaints	1,612
Non-Core Complaints	2,846
% Core of All Calls	36%

- And here we can see the percentage of core complaints, or truly conflict-related calls, compared to non-core complaints from all of 2025
- Our percentage of core calls is low at 36%, we hope to continue that low trend through the year
- As a reminder, our objective in the Bear Management Plan is to have less than 50% core complaints to maintain public support and not overly stretch response resources, so we are pleased with this percentage so far this year

Jan 1 – Aug 31, 2025	West Panhandle	East Panhandle	North	Big Bend	Central	South Central	South	State-wide
Calls	876	482	39	86	2,155	192	631	4,461
LE Notices	13	12	0	0	109	0	2	136
Trapping Events	40	67	0	0	106	2	32	247
Captures	17	31	0	1	75	0	26	150
Euthanized	3	0	0	0	19	0	3	25
Killed	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	7
Released / Rehab	14	30	0	1	53	0	19	117
Vehicle Collision Mortalities	14	15	9	0	85	3	17	143

- And here we have the numbers broken down by Bear Management Unit for the same time frame
- As usual, the Central BMU “wins” here by a large margin
- We killed 7 bears this year, but released or rehabbed 117
- This year we have had 14 cubs/yearlings in the rehab facility, so far 2 have been released into no harvest zones
- As a reminder, we are referring to number of bears killed when we talk about putting down a bear for conflict, as opposed to euthanized when we put an animal down because it is injured and cannot survive on its own
- *Call Numbers are lower by 9 compared to the "total" calls for the year since we don’t always have a location for each call*

Suspected Illegal Kills

Month	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
January	5	3	0	0	2
February	3	0	0	0	1
March	0	1	0	1	0
April	1	3	0	0	1
May	1	0	0	0	0
June	2	3	0	3	4
July	1	2	1	2*	2
August	0	3	1	0	2
September	3	0	0	1	-
October	8	1	3	2	-
November	3	0	1	2	-
December	2	1	1	5	-
TOTAL	**29**	**17**	**7**	**16**	**14**

*Bill went into effect

- July 1 2024 Self Defense law went into effect
- July 1 2024 thru August 2025: 24 bears

Bear Management Updates

August 2025 Commission Meeting

FWC APPROVES FINAL PROPOSED RULES FOR HIGHLY REGULATED BLACK BEAR HUNTING

- After FWC staff presented options on highly regulated black bear hunting and the public provided their comments at the August 2025 Commission meeting, FWC Commissioners approved final proposed amendments to bear hunting rules, which will take effect during the 2025 hunting season.

Bear Hunt – What's Next?

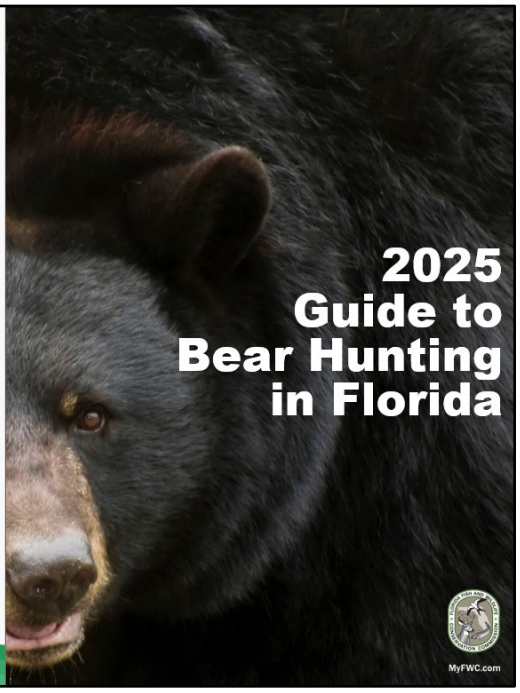
- Applications: Sept. 12 – 22
- Claim Round 1: Sept. 26 – Oct. 6
- Claim Round 2: Oct. 10 – Oct. 20
- Claim Round 3: Oct. 24 – Nov. 3
- Hunt Open: Dec. 6 - 28 (23 days)

Quick look 9-19-2025

- Total Applications Submitted: **100,296**
- Unique applicants: **12,422**

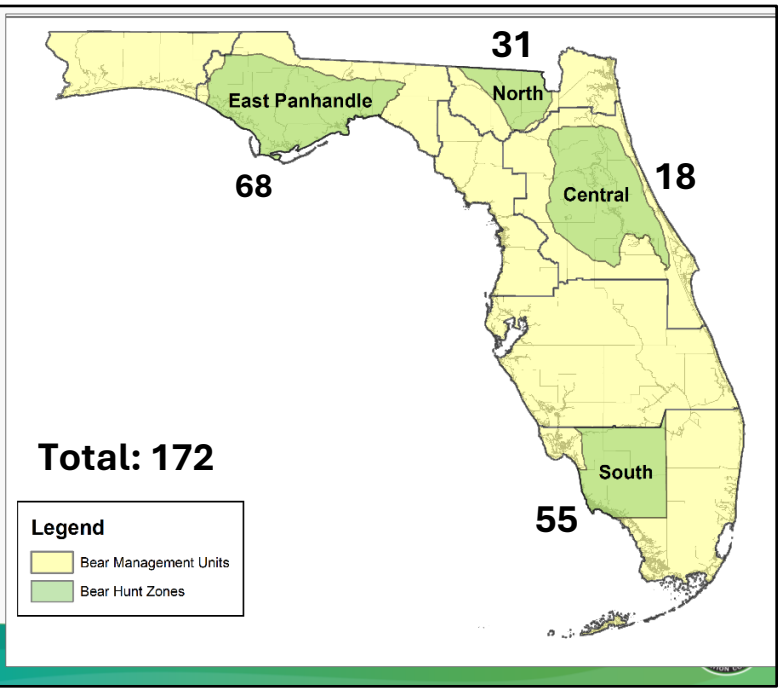
BSG & TAG Ideas

- Hunter workshops
- Hunter guide
- Buffers
- Resident vs Non-Resident
- Late season
- Lottery system with limited permits
- Harvest quota



These are some the ideas that BSG & TAG brought up during our March meetings that have been implemented.

Harvest Quotas



- Each Bear Harvest Zone has a set quota with a total of 172 permits.

Bear-Resistant Equipment Update

- Franklin, Wakulla, Gulf & Highland Counties
- 83 dumpsters secured
- $40,000 in grants

BEFORE

- We have an update to the bear-resistant equipment in Franklin, Wakulla, Gulf and Highland Counties
- Breakdown per county:
  - Franklin = 61
  - Gulf = 16
  - Highlands = 5
  - Wakulla = 1
- This makes this project complete!
- Carrabelle photo

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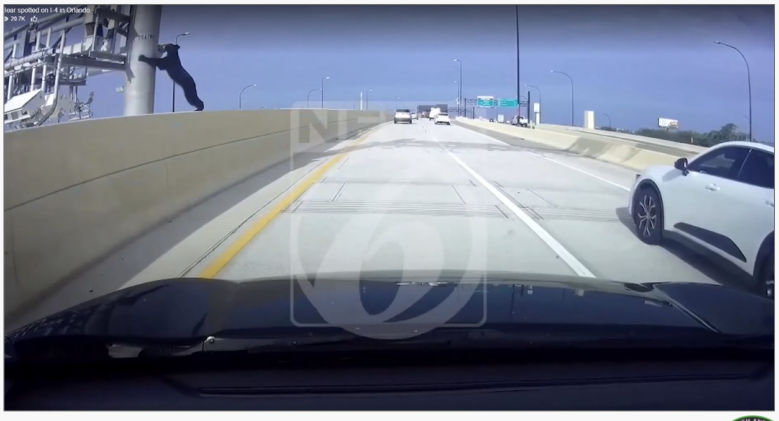
Landowner Expo in West Panhandle

- Bear booth & presentation (David Jacob)
- ~55 booths total
- 400-600 attendees

- FWC put on a large landowner expo in the West Panhandle
- It included about 55 booths from different sections and programs across FWC
- Including BMP, and ABB David Jacob gave a presentation
- There were estimated 400-600 attendees

