

FSCA Newsletter



June was a busy month for FSCA. On the 8th we attended the Lake Okeechobee Association of Airboaters Trash Fish tournament at the Okeetantie airboat launch area. A total of 18 teams removed 458 invasive fish species from the lake. FSCA is proud to be a sponsor of this event. Thanks to all the sponsors, volunteers and participants. On the 15th we held our 4th annual Fathers Day Fun Shoot which was a huge success! Thanks to all of our sponsors, volunteers and shooters! We look forward to seeing you at next years event. On the 22nd we held the 30th reunion of FSCA. We had a spectacular evening with 9 of the 12 past presidents and over 100 guests. It was great to hear all of the history of the club! The club also awarded Bishop Wright Jr the Lifetime achievement award. Special thanks to Nick Wiley for moderating the evening for us. And thank you to the past presidents in attendance who helped make the evening the success that it was. Looking forward we will be attending the FAA Unity Weekend Banquet 7/13 at the KOA in Okeechobee. This is a great event for a worthy cause and I hope to see you there. In closing I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable summer spending time with family. Please continue to follow our social media and website for all upcoming events.

Matt Nelson
President



*FSCA 30th Reunion
Pictures by Sandra Effertz Photography*

Upcoming Events

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10 Year Management Plan for
the JWD Corbett Manage-
ment Area

July 24, 2024

6:30 PM

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FSCA calendar updated week-
ly on FSCA1994.com

Amendement #2

The Right to Fish and Hunt

Matt, Joe, and Bishop joined a group of ranchers, conservationists, and sportsmen at an event with Travis and Mike. This gathering led them to Marco Island to support the Right to Fish and Hunt Amendment #2. Lauren Melo, a state representative, has been a champion for this amendment and other conservation efforts like WERP and Lake Okeechobee. Lauren's commitment to Florida's sportsmen makes supporting her and the amendment an easy choice for many.

While most outdoor enthusiasts are wary of constitutional amendments, it's crucial to spread the word and vote yes on Amendment 2 this year. Many people don't realize the threats to hunting and fishing, but these activities are under attack in at least 12 other states. It's essential to get informed, vote, and encourage others to vote yes on Amendment 2.

Wes Bates, founder and CEO of Stanley Steemer, hosted the event. He is a dedicated sportsman and member of the International Order of T. Roosevelt (IOTR). Luke Hilgemann, the Executive Director of IOTR, both of them encouraged Lauren to champion the right to hunt and fish.

President Theodore Roosevelt pioneered the North American Model of Conservation, emphasizing the importance of hunters in conservation efforts. Now, the right to hunt and fish in America is under threat. Some politicians and activists aim to eradicate hunting, jeopardizing Roosevelt's conservation vision. Hunting funds 75% of conservation efforts, but restrictions and bans threaten this funding.

A constitutional amendment provides the strongest legal protection against anti-hunting efforts. Currently, 23 states have established a right to hunt and fish, with Vermont being the first in 1777 and Utah the most recent in 2020. Establishing this right preemptively defends against anti-hunting legislation and litigation.

Conservationist in Florida are stepping up to protect this legacy, pushing back against those who don't understand the sport and upholding the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Securing the right to hunt and fish in every state will help grow the sport, welcome new hunters, and protect the lands set aside by our founding fathers.

2024-2025 YOUTH HUNTS

Python Hunt

July 26-28th Everglades

Holiday Park

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Grassy Island

Muzzleloader

Oct 25-27th

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Arthur Marshall Youth Hunt Nov 1-3rd

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Dupree WMA Youth Gator Hunt Feb 21
-22nd

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Youth Gator Hunt

STA 2

Feb 28th - March 2nd

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Grassy Island Youth Hunt

Mar 7-9th

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Gator Youth Hunt

STA 5

Mar 21-23rd

To learn more about our youth hunts or how to sign up please visit

<https://myfwc.com/education/programs/youth-hunting-program/>

Please like follow and share us on social media!



Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association 30th Reunion

Thank you, Matt Nelson, for your leadership and wisdom in guiding us through the night. This event provided a wonderful opportunity to bring together not only our founding fathers but also the next generation that will carry FSCA forward. It was inspiring to see three generations of FSCA members gathered to share their accomplishments over the years. FSCA was honored to welcome everyone to the 30th reunion of the Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association.

The evening was a journey through the past 30 years, highlighting the many achievements of this club, the tireless efforts of its founding fathers, presidents, and members, and the invaluable relationships built with staff from local, state, and federal agencies. From courtrooms to the thickest mud in the glades, this club has faced every challenge to public access with the goal of protecting and preserving traditional access and recreation on public land in Florida.

FSCA extends its gratitude to all who attended, hoping you not only enjoyed the evening but also gained insight into the hard work that has made our current access possible. The leadership would like to thank Nick Wiley for traveling from Tennessee to be our moderator, and Jamie and Velve Mellette from Swamp Cracker Barbecue for providing dinner. They are one of the hardest-working families in conservation, and we were honored to have them at the event.

A special thank you to Mike Elfenbein and Travis Thompson for discussing Amendment 2, which will be on our ballot this November. They answered questions and provided guidance on how to help spread the word to ensure this amendment passes. We also applaud Nikki and Tommy McGoldrick for managing the front door and checking everyone in, along with Bo Moyer, who donated the .308 Browning rifle won by Daniel King. Thanks to Daniel King for recording the event and to Sandra Shoemate for capturing photos that will last a lifetime.



*Current and past presidents of FSCA
Pictures by Sandra Effertz Photography*

FSCA's Achievements Over the Past 30 Years

FSCA started in 1994 by a small group of like minded individuals with one goal. Work to increase public recreation in Florida that's simple goal has branched into many areas, but FSCA focus has never changed.

Accomplishments & Projects

- Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association members enthusiastically answer the call for help when volunteer help is needed throughout the year to assist with various conservation efforts. Members have spent countless hours and have removed tons of trash from various public lands. Projects such as this only emphasize the need for more public awareness into a growing problem that faces Florida. Projects include, Northlake blvd, Corbett WMA, Multi-turf, Conservation area 2, Lake Kissimmee. Our latest project, on Earth Day 2014, we gathered 32 airboats with 80 volunteers to remove two abandoned Duke University research stations in WCA2. Several clubs and camp owners took part in this massive cleanup, but the most impressive thing was the innovative ideas, tools and techniques demonstrated by the Gladesmen to get the job done. This is an example of what volunteers can do and save the district thousands of dollars.
- When the Everglades Youth Camp at the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area was threatened with closure due to the condemnation of the camps obsolete waste water discharge system, F.S.C.A. volunteers donated 1404 man hours of labor and heavy equipment to truck in 2,340 yards of fill material and construct a modern drain field and filtration marsh. This allowed the summer youth camp program to open on schedule and saved the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) \$50,000.00 during a time of crucial budget shortfall. Years later, we returned, in the new pavilion to build a BBQ for outdoor grilling.
- Annual "Outdoor Youth Day" program is specifically designed to educate our children to the many different recreational activities available on our natural areas. Events include pony rides, canoeing, wildlife show, fishing, airboat & buggy rides, archery, K-9 show and rifle range. Each year we host over 1000 children for this unique experience. This event also helps us sponsor underprivileged children to attend the Everglades Youth Camp each summer.
- In January 1995, members helped convert an old horse stable into the Conservation Pavilion at the South Florida Fair and every year since we set up a booth to help educate the public on S Fl conservation issues.
- Our representatives have consulted with FWC and SFWMD to facilitate opening and establishing responsible regulation of new lands for recreational use. To date these lands include Nicodemus Slough, Fort Drum Swamp, Browns Farm, Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, Frog Pond, West Jupiter Wetlands, Dinner Island, Spirit of the Wild WMA, John and Mariana Jones WEA, all 5 STA's, Okalawacochee and Allapatha Flats
- In 2011 we purchased 2.5 acres of property in Royal Palm Beach for our future Conservation headquarters. The property is instrumental in the growth of our organization by allowing us to have a footprint in S Fl.

