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Florida Government Accountability Act Sunset Reviews

The act establishes the process, criteria, and schedule for the Legislature to assess whether state agencies and advisory committees need to continue to exist.

The following agencies are on the first year schedule for Sunset Reviews to be conducted by July 1, 2008

- Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Department of Citrus, including the Citrus Commission
- Department of Environmental Protection
- Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
- Water Management Districts

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OPPAGA Reports on the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission - 2000-2007

2003

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Improves Performance Data, But Continues to Face Trust Fund Deficits, Report No. 03-38, July 2003. Since our 2001 report, the commission has addressed most OPPAGA recommendations related to wildlife, freshwater fisheries, and marine fisheries management. It also partially implemented our recommendation for integrating its systems for tracking citations issued to persons violating state laws and regulations.

The commission and the Legislature have also taken action to address our 2001 report's recommendations relating to the commission's financial condition. To address the problem of continuing deficits in several operating trust funds, the commission reviewed its financial situation and recommended that the Legislature increase the fees it charged for certain licenses. The 2003 Legislature subsequently authorized the commission to charge fees for new permits and increase the fees for some licenses. The commission also engaged in a strategic planning process to identify lower priority programs and activities that could be eliminated to address funding deficits.

2001

Justification Review of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Report No. 01-48, October 2001. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's programs generally benefit Florida residents and visitors and should be continued.

Specifically, we found that wildlife populations are declining in Florida, but the causes are beyond the commission's control; freshwater fish populations are generally stable or increasing, but listed freshwater fish species are a concern; and populations of most marine fish species are stable or increasing, but some species are still overfished.

Progress has been made in integrating law enforcement units and personnel from the former Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and the former Florida Marine Patrol.

The commission is facing a crisis in its financial status and projects three of its trust funds will be in deficit position by Fiscal Year 2004-05. We recommend the commission reduce the size of its trust fund deficits through increased sales of hunting and fishing licenses and eliminating low priority programs. The Legislature should also consider authorizing the commission to raise its fishing and hunting license fees.

The Florida Legislature

Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability



Where does OPPAGA get its work?

- Presiding officers
- Legislation or Proviso in the General Appropriations Act
- Legislative Auditing Committee
- Member requests approved by presiding officers

What does OPPAGA provide?

- **Research memoranda** answer specific issues or questions for leadership, members, or committees; these papers provide a non-public forum to fine-tune ideas as they are confidential to the requesting member and his or her presiding officer. In Fiscal Year 2005-06 OPPAGA issued 100 research assistance memoranda.
- **Reports** deliver program evaluation, policy analysis, and justification reviews of state programs to assist members with overseeing government operations and developing policy choices. Progress reports inform the Legislature whether agencies have corrected identified problems. In Fiscal Year 2005-06, OPPAGA issued 77 reports and made 53 presentations to legislative committees on these reports.
- **Florida Government Accountability Report (FGAR)** offers descriptive, evaluative, and performance information about more than 200 state programs. This nationally unique, award-winning encyclopedia of state government is available on-line and in print for all members' capitol and district offices.
- **The Florida Monitor Weekly** provides summaries and links to new reports and articles of interest to Florida policy makers through a weekly electronic newsletter.