Overpass in Orlando

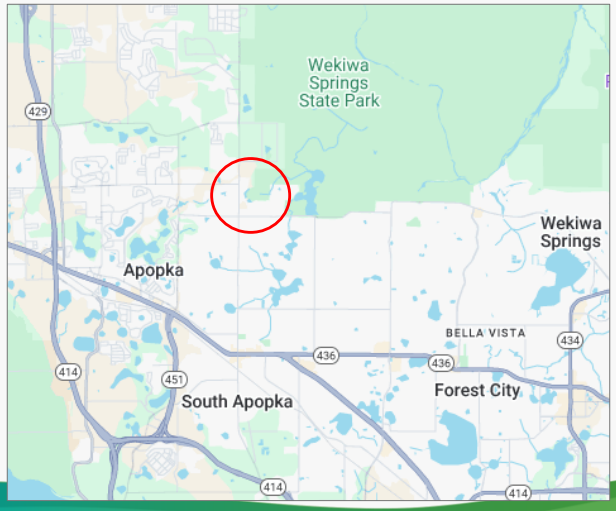
- June 30, 2025
- Overpass on I-4
- Dispersing
- Safe



- On June 30th we got a report of a bear on an overpass on I-4
- Monitored the situation
- Luckily, bear moved on by himself and did not receive any more reports and he is assumed safe
- Orlando City soccer game appearance as well

Orange County Incident

- August 21st
- Apopka
- Nextdoor post



- Now to talk about two human-bear contact incidents that have happened since our last meeting
- The first one was on August 21st in Apopka
- We received notice of it due to a Nextdoor post

Orange County Incident

- Bear ran past victim when walked out front door
- Victim yelled at bear and it ran back
- Bear bit victim in arm and scratched back
- Caught 2 non-targets
  - Male relocated
  - Female hazed and released on-site

Fox 35 Orlando

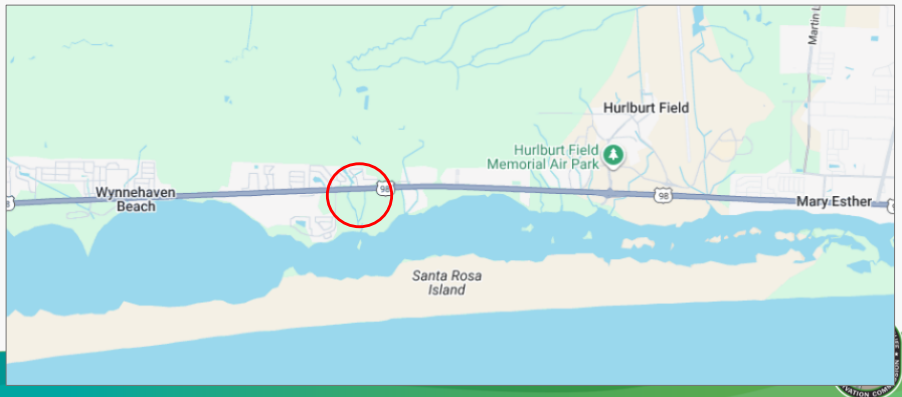
- A man was leaving his house early in the morning and a bear ran past him
- He yelled at the bear and it then came back and bit him in the arm and scratched his back
- You can see his injuries in this photo, mostly healed
- In response we set a trap and caught two non-targets
  - Male was relocated
  - Female was hazed and released on-site

Orange County Incident

- Here is the Ring doorbell video of the incident

Okaloosa County Incident

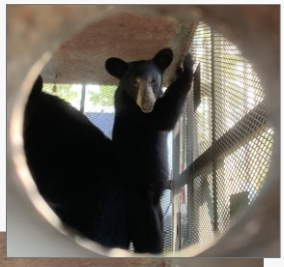
- September 4th
- Mary Esther

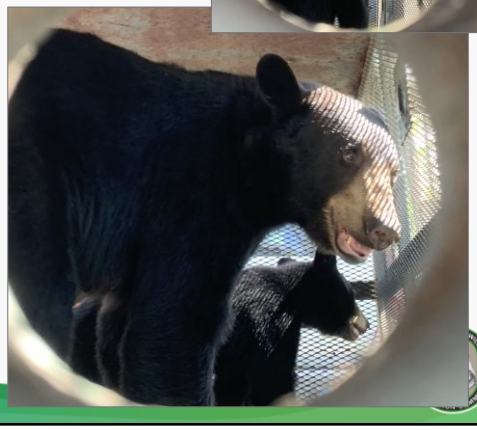


- The next incident happened in September 4th in Mary Esther, Okaloosa County

Okaloosa County Incident

- Victim let out three dogs unleashed at 3am
- One dog was pinned down by female bear
- Victim tackled bear
- Two cubs nearby
- Scratches to back and abdomen
- Caught several bears
  - Breeding pair relocated
  - Family group relocated





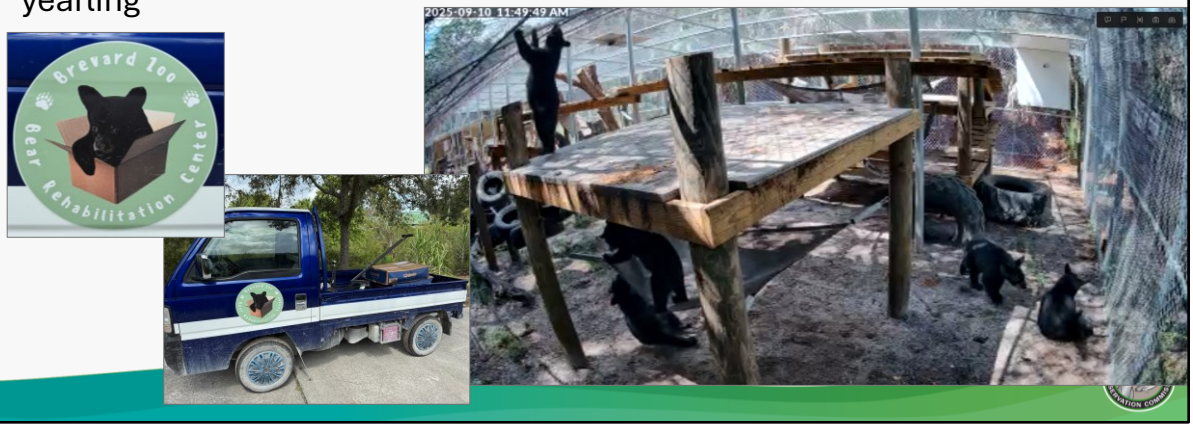
- The victim let out his three dogs early in the morning and they were unleashed
- One dog went around the corner and was pinned down by a female bear
- The victim then tackled the bear and it was noted that two cubs were nearby
- Curing this he received scratches to his back and abdomen
- In response we caught several bears
  - A breeding pair that was relocated
  - Family group that was relocated (the photos here show the family group)

Okaloosa County Incident

- Here are a couple photos of the breeding pair near the traps

Orphaned Rehab Cubs

- Last meeting: 5 cubs and released 1 yearling
- Now: 12 bears in rehab (11 cubs & 1 yearling) and released 1 yearling



- Release timing: January
- Not in any BHZs
- Morty is now featured on their zoo work truck!

Total have had 14 cubs in rehab this year.

- June: 5 cubs in rehab and released 1 yearling on June 10th
- September: 11 cubs and 1 yearling in rehab
  - released a female yearling on 9/2

Palatka Male Yearling

- August 24th
- Lake County
- Emaciated yearling

- We received a call on August 15th about an emaciated young bear near a wood line
- Took awhile and caught a non-target bear, but we finally caught the sick yearling bear on August 24th
- He was only 23 lbs when admitted into rehab

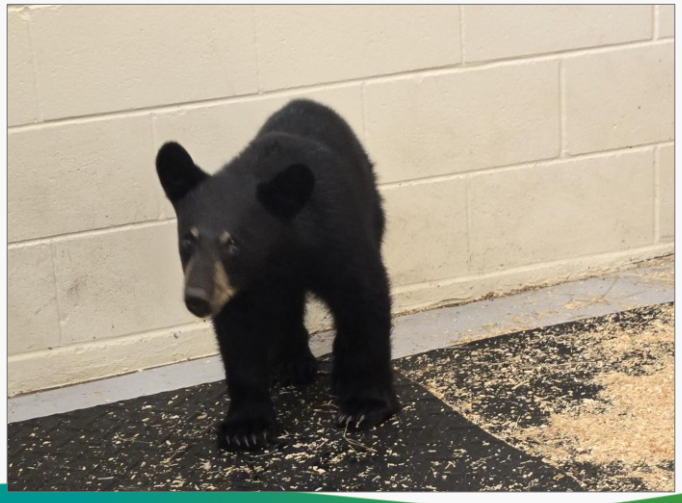
Ocklawaha Male Cub Siblings

- August 31st
- ~7 months old
- Three siblings – all male
- “Mo”