FSCA's Achievements Over the Past 30 Years

- FSCA was instrumental in establishing the Youth Hunt program of FL. We held the 1st non agency personnel youth hunt in our state, we hosted 15 different hunts for over 75 children. Twenty-nine of our members are certified Hunt Masters with the state of Florida Youth Hunt program
NRA Youth Hunter Ed challenge tournament is an awesome program in which FSCA had three boys from region five qualify for Pennsylvania to represent the state of Florida in 2008.
- In cooperation with the Everglades Coordinating Council (ECC) and the Florida Conservation Council, F.S.C.A. has helped organize and host events designed to educate our state legislators of environmental programs facing South Florida's unique ecosystem, as well as the recreational opportunities and economic enhancements a healthy ecosystem can provide. These events have included three legislative tours of the Everglades and Legislative Day family outings at the Everglades Youth Camp.
- Assisted in the construction of a park in the City of West Palm Beach in the Water Catchment Area, allowing public access for wildlife viewing opportunities in an area that had been closed to the public since the early 1980s. F.S.C.A. volunteers returned to provide maintenance for the park trail system.
- October 27, 1994 F.S.C.A. volunteers participated in "Operation Deer Feed" in Water Conservation Area III, taking native vegetation to starving deer stranded on islands during flood conditions. An important component of this project involved transporting elected officials and the news media into flooded areas to educate them as to the plight of the wildlife in the area. Additionally, uncovering the flaws in the water management system that contributed to the devastation.
- In cooperation with SFMD, we build a 20x30 foul weather shelters on DuPuis, and 2 along the Kissimmee River PUA we moved posted signs back for more public access along with making a campground for all user groups.
- Designed and built the 1st horse paddock for Dupuis WMA before they would open to equestrian use. Volunteers also installed a fence at the public campground on the Dupuis Reserve.
- The Florida Trails Association has an Ocean to Lake Hiking Trail that runs for approximately 63 miles, west from Hobe Sound Beach to Lake Okeechobee. The trail starts at the ocean, entering Jonathan Dickinson State Park at US 1, traveling through the park, Palm Beach County Natural Areas, Corbett Wildlife Management Area and Dupuis Management Area, and ends at the lake. This trail was enhanced when the Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association placed a bridge over the game canal in the JW Corbett wildlife management
- Designed, built and installed Wood Duck Boxes at Dupuis Reserve, on Lake Okeechobee, John and Mariana Jones WEA, and the Kissimmee River in cooperation with SFWMD, FWC, and Delta Waterfowl. Programs such as these have enabled wood duck populations to rebound from near extinction throughout the nation.
- We participated in the Vessel Sound Ordinance Testing in cooperation with FWC.
- May 23, 1995 the F.S.C.A. was appointed to the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Environmental Advisory Committee.

FSCA's Achievements Over the Past 30 Years

- Adopted a “White Tailed Deer” in June 1997 as a participant in the Dreher Park Zoo Adopt-an-Animal program.
- Repaired 11 miles of vandalized fence on Cecil Webb Wildlife Management Area (WMA), enabling continued public enjoyment of this area. F.S.C.A. established a peer pressure education program to urge ethical conduct on public lands.
- We have treated youth groups to fun-filled environmental education field trips via swamp buggies and airboats. These groups include Girl Scouts, 4H kids, summer youth camp attendees, Boy Scouts and Indian Princesses.
- F.S.C.A. members lend a hand to members of our community in need. In June 1994, held a benefit barbecue for a single mother who had been seriously injured in an automobile accident. In July 1997 FSCA held a benefit for two-year-old Cody Freshwater, diagnosed with Acute Lymphocyte Leukemia, then years later he was a one of our Youth hunters.
- Developed and coordinated youth education programs in local schools and the Everglades Youth Camp.
- Participated in habitat enhancement prescribed burning program with FWC within the J.W. Corbett Management Area.
- On three separate occasions F.S.C.A. donated and installed culverts to improve hydrology under backcountry trails on public lands and to provide for continued public use during periods of flooding.
- We have hosted numerous Wounded Warrior events to include turkey, deer/hog and alligator hunts

Volunteers improved visitor safety and aesthetics on SFWMD lands by removing over 2450 fence posts and over 170,000 ft of barbed wire from Nicodemus Slough, Gardner Marsh and Kissimmee River.

