

Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Society Strategic Plan

Fall 2006

This strategic plan is a dynamic document adopted by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society (FLTWS) to guide the activities and future direction of the Florida Chapter. Goals and Objectives are subject to modification at 2-year intervals; the initial review was in January 2005. Action plans are developed by Florida Chapter committees and reviewed at least annually by the Executive Board. The strategic plan is posted on the Chapter website (<http://www.fltws.org/>). At the fall meeting of the FLTWS each year, the President Elect or the Past President will evaluate the status of actions on the Strategic Plan and prepare a report of findings.

Vision Statement:

The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society shall be the acknowledged source of scientific information and expertise concerning conservation of Florida's wildlife and the environment on which it depends. Decisions affecting wildlife resources in Florida will be made after consideration of relevant scientific information, in consultation with wildlife professionals, and with a supportive public.

Mission Statement:

The mission of The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society is to serve and represent wildlife professionals in promoting wildlife conservation, biodiversity, and resource stewardship.

Motto:

- *“Wildlife Stewardship through Science, Education, and Management”*

Slogan:

- *“Florida's Leaders in Wildlife Stewardship”*

Goal 1: The Florida Chapter TWS actively promotes sound stewardship of Florida's wildlife resources and plays an effective role in wildlife conservation.

Objectives:

- A) Assess Chapter's capability to provide independent, objective, technical information on specific issues. Provide financial support for members' participation in approved activities (Membership Committee, Executive Board).
 - i) Prepare and distribute questionnaire; results reported to Executive Board. (Membership Committee)
 - ii) Assess financial needs to assure/support members' participation.
- B) Notify resource agencies of willingness and capability of Florida Chapter TWS to provide independent, objective, technical information to facilitate issue resolution and education. (President)
- C) Develop process to identify emerging critical wildlife resource issues. (Conservation Committee)
- D) Increase recognition of Florida Chapter TWS
 - i) Maintain an attractive, up-to-date website.
 - ii) Provide physical or printed representation at a wide variety of outlets (e.g., meetings, nature festivals).
 - iii) Provide attractive t-shirts, hats, and other promotional items.
- E) Increase collaboration with other nongovernmental organizations.
 - i) Establish links between Chapter website and those of compatible organizations.
 - ii) The President Elect will develop a contact list of all relevant organizations. During the first three months after assuming duties, the President will contact each organization to establish a dialog and inform them of our mission, expertise, and desire to work as a partner on common causes.
 - iii) Distribute Chapter Newsletter to contacts at each compatible organization. (Information Chair)
 - iv) Involve compatible organizations in conferences and workshops whenever possible.
- F) Increase effectiveness as advocate for wildlife in key wildlife resource issues.
 - i) Coordinate action whenever position on advocacy issues is shared with nongovernmental organizations.
 - ii) Submit to popular media outlets information on recent publications, key Chapter events, or positions on important wildlife issues. Emphasis will be placed on newspaper editorials but information will also be in the form of press releases. (Information Chair)
 - iii) Hire Executive Director. (Executive Board).
 - a. determine amount of budget that can be applied to salary (Annually by Executive Board to assess Executive Director priorities through budget review).

- b. create position description. (Executive Board)
- c. advertise position. (President).
- d. select candidate. (Executive Board)

Goal 2: Public awareness and appreciation of wildlife conservation and wildlife professionals is increased.

Objectives:

- A) Develop specific website features designed for public interaction.
 - i) Solicit cost estimates for contract with a professional web consultant to design, manage, and host a new website.
 - ii) Present Executive Board with the option of contracting with a professional web consultant.
 - iii) Redefine Newsletter Editor's position as Chair of Information Committee. Responsibilities include editing Newsletter..
 - iv) Structure website so that home page is partitioned explicitly between content for members and public including a module for using the FLTWS website for fundraising through donations to the Chapter.
 - v) Establish links to our website on sites at local governments, nongovernment organizations, universities, and other similar web-based resources.
- B) Seek opportunities to present information on wildlife science, management, and policy to the public.
 - i) Members accept invitations to speak at key meetings and events as Chapter representatives.
 - ii) Make Chapter's areas of expertise (but not information on specific members) available to the public via the website. Executive Director or Chapter President will act as an intermediary between public and individual members regarding requests for expertise.
 - a. distribute membership questionnaire concerning who would be willing to answer web-based questions.
 - b. identify members' specific areas of expertise and contact information.

Goal 3: The highest professional standards for natural resources conservation, research, education, and management are maintained.

Objectives:

- A) Increase member services by knowing and offering what members want or need from the Chapter to assist with their growth and development as professionals and maintain a high standard of excellence.
 - i) Membership committee works with information and education committee to develop a questionnaire soliciting members needs (e.g., workshops, technical training sessions, website content).
 - ii) Present survey results to the Board, who will rank services and establish a co-chair of the Membership Committee to coordinate delivery of services.

- iii) Begin offering additional services. Co-chair to provide an oral report of member services at spring and fall business meetings.
 - iv) Provide a Florida natural resource job listing service on the Chapter's web page available to members only.
 - v) Coordinate mentoring opportunities for students in natural resources programs in Florida.
 - vi) Host informational workshops with special opportunities for current members, and with a plan for recruitment of new members.
- B) Promote professional standards and ethics by keeping the membership informed about TWS Code of Ethics and other issues relating to professional standards and ethics.
- i) TWS Code of Ethics is available on the Chapter website and updated as needed.
 - ii) Certification chair or designee is responsible for submitting at least one article for the spring newsletter on certification, certification renewal, continuing education, or other aspects of professional development and ethics.
 - iii) Certification chair or designee provides oral reports at the spring and fall business meetings.
- C) Encourage future professionals by establishing and maintaining active involvement in student development.
- i) Provide free housing (e.g., rooms, cabins) and free or discounted registration fees at Florida Chapter meetings for students.
 - ii) Offer a \$100.00 best student paper award to be presented at annual spring conference.
 - iii) Provide a \$1,000.00 annual undergraduate student scholarship.
 - iv) Provide funding for appropriate student functions and events such as the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and other professional development opportunities.
 - v) Have Chapter President or designee speak at one student Chapter meeting each year.
 - vi) Encourage participation of student representative to attend Chapter business and board meetings.