- Received a call that three young bears were hanging around a neighborhood getting into trash
- Unsure what happened to female bear
- This is Mo: He was 41 pounds when he got to rehab

Ocklawaha Male Cub Siblings

"Curly"



- Curly was 41.6 lbs when he went to rehab

Ocklawaha Male Cub Siblings

"Larry"

- Larry was 36.5 lbs when he went into rehab

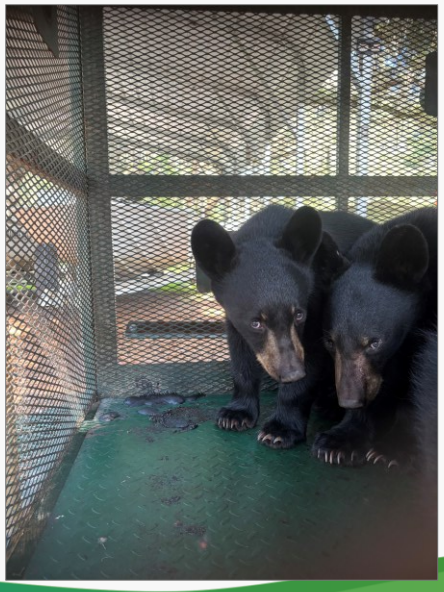
Marion County Male Cub

- August 31st
- Silver Springs
- “Blaze”

- Received a call that a bear was shot and a cub was in a tree nearby
- Still under investigation
- Bear was 20.5 lb when went to rehab

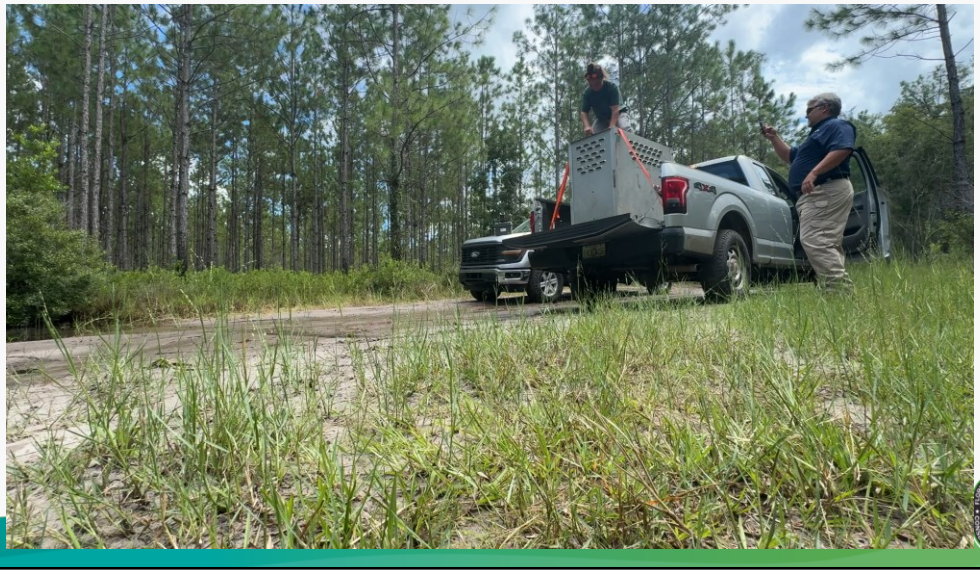
Freeport Cub Siblings

- September 10th
- Walton County
- One male, one female
- “Luke” and “Leia”



- Received a call about a bear being shot and there were cubs nearby
- Still under investigation
- Luke was 43 lbs
- Leia was 37 lbs

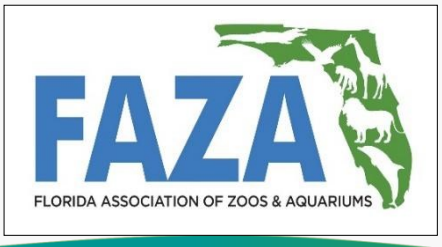
Yearling Release



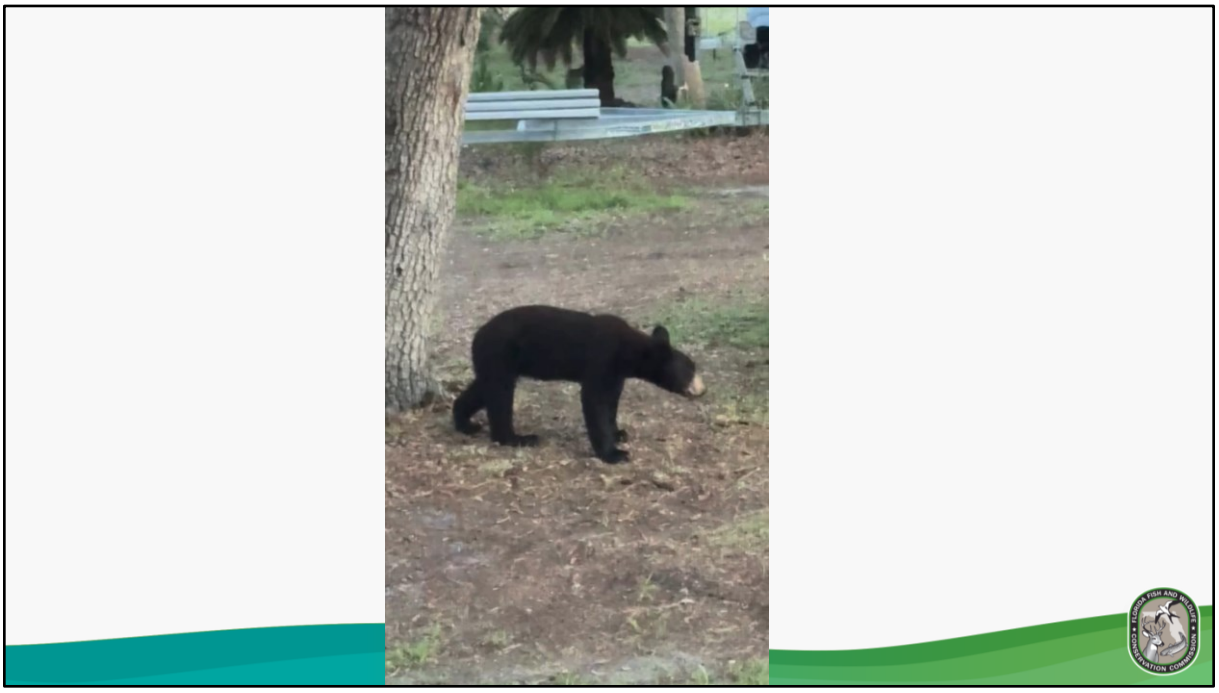
C101
Rehab nicknamed Jordan
Came into Brevard on 7/16 - Thin with heavy tick load and wound on right rear foot
Treated and gained weight quickly
Released on 9/2 in a no harvest zone

Brevard Zoo – FWC Collab Conservation Award

- Awarded to Brevard Zoo
- Collaboration with BMP
- Award to recognize efforts by FAZA members working with FWC and conservation



- We also want to mention that Brevard Zoo recently received an award from the Florida Association of Zoos and Aquariums
- They received this for their exceptional collaboration efforts with us and their bear cub rehab facility
- The award is given to FAZA members to recognize their efforts working with FWC and further conservation
- Congrats, Brevard Zoo!



- Video: Based off the behavior we saw of this group over the course of a few weeks, we think the sow was trying to kick out her yearlings to be on their own. Unfortunately for her, she was caught in one of our traps and one of the yearlings caught up with her. The only time I've ever seen a sow bluff charge a cub or yearling was when she was trying to separate from them. Pretty interesting behavior that we don't always get documentation of.

