



# Legislative Priorities

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**2026**





## Funding Priorities

- Support full funding in the State's budget for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and associated Everglades restoration projects.
- Support funding for the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to continue design and construction of water quality treatment projects, including the water quality treatment feature associated with the Picayune Strand Restoration project.
- Support long-term funding for a Septic Conversion Grant program through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to accelerate conversion of failing and high-risk septic systems in coastal and inland areas.
- Support funding for additional water quality monitoring, including real-time monitoring stations and public notification systems in coordination with the Safe Waterways Act.
- Support increased funding for Florida Forever in order to expedite the acquisition of sensitive environmental lands, including parcels within the Florida Wildlife Corridor.
- Support continued funding for the Resilient Florida Grant Program and other programs for planning and implementing responsible nature-based and hybrid solutions.
- Support continued research funding for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) pertaining to the critically endangered smalltooth sawfish. Continuing this valuable research will aid in population and habitat monitoring and provide scientific support for the limited juvenile nursery areas within South Florida, including the Peace River and the Caloosahatchee River. Reports from 2024 and 2025 indicate that the sawfish population is experiencing an unusual mortality event. Sawfish serve as indicators of the health of fragile coastal ecosystems.
- Reinstate funding through FWC for trash management programs to reduce conflict with Florida black bears. Require that revenue collected from the sale of Florida black bear hunt tags be restricted to conservation measures for black bears.
- Provide funding for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to expedite construction of wildlife crossings where the need has been identified in areas that are known endangered Florida panther roadkill hotspots.
- Increase the funding for the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) programs by FWC that help promote preservation of Florida panther habitat on working lands like ranches.



## Policy Priorities

### Smart Growth Management & Climate Resilience

- Oppose preemption and support local government home rule authority to implement policies more stringent than state standards, especially with regard to protecting natural resources and habitat, building local resilience, and supporting smart growth principles.
- Repeal or amend SB 180 to ensure local governments retain flexibility to adopt emerging best practices for resilience and align with state programs such as CERP, Florida Forever, and the Resilient Florida Grant Program. Remove the vague term “more restrictive or burdensome” to allow amendments to comprehensive plans that address resilience, hazard mitigation, floodplain management, wetlands protection, or climate mitigation and adaptation.
- Support legislation that promotes the thoughtful and balanced use of nature-based and hybrid solutions to flooding and other impacts introduced by a changing climate. Oppose resiliency solutions that would significantly compromise ecological integrity or displace the protective benefits of existing natural systems.
- Support legislation removing the harmful fee-shifting provision from Florida Statute Ch. 163.3215, which has had a chilling effect on the public’s ability to defend local comprehensive plans through challenging inconsistent developments.

### Improve Water Quality, Wetland Protection, and Wildlife

- Oppose any legislation that would infringe on local government’s ability to adopt strong and stringent fertilizer ordinances to protect water quality. Specifically, oppose legislation that would impinge on existing ordinances, limit amendments, or prohibit the adoption of new strong fertilizer ordinances.
- Oppose any legislation that would erode the state’s wetland permitting program, including mitigation requirements.
- Refine requirements for the appointed membership of the FWC Commissioners to include broader representation and scientific/biological expertise.