FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION FWC

- The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is constitutionally controlled.
- The Florida Constitution grants the FWC the authority to regulate and manage fish and wildlife resources.
- The authority is outlined in Article IV, Section 9 of the Florida Constitution.
- The recent addition to Amendment 2 to the Florida Constitution, which enshrines the right to hunt and fish, does not limit the FWC's existing authority under Article IV, Section 9 of the Florida Constitution.
- The Florida Legislature may also enact laws that impact the FWC's authority over captive wildlife and other areas.

- **The primary purpose of the FWC is to manage Florida's fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people.**
- **"Patrol, Protect, Preserve" reflects the commitment to managing and conserving Florida's fish and wildlife resources for the long-term benefit of all people and future generations.**
- **The FWC also enforces boating regulations and promotes conservation efforts.**
- **Florida has over one million registered recreational boaters and is known as the "Boating Capital of the Nation."**
- **In 2023 there were 619 boating accidents.**
- **Florida has the largest number of boating-related deaths. The second leading cause of accident-related deaths is alcohol.**

- It is illegal to boat in Florida while impaired by drugs or alcohol. Specifically, it is illegal to operate a boat or manipulate water skis, sailboard or other similar device while under the influence.
- An individual is deemed to be under the influence with a blood or breath alcohol concentration of 0.08 or higher.
- The use of alcohol or drugs can result in many negative physical manifestations. Blurred vision, slowed reaction time, and poor concentration are just a few of the issues caused by drinking alcohol or using drugs.
- Alcohol and drugs are major contributors to boating accidents and fatalities.
- A PFD or Personal Flotation Device is a wearable life jacket that must be United States Coast Guard approved and all vessels must carry such devices.
- In addition to a PFD for every individual on a boat, there must be a throwable Type IV PFD for vessels under 16 feet in length.
- Children less than 6 years of age MUST wear a USCG approved PFD if the vessel is less than 26 feet in length and is underway.
- A Boater Safety Course is required for anyone born on or after January 1, 1988, who operates a motorized vessel of 10 horsepower or more in Florida.
- When fishing in Florida you must possess a fishing license. In Florida, however, youth less than 16 years of age and resident seniors 65 years of age or older are exempt.