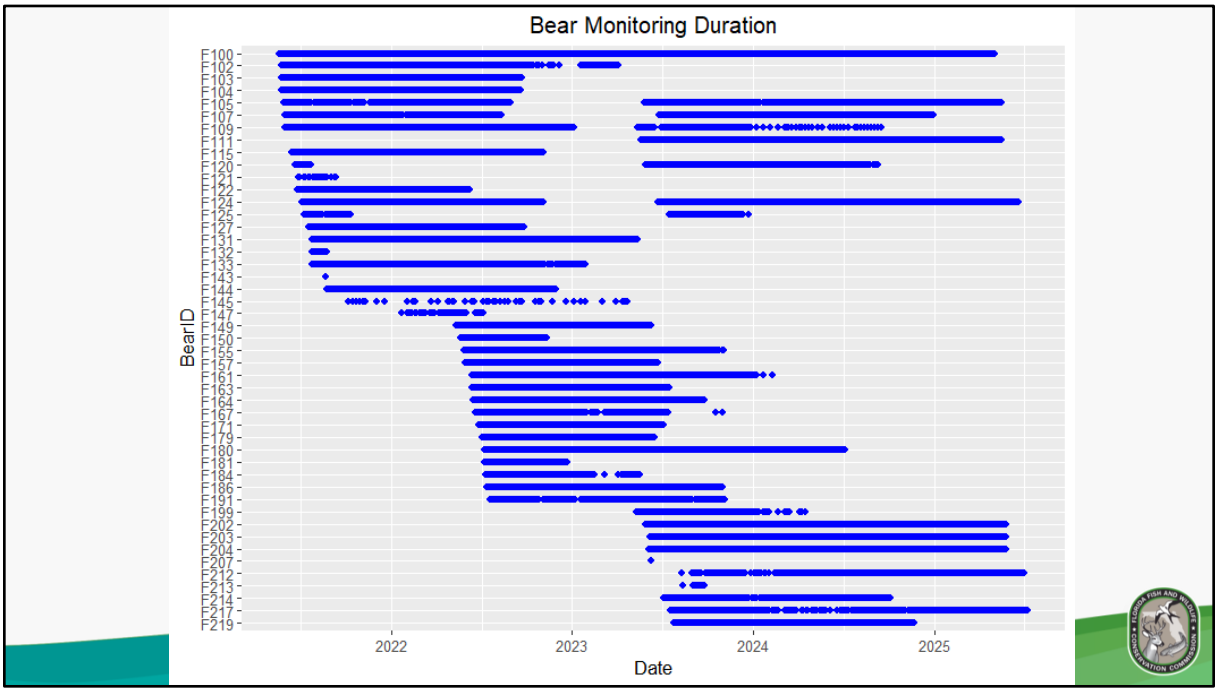
Any questions?

Some slides have not changed since our last meeting.

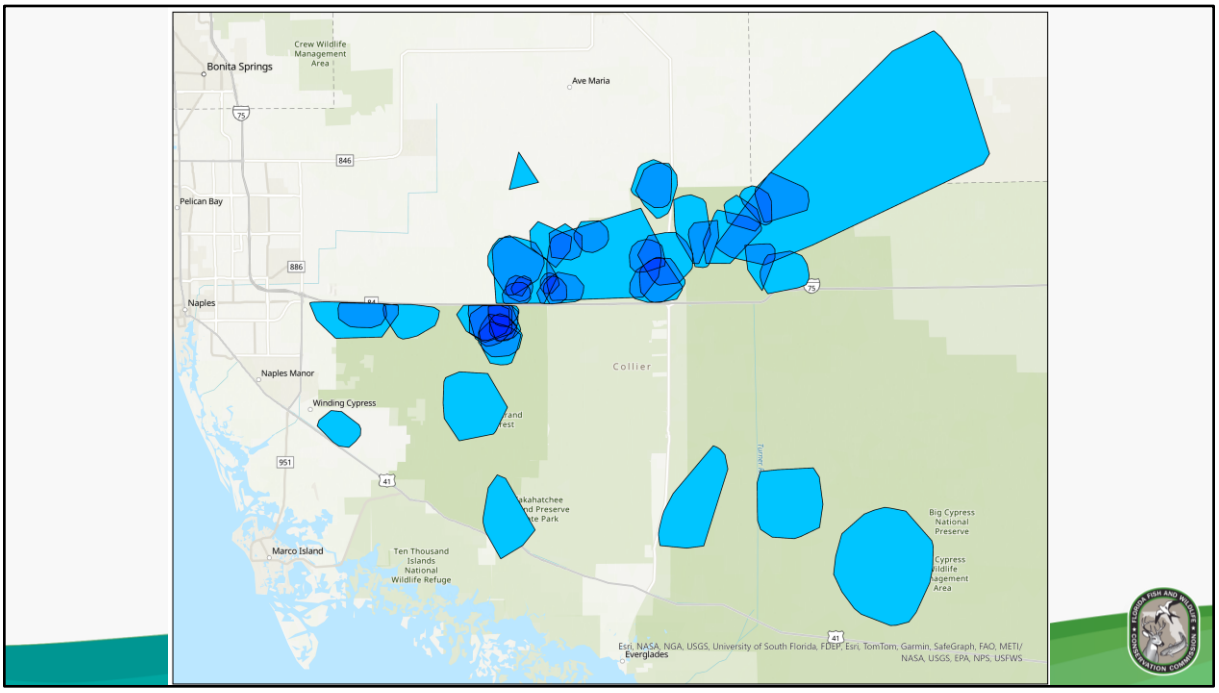
Big Cypress Demographics

- 47 collared females
  - 0 active
  - 1 recaptured to remove collar
  - 31 dropped off
  - 13 missing
  - 2 dead

- The field work for this project ended in July so I've shortened these slides by removing the methods that I've presented for several years.
- The final status for the 47 collared females are:
- **0** collars are active, all remaining collars dropped off this past July
- **1** collared bear was trapped to remove her collar when she moved from Picayune Strand SF to eastern Naples.
- **31** collars dropped off. Most (**15**) were because leather spacers broke prematurely, as we've discussed the detail several times. We have not had any breaks since Shelby added a second spacer and covered them with duct tape.
- **13** bears are missing because their collars stopped transmitting; 4 had some evidence of battery failure and a couple were photographed after their collars stopped transmitting, so we know they were alive and the collar was malfunctioning. However, the rest just disappeared, and their fate is unknown.
- **Only 2 were confirmed dead.**



- We created this timeline to show when and how long each bear was monitored by one or more GPS collars. Just another way to show the dataset we have.
- Each vertical white line is 6 months, and there is a dot for each day the bear was monitored.
- Single dots for Bear F143 and F207 are because they slipped off their collar soon after we captured them. Bear F145 has a series of dots because her GPS failed and she was tracked using the VHF signal by truck or plane, which was much fewer fixes than GPS provides.
- Small gaps are periods when the collars didn't report GPS fixes and larger gaps like F105's are from the first collar dropping off and her recapture to get a second collar.
- One bear, F100, was monitored for the entire study! As we've discussed before, collars that dropped off prematurely shortened the timeline for several bears, but overall we were still able to monitor enough bears over the 4 yar dataset to get the required survival and reproduction data.



- To refresh things, this map shows 95% MCP home ranges. We've shown a map of map shows GPS fixes for several years, mainly to show the extent of the study. This map has that same goal as we have not compared mean home range sizes or gleaned any other information yet.
- You can really see where we had higher trapping success.

If asked: it likely correlates to bear densities but cannot be used on its own to define density across the study area due to trapping biases. The triangular home range is from F145 whose collar failed, so very few points from her collar and not an accurate representation

Cub Monitoring

All years (including 2025)

- 24 dens visited; 27 litters confirmed
- 49 cubs examined; 51 observed
- +5 cubs documented outside dens
- 18 F: 31 M: 7 Unknown sex
- Mean litter size = 2.13
- 32 cubs (12 F : 20 M) got a transmitter (glue or glue + epoxy)

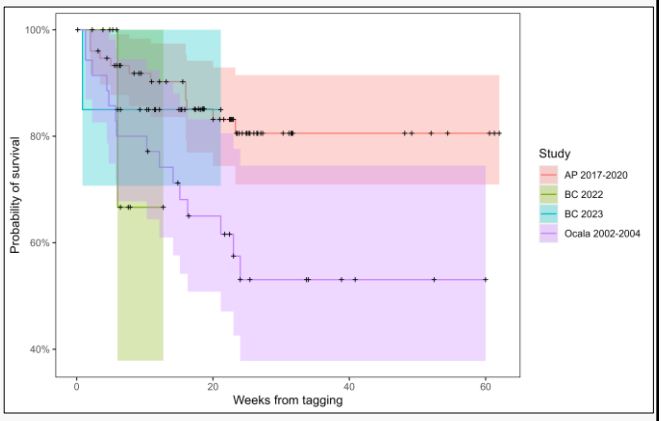
- Field work is over, and we will not get any new cub data.
- Over all 4 years of cub exams, we've examined 49 cubs from 24 dens. Another 2 cubs were directly observed at their den, but we couldn't handle them.
- Game cameras or field staff from other agencies documented 5 additional cubs from 3 litters that were seen after they left their dens. They were not included in the calculation of litter size because we don't know the true size of those litters.
- Known litter size (51 cubs observed/ 24 litters) is 2.13 cubs/litter which is typical for Florida.
- Most litters had 2 cubs. We did not examine any litters with 4 cubs, but we did see a litter of 4 on camera with an unknown female, so litter size in SW FL is similar to the other parts of FL.
- Only 1 litter of 5 cubs has ever been documented in Florida so it's extremely very rare.