Goal 4: The Florida Chapter TWS enhances knowledge and technical capabilities of wildlife professionals.

Objectives:

- A) Develop web-based compilation of current "free-ware" software pertinent to the ecology and management of regional wildlife. (ad hoc committee appointed by Florida TWS)
- B) Develop and maintain web-based annotated bibliography of regional wildlife literature. (ad hoc committee of TWS student chapter members)
- C) Identify and make initial contact with agencies and organizations in Caribbean who are concerned with scientific and technical issues overlapping those of interest to Florida TWS members. (ad hoc committee appointed by Executive Board)

- D) Offer educational workshops associated with Spring or Fall Meeting. (Vice President)
 - i) Designate Workshop Chair and Committee in preparation for workshop associated with Spring or Fall Meeting.
 - ii) Distribute membership questionnaire on the type of workshops in which members would be interested and the cost they would be willing to pay. Consider offering both technical training workshops and natural history or ecological workshops.
 - iii) Workshop Committee solicits experts to make presentations or give demonstrations at workshop.
 - iv) Workshop Committee works with Local Chair to organize logistics of workshop.

- E) Develop future professionals- Identify mechanisms for Florida TWS and its members to mentor college students aspiring to careers as wildlife professionals. (ad hoc committee)

Goal 5: The Florida Chapter TWS uses sound biological, social, and economic information to influence wildlife policy decisions.

Objectives:

- A) Increase the advocacy efforts and effectiveness of the Chapter on policy issues.
 - i) Dedicate a web page to prepared statements that define the Chapter's position on policy issues.
 - ii) Identify sources for information distribution, such as major newspapers, television, and radio stations.
 - iii) Create regional members within the Conservation Committee.
 - iv) Provide web link to alert membership and provide sample position statements for individual member advocacy.

- B) Provide forums that will promote the exchange of information relevant to wildlife policy issues.
 - i) Expand current website to include pages dedicated to current wildlife issues.
 - ii) Develop a list serve to promote membership knowledge of and participation in wildlife issues.
 - a. obtain cost estimate for maintaining and managing listserve and present to Executive Board.
 - b. distribute membership questionnaire concerning interest in participating in a listserve.

- C) Be recognized as a leading source of sound information supporting wildlife policy decisions.
 - i) Provide credible information to policy makers and organizations regarding current issues affecting wildlife.
 - ii) Provide financial or logistic support for limited well-defined pertinent research projects.

- D) Monitor and influence wildlife policy decisions that occur outside of Florida's physical or political boundaries but affect Florida's wildlife resources.
- E) Initiate and maintain collaboration with nonprofit organizations as a normal practice of addressing policy issues that appeal to common interests.
 - i) Identify nonprofit organizations.
 - ii) Identify liaison(s) within our membership.
 - iii) Create policy or guidelines for collaboration practices.
 - iv) Contact targeted nonprofit organizations.
 - v) Develop joint meetings to forge professional partnerships.

Goal 6: Ensure the financial stability, future growth, and expanded membership diversity of the Florida Chapter TWS relative to long-term support for the stated mission.

Objectives:

- A) Increase membership to 400. (Membership Committee)
 - i) Create an implementation plan.
 - ii) Provide a Florida Chapter TWS membership package to new biologist employees of state, federal, and private environmental agencies, organizations, and businesses in Florida.
 - iii) Cross-reference the state and national lists of Wildlife Society members to recruit all potential national members to the Florida Chapter TWS.
 - iv) Develop liaison with allied professional associations and provide overview of Florida TWS mission and activities (TWS membership committee; coordinate with President Elect [see Goal 1.E.ii]).
- B) Increase membership diversity to reflect the ratios of women and minorities in the profession. (Membership Committee)
 - i) Appoint Chapter sponsors to all Universities with a wildlife or natural resources program. These sponsors would be responsible for a recruitment and mentoring program to ensure that student members become active professional members of the Florida Chapter TWS.
 - ii) Identify and recruit prominent female and minority wildlife professionals to join the Florida Chapter TWS.
- C) Increase annual revenue to a level that will support member participation in advocacy roles and fund the salary of an Executive Director. The Florida Chapter TWS will assess the ability to hire this position on a full or part-time basis with a goal for a part-time Director. To realize this goal, the Chapter will:
 - i) Consider an increase in annual Chapter dues to \$25.
 - ii) Develop fund raising events in conjunction with regular membership meetings (e.g., silent auction, raffles).
 - iii) Consider profit-generating symposia that further the mission of the Florida Chapter TWS.
 - iv) Seek opportunities for annual corporate sponsorships.
 - v) Continue to seek sponsors for specific Chapter functions.
 - vi) Generate interest-bearing investments that will fund annual costs of professional staff.

- vii) Grow the capital for these investments for expansion of initiatives consistent with the Chapter's mission.
 - viii) Add a function to the FLTWS website allowing fundraising through donations to the Chapter.
- D) The president (and, in the future, the Executive Director) of the Florida Chapter TWS will communicate with other chapter presidents regarding similar membership and financial initiatives in other states and discuss the status of our programs with the administration of TWS. The annual meeting of TWS is an excellent opportunity for this exchange, and the president will strive to attend or send a representative to this meeting on an annual basis.