



FLORIDA CHAPTER
OF
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

March 8, 1971

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Executive Board
Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society

FROM: George Cornwell *GC*

SUBJECT: Resolution on the mandatory wearing of quasi-military uniforms and rank by research biologists employed by the FG&FWFC; and, proposed Forest Fire - Environmental Quality Research.

You will find enclosed copies of a resolution submitted to the Resolutions Committee by Lovett Williams relative to the wearing of uniforms by FG&FWFC research biologists. This resolution passed the Resolution and Public Statement Committee with one dissenting opinion submitted by Gordon Spratt. The resolution and Gordon's opinion are enclosed for your review. Please vote on the resolution as Item Number 1 on the enclosed postcard. I understand the Commission will be acting in the near future on a uniform policy, so please respond by return mail.

You will also find enclosed correspondence from John Gray seeking FC-TWS support of needed research on the relationships between forest fire and environmental quality. Please vote on this as Item Number 2.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

WHEREAS: The members of the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society account for nearly all professional wildlife conservationists in Florida; and

WHEREAS: It is a widely acknowledged role of a professional society to speak in behalf of its members and to promote their aims and ideals; and

WHEREAS: It has come to the attention of this society that the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission at this time is contemplating new policies affecting the dignity of our profession, to wit, the mandatory wearing of quasi-military uniforms and rank insignia by professionally trained management and scientific personnel in its employment; and

WHEREAS: This society believes that the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commissioners are reasonable people who value the professional status and morale of their biologists; it is therefore

RESOLVED: That the Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Society shall state to one and all its position in regard to the mandatory wearing of quasi-military rank and uniforms, as follows:

That the wearing of uniforms, per se, as required for identification is not objectional, provided that said uniform is not undignified, degrading, or unbecoming the of a trained professional resource manager and/or scientist.

2. That graduate biologists are themselves qualified to determine when and under what circumstances they should wear uniform clothing. To assume otherwise by inflexible regulations is to belay their judgement and raise serious questions about the confidence placed in them by their superiors.
3. Assignment of some form of rank is essential in any organization but the mandatory wearing of quasi-military paraphernalia is not appropriate for the scientific and professional wildlife biologists.
4. That nothing in this resolution is designed to suggest that quasi-military rank and uniform clothing is undignified for bona fide law enforcement agents.