If asked: Ratio of KNOWN litter size through 2025 = 5: 11: 8: 0
We examined 49 cubs, observed 2 more at dens but could not handle them, and documented 5 more from game cameras.
Past slides showed 33 cubs with transmitter, but I removed the one abandoned cub that got a transmitter before it was brought to a zoo.

Survival Data (preliminary)

Annual cub survival

- 5 cub deaths (all April-May)
- 32 cubs monitored
- Rate differs by year
- 68.4% (44.1% – 90.7%) survival over 21 weeks
- Seeking statistical advice



- **No update for this slide since our last BSG meeting and these are still preliminary numbers.**
- We have not tracked cubs since 2023, so this final dataset includes 5 deaths of 32 monitored cubs.
- The survival in 2022 and 2023 differed from each other (the green and blue lines and shaded areas).
- Over the 21 weeks that we could monitor cubs, those deaths provided an estimated survival of **68.4%,** with a **44 - 91% confidence interval** to 95% certainty.
- For past estimates of cub survival, we see little effect from the year or sex of the cubs, so we can estimate a weekly survival rate over a year. This weekly rate over 21 weeks results a 95% confidence interval of **5% - 70%**, which is very wide.
- Because we were unable to monitor cubs long enough for the annual survival that the growth model needs, I don't yet have a final estimate for their annual survival for the growth matrix.
- We have not yet discussed with statisticians how to address this gap in the growth model.

Survival Data (preliminary)

High annual adult female survival?

- Only 2 deaths will be >90%
- Start estimates in July

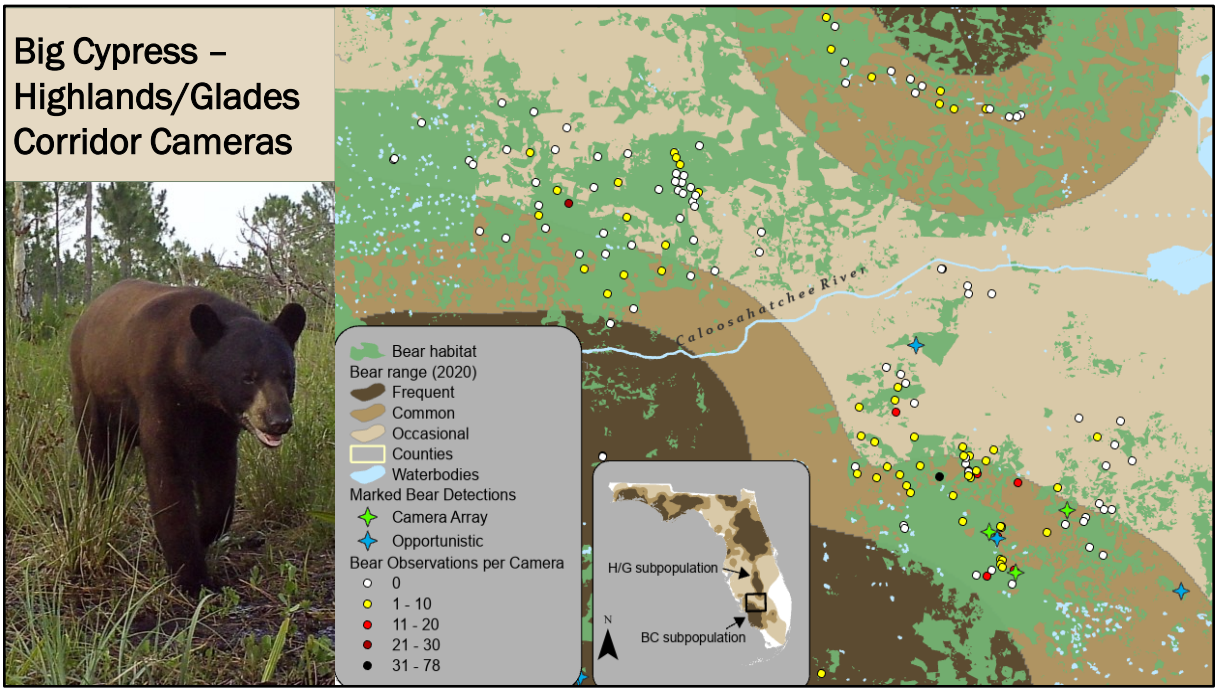
Growth rate calculated late summer or fall

- Ocala growth rate (both study areas combined) = 2% with adult survival = 91.4% and cub survival = 38%.
- If BC annual adult survival and cub survival are same or higher than Ocala, expect stable or growing subpopulation.

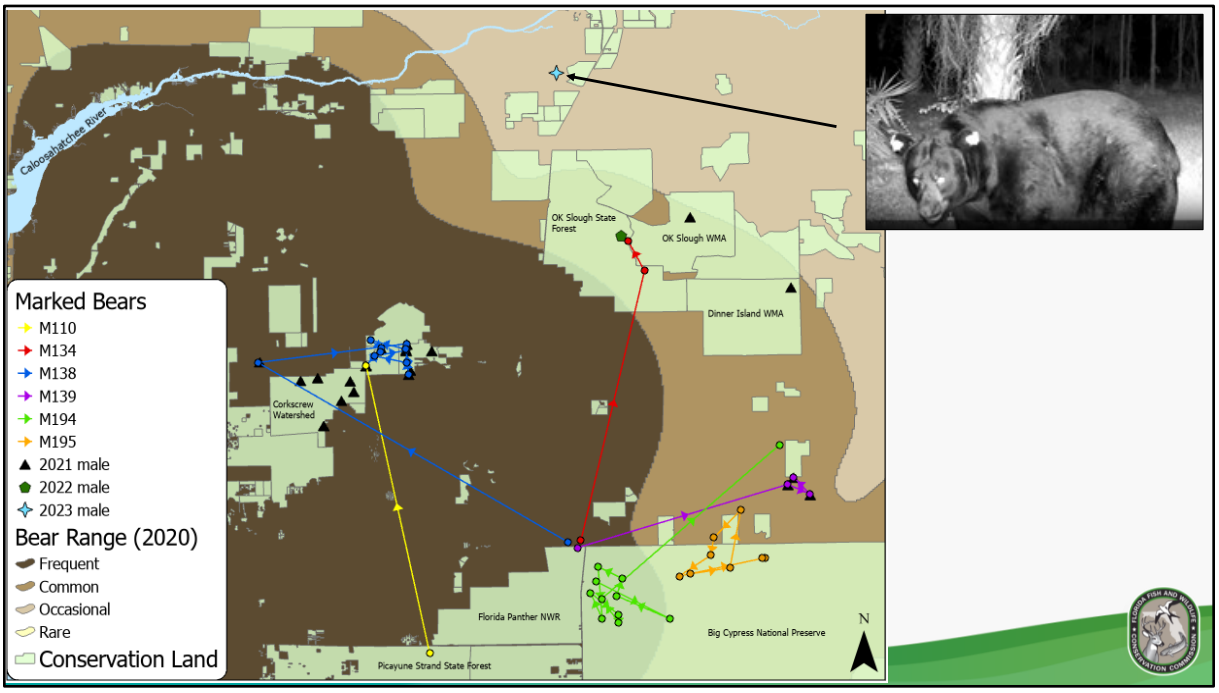
- We don't have a final survival rate for the adult females yet. The last collars came off in late June but one had to be shipped back to the manufacturer to get the data off it. Hope to have more results for the Fall BSG meeting.
- From earlier studies, only 2 deaths over the study suggest a high survival rate, **possibly >90%**.
- Adult survival has a greater effect on population growth than cub survival, but I can't calculate the growth rate until the statisticians decide what value to use in the matrix table for cubs.
- If BC annual adult survival is higher than 91% and cub survival is same or higher than 38%, then I expect growth to be at least stable.

