FLTWS Bear Hunt Position - 20 June 2016

* Commissioners, Director Wiley, staff, ladies & gentlemen, I am here as the spokesperson for roughly 250 members of the Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Society.
* Our Chapter membership includes practicing wildlife professionals, educators and students, all dedicated to sustainable management of wildlife resources and habitats in Florida.
* Our parent organization at the national level, The Wildlife Society, has over 10,000 members, and is the certifying body for wildlife biologists in North America.
* We wish to commend the biological staff and administrators of FWC for development of the 4 options for consideration regarding a 2016 bear hunt, and for their well-considered recommendation of Option 2 to the Commission. We feel it is biologically sound, and that it attempts to develop a consensus of the wide-ranging opinions and positions of the Florida stakeholder citizenry.
* Because of the diversity of professional and personal opinions among our Chapter’s members regarding the efficacy and advisability of a 2016 bear hunt, FLTWS is not making a specific option endorsement regarding how the Commission should decide on implementation of a 2016 bear hunt.
* HOWEVER, our Chapter would like to register our professional position, which we ask you to consider in your deliberations.
* I would like to read this short statement since I would not want to ad lib the document our President, select members and Executive Board have so conscientiously developed: