CONSERVATION PLAN
Florida Council
Federation of Fly Fishers

1.0 Mission
The mission of the Federation of Fly Fishers is to lead activities that enhance and support the fly-fishing experience for all anglers that fish with the artificial fly. A keystone to this mission is the recognition that conservation of our wetland and fishery resources is fundamental to our present and future angling experiences as fly fishers.

2.0 Purpose and Goal
Conservation of fisheries and their habitats has been a core value of the Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF) since its founding in 1965. The FFF pioneered the practice of catch and release and has since been a leading organization in the advocacy and practice of conserving “All Fish in All Waters” and of excellence in education and enjoyment of the fly fishing experience. The FFF is the international voice of all fly fishers. We are dedicated to supporting fisheries research and restoration, improving water quality, protection and restoration of native aquatic habitats, the perpetuation of wild fish stocks, and increasing the voice of anglers in conservation decision making.

The Florida Council (Council) subscribes to the FFF conservation mission and the philosophy that conservation is fundamental to our continuing opportunities and enjoyment of fly fishing in Florida. More specifically, sound conservation and monitoring of our fisheries and their habitats in Florida today is the best safeguard against disasters that may affect or threaten those resources. The Deep Water Horizon explosion that began spilling approximately 206 million barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico on April 20, 2010, is a dramatic testimony of this reality.

This Conservation Plan has been developed with the specific goal of establishing the Florida Council of the FFF as an informed conservation voice and advocate on behalf of our Florida Clubs and membership for sound wetland and fishery management to ensure that our enjoyment of fly fishing remains an infinite opportunity in Florida.

3.0 Responsibility
It is the responsibility of the Vice President of Conservation (Conservation VP) to inform and represent the Council and membership regarding matters pertaining to conservation of fishery resources and their habitats in Florida. The Conservation VP also serves as liaison with other conservation organization in Florida and is a member of the Conservation Committee for the FFF. The Conservation VP ultimately is responsible for maintaining close coordination with the Council President in the implementation of this Conservation Plan on behalf of the Council and its clubs and members and the FFF.

4.0 Conservation Plan Elements
This Conservation Plan incorporates many interrelated elements or ways our members, clubs, board members and instructors may actively participate and/or support the conservation efforts of the Council and FFF. Even the mention during a fly tying or casting workshop that the Council maintains an active
A conservation program on behalf of our members is critical and delivers one more message regarding what the FFF is doing to assure our continuing fly fishing opportunities. Those elements include the following.

4.1 Conservation Outreach

Conservation outreach involves the communication and sharing of information among our clubs and members regarding conservation activities of the FFF, emerging conservation issues and support that is available for getting involved that may affect the well being of fishery resources and their habitats in Florida. The Council assumes primary responsibility for communicating and maintaining an open dialogue with its clubs, members and the FFF regarding such matters in order to assure a collaborative voice of advocacy for conservation in Florida. It is important for the Council to communicate with the national office of FFF regarding ongoing conservation activities in Florida as the conservation work we do in Florida is an integral part of the overall conservation effort of the FFF. An active and effective conservation program in Florida will be a clear demonstration of core FFF values regarding conservation of fishery resources. The Council views its clubs and members and the FFF as essential partners in the sound conservation of not only Florida’s but the nation’s important fishery resources.

Council Website
The Council website, www.fff-florida.org, is the primary point of communication between the Council and its clubs and members regarding all conservation matters. Information regarding emerging conservation issues, reports of ongoing conservation projects, letters submitted to agencies concerning proposed management and regulatory changes, request for assistance and available grant programs to assist local conservation projects will be posted on the website with appropriate contact information on a regular basis. Clubs are encouraged to contribute information regarding local conservation projects and issues for posting on the website for sharing with other clubs, councils and the FFF.

Electronic Mail
A current mailing list email addresses will be maintained by the Council Secretary (?) to assist timely communication of all Council and FFF matters, including conservation activities of and within the Council. Club Presidents generally will be notified by email of timely conservation activities and actions of the Council with reference to postings on the website for further details and information that may be downloaded for local use.

Programs, Classes and Workshops
Programs on fly fishing, fly-tying classes and casting workshops are excellent venues for also reminding students that the FFF is a major voice and advocate for sound conservation of our fishery resources and their habitats on behalf of every individual member of the FFF. A good message to deliver is that being aware and philosophically supporting the conservation mission and activities of FFF is, in many ways, just as important as getting directly involved in those activities. Still yet, it is local conservation programs that are the grass roots substance of the FFF’s conservation efforts and voice.

4.2 Conservation Action

Conservation action generally involves the provision of Council technical review, analysis and opinion regarding resource management and regulation changes and needs that may affect the wellbeing of fishery resources, health of the habitats upon which they depend and/or member opportunities to enjoy the recreational value of those resources in a sustained way through fly fishing. It shall be the responsibility of the Conservation VP to monitor and track development of such issues, prepare written analyses for the Council regarding implications for members and draft informed opinions, comments and recommendations for correspondence to agencies on behalf of the membership, Council and FFF, as may be appropriate. Reports and correspondence regarding conservation actions will be posted on the website

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for Club and member information and copied to the FFF through the Conservation Committee. Issues potentially requiring conservation action by the Council will be identified and monitored as follows:

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC):**

The FWC website (http://myfwc.com) is an excellent source of information regarding freshwater and marine fishery management issues including new or revised management policies and regulations that are proposed for Commission approval and implementation. Staff recommendations regarding new regulations and regulation changes typically are posted as agenda items months prior to the Commission meeting where an action may be voted. Reports and other documents that serve as the bases of the proposal also are posted with the agenda items for public review. The FWC website should be considered a primary source of accurate information regarding agency management and regulation issues.

**Organizations with Common Interests:**

Other organizations that have common conservation interests with the FFF, such as the Coastal Conservation Association of Florida (CCA) will be good sources of important information regarding emerging conservation issues and views. It shall be the responsibility of the Conservation VP to maintain an effective liaison with the CCA Executive Director, Mr. Ted Forsgren, (tforsgren@ccaflorida.org) for purposes of sharing information concerning conservation issues and collaboration in the preparation written positions and opinions that may be submitted to agencies.

**Clubs and Members:**

Council clubs and members are the grass-roots basis for opinions formed by the Council. All positions and opinions of the Council must first be factually and scientifically sound, but within those parameters there also is latitude for considering preferences regarding the fishing and harvest interests and methods of our members. Therefore, member opinion will be sought through the website and other correspondence with clubs, when timely and applicable, for development of opinions the Council may submit to agencies. Strategic and technical assistance will also be provided clubs and members concerning analyses of local conservation issues and provision of technical and strategic support for planning and implementing action at local levels.

### 4.3 Conservation Projects

Conservation projects of the FFF serve two fundamental purposes. Conservation projects influence or result in a conservation benefit to fisheries and our recreational opportunities to enjoy them at some level within the scope of intended influence of that project. Perhaps more importantly though, every conservation project that is supported and implemented by the FFF demonstrates the practiced conservation philosophy of the FFF and therefore, influencing conservation beyond the capabilities of the FFF (Councils, clubs and members) by agencies and other resource users. It is this influence that ultimately contributes most to the overall conservation of fishery resources and their habitats and our members continuing angling experiences as fly fishers.

The Council supports all conservation projects of the FFF, but its primary focus will be to support conservation projects in Florida through its clubs and members. No project is too small as long as it is designed to result in a benefit to fisheries and/or their habitats at even the most localized level. Examples of projects already supported in Florida include installation of informative signs and receptacles for used monofilament dispensers to minimize impacts to water birds, planting of mangrove seedlings to assist hurricane-damaged mangrove systems and technical and strategic assistance regarding proposed ill-designed dredging of a small natural tidal creek. The Council may provide support for conservation projects in the form of project design, preparation of grant proposals to FFF, partial funding, field support and assistance with implementation, monitoring and reporting. Monitoring and reporting of all...
conservation projects will be necessary elements for financial support, as every project is an integral part of the role the FFF serves in conservation or our fishery resources.

4.4 Conservation Grants and Funding

The FFF maintains several grant programs that are intended for Councils and clubs by providing partial funding to encourage and support implementation of conservation projects at grass-roots levels. Such grants generally will require submittal of a short grant application with project description or proposal and information regarding in-kind support and/or matching funds. The Council will provide assistance in the preparation of project design and grant applications and submittal to the FFF. The Council also will provide financial assistance when matching funds are requested. All grant submittals to the FFF are reviewed and approved for awards by the Conservation Committee of which the Council Conservation VP is a member.

The Council also raises funds to support conservation projects through various fund raising activities that include raffles conducted at the annual Council Fly Fishing Expo. The Council will maintain funds in its operational budget to encourage and provide financial support to its clubs for implementation of conservation projects. Clubs will also be encouraged to conduct fund raising activities for support of conservation. The first priority for allocation of conservation funding by the Council will be for support of projects in Florida, but funds may also be provided as partial support for FFF projects of broader conservation significance.

5.0 Contacts:

The Council Conservation VP serves as the primary contact for clubs and members regarding ongoing conservation projects in Florida, available grants and other funding, assistance with planning conservation projects and other conservation activities of the FFF. Contact and other information is available at the Council website (www.fff-florida.org) and at the FFF website (www.fedflyfishers.org). Although the Conservation VP serves as primary contact, any officer of the Council may be contacted for information and other contacts.

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