If asked:

- AP annual adult female survival = 91.5%, cub survival = 66.5% for a growth rate of 11.9%



- Although more detailed analyses has not been done, I've shortened the slides for the Big Cypress to Highlands/Glades Corridor monitoring project.
- As most of you know, we deployed 53 cameras for 37 months (November 2021 - December 2024), collected over **2.8 million images** and **16,000 videos**, and identified **615 bear detection events** (images within 15 minutes = 1 event) from BRP & partner cameras.
- This map is the same as we showed at the last meeting.
- It shows the camera locations color coded by the number of bear detections. For perspective, it also shows opportunistic sightings of the marked bears that we'll discuss later.
- Again, white circles show cameras that have not detected a bear yet and darker colors indicate more bears. The blue and green stars indicate bears tagged in the Big Cypress project.
- The images from our partners are through **May 2025**, past the date our cameras were removed so **we will not seek later data.**
- As we've said in previous meetings, most detections have been on the edges of the Common bear range, with a few in the Occasional bear range (lighter tan). So far, the low number of detections seem to support the current bear range levels.



- You already know about the 4 solar-charged ear tag transmitters that we tested and that they only lasted about 50 days on average, which we considered a failure to recharge. The locations of 2 northern bears were irrelevant, so I am not showing them today.
- **This slide is the same from our last meeting.** This map shows sightings from our research cameras are through December 2024, when they were retrieved, and from collaborator cameras and public sightings through May 2025.
- We have identified **6 marked bears**, listed in the legend, and these are the same as the previous meeting. As before, we have several locations where we could see an ear tag but not well enough to identify the individual bear. Sometimes we can see the tag's shape to identify the year that the bear was captured.
- These **6 identified bears would be 5-6 years old now**, so they should have settled into a home range by now. However, we don't know where that range is from these data.
- Again, these lines merely highlight the **potential** for the corridor, not dispersal activity in general.
- Few sightings are outside the occupied bear range, and those are not far outside, but these detections confirm that some bears from the large BC subpopulation are moving northward, toward the habitat corridor. Hopefully, they or their descendants continue to move toward or into the small Highlands/Glades subpopulation.
- We saw most of these tagged bears, and all 6 we could identify, back in 2022, even though there were more tagged bears on the landscape after fall 2023. I **wonder if**

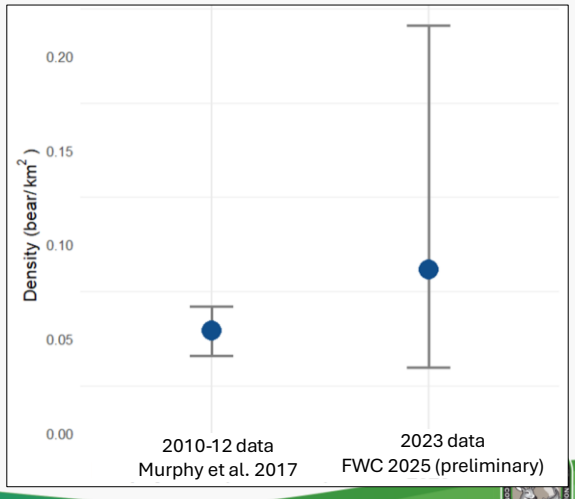
dispersal is not consistent year to year, maybe some unknown environmental variable causes a **pulse of dispersal** (or a pulse northward) in certain years**.**

- We have not yet reviewed all photographs of marked bears to double check their identification by consensus of multiple people because of other higher priority tasks.

If asked: *M194 and M195 were the 2 solar tags.*

Highlands/Glades Abundance

- 82 barbed wire corrals built
- Scent lure and bait suspended (none on ground)
- 375 hair samples collected
- Density = 0.087 bears/km^2
- Density higher than 2012, but 95% confidence intervals completely overlap

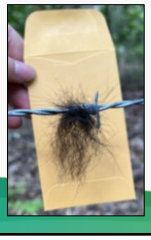


- The first area for the Updated Bear Abundance project was the Highlands/Glades subpopulation, the last abundance estimate here was in 2012**.**
- We built **82 corrals** in summer 2023, collected **375 hair samples**, **selected 165 for genotyping** (aiming for 2 samples/corral/week), and genetically identified **31 individuals**.
- We are now doing all the density and abundance analyses within FWC to avoid delays inherent in using a UF graduate student.
- Our bear **density estimate (0.087 bears/km^2)** is higher than the 0.054 bears/km^2 from 2010-2012 data.
- The error around our current mean is much wider because we have 1 summer of data rather than the 3 summers (2010-2012) that Murphy et al. 2017 had.
- **Because of this wide error, FWC have not finalized the abundance estimate.**
- Data collection and analysis of other subpopulations prevented us from investigating how to best address the habitat fragmentation in this subpopulation. Simply restricting density to bear habitat, as Murphy et al. did in 2017 may not be the best method.

If asked: *UK collected 369 hair samples in 2012, and 48 individuals identified. UK's combined density is 0.054 bears /km^2 vs our 0.087 bears /km^2 but error is the problem.*

Osceola Abundance

- 77 barbed wire corrals built
- Scent lure and baited suspended (none on ground)
- 281 hair samples collected
- 108 selected for genotyping
- 30 individuals (17M: 13F) identified



- Last summer (2024) we built **77 corrals**, collected **281 hair samples** from the Osceola subpopulation, the second area for the Updated Bear Abundance project. The last abundance estimate there was in 2014**.**
- We hoped have 2 samples/corral/week to genetically test. From our data, we had 107 samples that could be selected for genotyping. The lab inspects samples under a scope and found that some samples were not bears and other samples had inadequate follicles for genotyping. However, they were able to replace some of those during a second selection phase, so we attempted to genotype 108 samples.
- These 30 bears across all corrals over 6 weeks.
- Remember, I am not really measuring bear abundance or density, I'm measuring timing and location of the bears that provided genotyped hair to **estimate the capture probabilities of bears that were NOT sampled**. That probability is what derives the estimate of density. From our study area, a buffer around the corrals, we get the estimate of abundance.

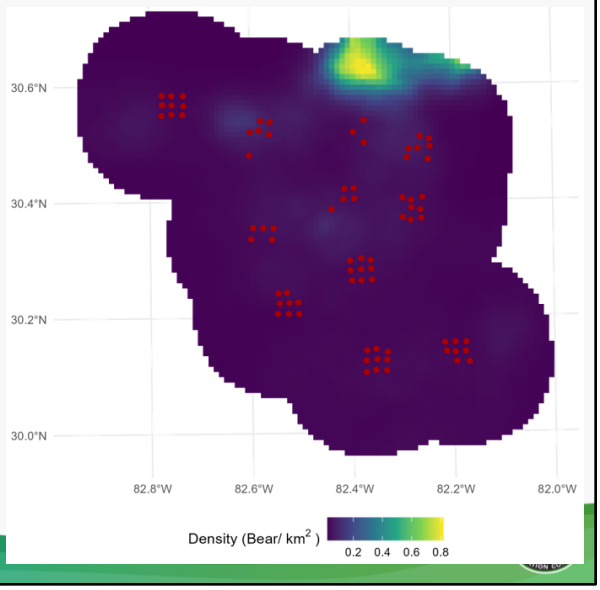
Osceola Abundance

Parameter	Estimate	SE	Lower 95% CL	Upper 95% CL
Density[a]=	0.0377	0.0188	0.0150	0.0949
Abundance=	307	163	125	835

[a] = bears/km^2

281 hair samples, 64 detections of 30 bears

16-km buffered area = 5,320 km^2

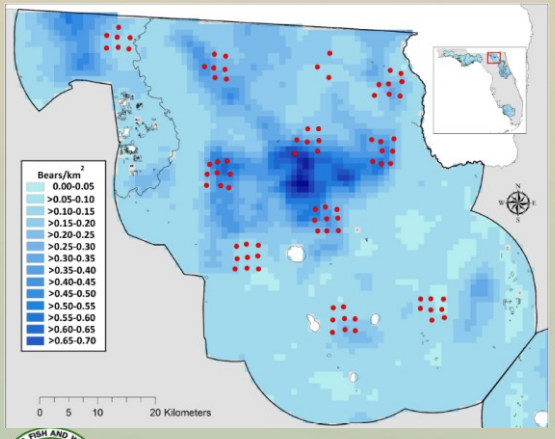


- The preliminary density was estimated at **0.0377 bears/km^2** (95% CI 0.0150 to 0.0949) with resulting abundance as **307 bears** (95% CI 125 to 835), **not including cubs of the year** that are generally too small.
- A **16 km buffer** around the 77 corrals provided the area to which density was calculated. This buffer includes a portion of Georgia because our corrals were so close to the state line.
- **This map shows bear density across the study area** based on the capture probabilities for the top covariates, which included **% Swamp**. The higher % Swamp (the yellow pixels) is in the north, which puts **many bears in the GA**.
- We ran over 400 models of these data that included various typical bear responses and the same environmental covariates as in 2014 (mast species, distance to roads and water, etc.). Three of those models were all close (low Delta AIC) so we averaged those results. **The top model was % swamp, so the models place higher bear density in areas with greater % swamp.**
- **We just got these results back and are still investigating to understand what's going on.**

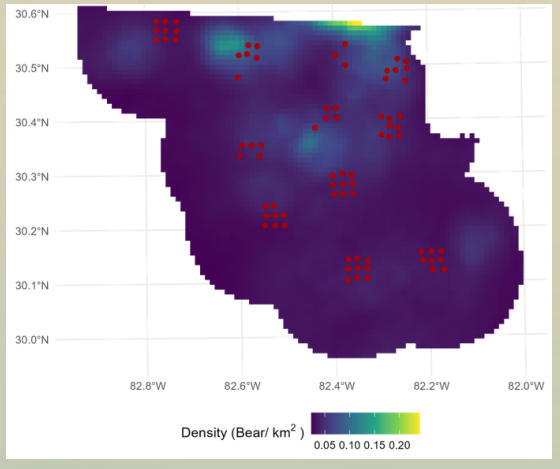
Note: *The 2014 Osceola bear density is on slide 51.*
We used a 16 km buffer because it was used in 2014, which was a result of simulations into best corral spacing.

Osceola Abundance

2014 data
Humm et al. 2017

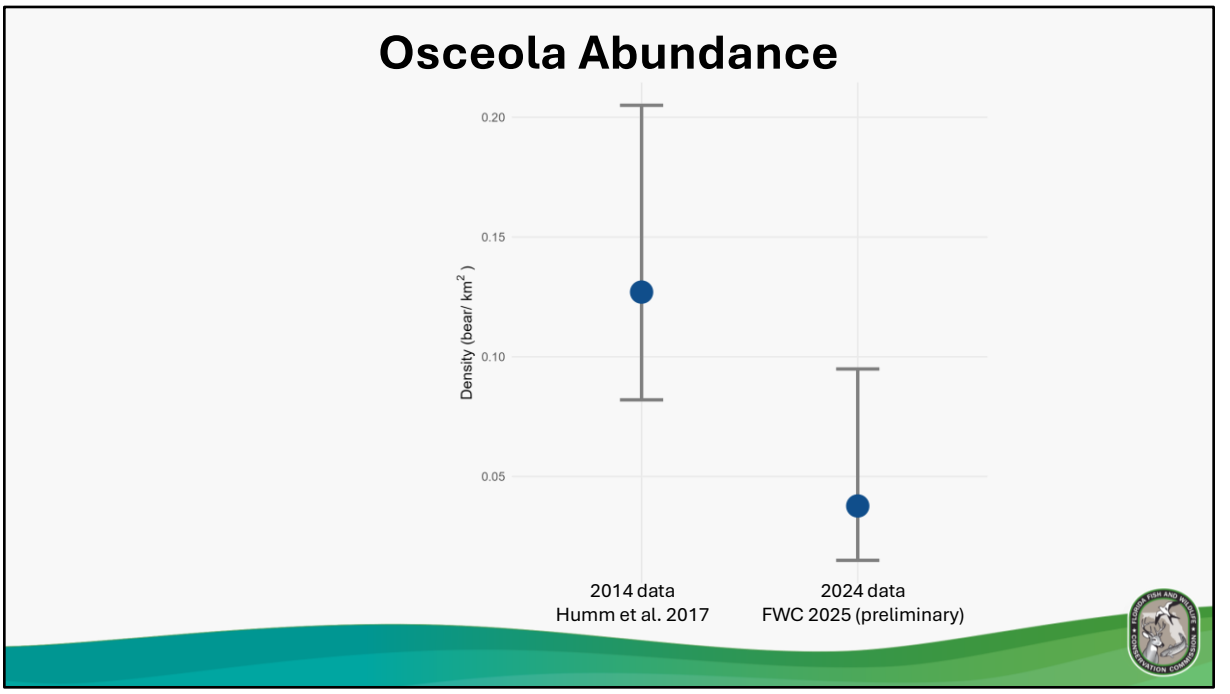


2024 data
FWC 2025 (preliminary)



- These maps are clipped to the state line.
- Density surface maps for bears in the Osceola study area, left is 2014 and right is 2024. The red dots represent hair corrals.
- Note that the colors and scales are different. If the scale was the same, the entire 2024 map would the lower/lighter 4 shades of blue.
- The **key point** is that the top covariates (not shown) differ between 2014 and 2024.
- In 20214, the top models included **% mast**, and the averaged models put most bears in the center of the study area. In 2024, the **% Swamp** covariate put most of the bears in the north, in GA.
- U. Georgia is doing a similar study with corrals in southern Georgia but also using cameras at corrals and capturing bears to track with GPS collar over several years. They found fewer bears at both corrals and trap sites in 2024 than in 2025 and **they think** the 2024 drop was an annual anomaly, perhaps the bears spent more time in the deep swamps during the 6-week period so were not captured at corrals as often as expected, but they are still analyzing their data. Because we synchronized our study with theirs, we'll be able to learn from their results what might have happened in Florida too.
- We know that bears cross the state border. The FWC has records of **14 bears that have crossed the Florida/Georgia border.** There are 2 female bears radio collared in Georgia for research were later found in Florida (one from 1998 and one in 2025). female bears but most (12) were Florida bears that moved north into Georgia.

- Some of these were tagged during research in the 1990s and some were bears translocated in the 1990s or early 2000s after a conflict. We haven't tagged bears in that area since 1999 and no longer translocate conflict bears so we have no way to know how many Florida bears have moved north in recent decades.

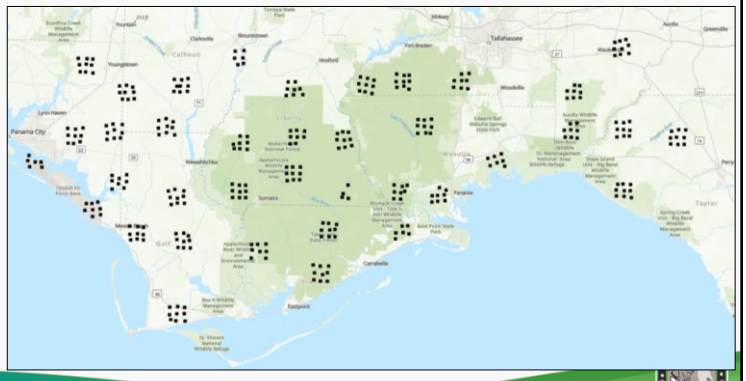


- The 2025 bear density in the Osceola area is **lower than the 0.127 bears/km^2 from 2014 data**, which provided an abundance estimate of **496 bears (95% CL 119 – 319)**. These confidence intervals overlap, so statistically the density could be the same or even increase.
- We also know that density and abundance estimates can vary year to year from corrals built in 2001, 2002, and 2003. The resulting report (Simek et al. 2005) focused on annual capture probabilities so it did not report annual bear abundances. They estimated density and abundance with a multi-year model (Jolly-Seber) provides an estimate of "apparent" survival. It found **89% for all bears** (86% for males and 96% for females) compared to the 98% female survival from telemetry (2005 Monograph).
- The annual estimates of abundance varied between years more than births or deaths typical of bears could explain.

- *If asked: Jolly-Seber estimate for from the 2005 report (from 2002 data year) = 256 bears, with 95% confidence interval of 200 – 313 bears.*

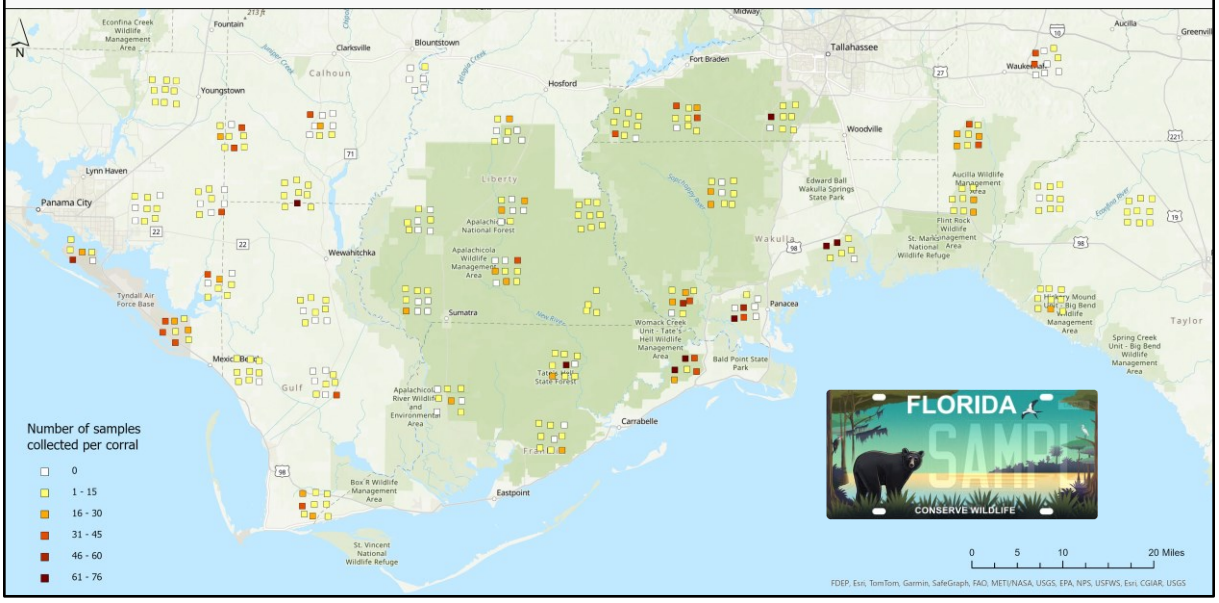
Apalachicola Abundance

- 317 barbed wire corrals built
- Scent lure and baited suspended + 1 quart of corn on ground
- Checked 6 weeks (mid-June to end of July)
- Genetic results expected spring 2026



- Over 2 months, 4 FWC seasonal techs built **317 barbed wire corrals** in the Apalachicola bear subpopulation. This is the third area for the Updated Bear Abundance project, and the last abundance estimate here was in 2015**.**
- Unlike the last 2 field seasons, we **also put corn on the ground,** in addition to suspended baits, because we had so few hair samples last summer that I wanted to return to what I know worked in 2015.
- With this many corrals over such a large study area, we needed help checking them and were able to get 6-7 other assistance, mostly from FWC but also Tyndall AFB biologists. They baited all corrals then checked them weekly for **6 weeks** to collect hair and replenish the bait and lure.

Apalachicola Abundance



- This is a map of the number of samples we collected from each corral this summer.
- We collected 3,157 samples, although our field crews were not sure that all of them were from a bear.
- We hope to genotype 2 samples per corral per week, but sometimes we don't have enough samples and sometimes the selected samples fail the genetic testing. Remember that the data that drives the density estimate is **capture probability.** I don't know that until I get the genetic results.
- I'll ship the samples to the genetics lab soon but won't get the results until about June 2026.

[CLICK] Each year, the funds for genetic analysis come from a Conserve Wildlife grant, so thank you to everybody who bought one of those tags.

Publications

- **Submitted to journal:**
  - Manuscript of survival and growth rates of the Apalachicola bear subpopulation (sent 7/16, no answer yet).
  - Manuscript on survey results from North American bear managers (sent 9/15, no answer yet).
- **Draft for supervisor review:** manuscript about gluing transmitters to Big Cypress cubs and the survival estimates over 21 weeks.
- A manuscript with updated bear densities must wait for 2028.

- The manuscript for the Apalachicola survival and growth rates has been submitted to the Journal of Wildlife Management. Manuscripts are never accepted as is, it will either be rejected with instructions on what they think is needed or accepted on condition that certain revisions are made.
- Shelby is revising her survey manuscript right now and we hope to submit it to the journal Ursus soon. They are expecting it, so that review process may go faster.
- Besides field work, our highest priority is to revise those 2 manuscripts.
- I do not plan to draft a manuscript with updated densities until estimates for all subpopulations are done, so it can't start until summer of 2028. At that time, I will also analyze genetic diversity and immigrations among subpopulations.

Future Research Activities

- Estimate density/abundance for Apalachicola subpopulation in 2026
- Collect hair for Ocala subpopulation abundance/density in 2026
- Collect hair from Big Cypress and Eglin subpopulations in 2027 and complete estimates of density/abundance in 2028
- Genetic diversity and immigration in 2028.
- UF undergraduate explored activity data from our GPS collars
- UF's Dr. Smith plans to collar bears in Wekiva State Park this fall for a multi-year movement study.

- We plan to complete abundance estimates for the rest of Florida by 2028 and investigate genetic diversity that same year, if possible.
- The UF undergraduate is writing on her own time while working full time, but she plans to send a draft to her UF advisor to review this fall. As a first manuscript, it will likely need a few revisions before it's solid enough to send to a journal.
- Time to write manuscripts is limited as we conduct the field work each summer and continue to organize and analyze data from the two multi-year projects in southern Florida but we have a lot of data and a lot of ideas for the next several years.

Questions for Research?

Photo from unknown private lands

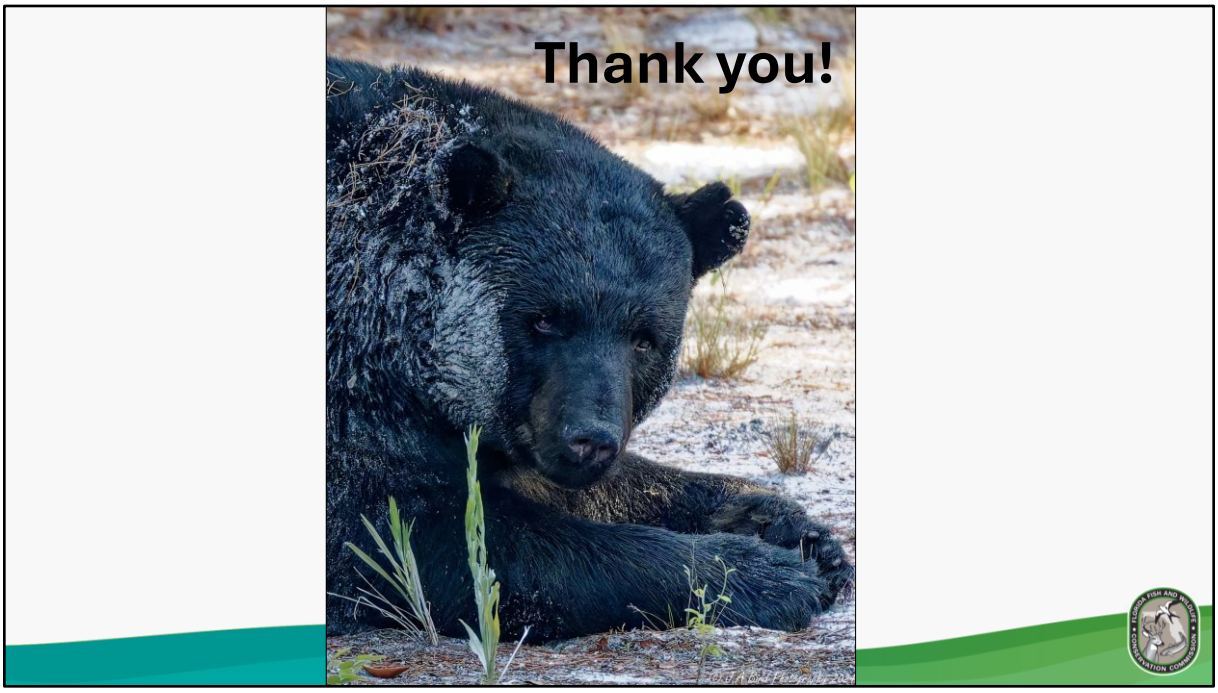


Photo from a resident in Marion County