- Re-roofed the storage building at the Everglades Youth Camp rifle range where young people as well as adults are trained in firearms safety.
- “Mangrove Marathon” on Jupiter Waterways Park, a project to replace harmful exotic trees with native mangroves which are essential in restoring inshore islands and marine nurseries along Florida’s east coast.
- Worked in conjunction with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission to count and mark existing Red Cockaded Woodpecker colonies.
- Volunteers have frequently participated in annual exotic tree eradication programs on various management areas.

FSCA's Achievements Over the Past 30 Years

- We promote conservation and environmental education in annual “Earth Fest” and “Earth Fest for Educators” events at the Palm Beach Mall.
- Hosted Bass Tournaments to promote catch-and-release fishing opportunities and to raise funds to further our conservation efforts.
- Developed and managed a “Dolphin Fishing Tournament” to promote fishing opportunities and to raise funds to further our conservation efforts.
- Volunteers provide swamp buggy rides in the Ft. Pierce Cattlemen’s parade and the Belle Glade Black Gold parade.
- In conjunction with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) F.S.C.A. volunteers participated in real Florida naturescaping in John D. MacArthur State Park.
- F.S.C.A. volunteers have participated in the annual Kids Fishing Day event sponsored by the West Palm Beach Fishing Club.
- Held our first annual alligator hunt kickoff party at Belle Glade Marina on Lake Okeechobee.
- Helped the FWC set rules for three new land acquisitions.
- Helped SFWMD form WRAC Rec committee making sure all their lands have all the recreational opportunities possible.
- Every year prior to the peak period in which native wildlife is expected to produce offspring, F.S.C.A. volunteers work with members of other conservation organizations to plant over 600 lb. of seed to enhance wildlife habitat.
- We annually host a Treasure Coast Wildlife Management area summit to allow user groups to coordinate on problems in our local WMA’s
- Each July F.S.C.A. celebrates Plant a Tree for Marjorie Day. By planting a tree in honor of a person who, like Marjory Stoneman Douglas, has dedicated his or her life to promoting conservation and environmental responsibility.
- F.S.C.A. participates in the FWC’s Adopt-a Boat Ramp program.
- In 1997 joined “Adopt a Highway” program, providing ongoing litter control over a 4-mile stretch of Northlake Blvd. In the Royal Palm Beach Acreage. Volunteer work details are scheduled to coincide with peak rush hour traffic in order to promote environmental responsibility through example.

FSCA's Achievements Over the Past 30 Years

- F.S.C.A. volunteers lend a hand in cleaning up local lakes and waterways during the FWC's annual Project Eagle environmental cleanup.
- Help Santa collect toys for underprivileged children every Christmas by participating in the US Marines Toys for Tots program.

If you're not a part of this association, feel free to get involved we welcome everyone aboard. This is by far not a one-man show as you can see.



FSCA 30th Reunion
Pictures by Sandra Effertz Photography

By Nikki McGoldrick, FSCA, All Rights Reserved

4th Annual Father's Day Fun Shoot 2024

On behalf of the Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association (FSCA), we extend a heartfelt thank you for your generous support as a sponsor for our annual clay shoot. Your contribution has been instrumental in making this event possible, and we are truly grateful for your commitment to our cause. We extend special thanks to Steve and Rachel Stroh, who have supported this event from the beginning. We also want to acknowledge Native Boyz and Chris Duque for helping us promote this event, along with Terry Garceau and his cooking team for providing lunch and delivering essential supplies. Additionally, we appreciate all the board members who ensured every detail was meticulously handled. This event would not have been possible without the Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Complex and their staff, who provided all the necessary support, making it an enjoyable day for families to come out and participate in shooting sports. We thank the 22 teams who joined us, spending the day with FSCA members to celebrate Father's Day in a fun and engaging way. Congratulations to all the winners! Here is the list of winners: Ericka Lambert (Conservationist), Keeley Lima (Youth Female), Layton Fogleman (Youth Male), Nikki McGoldrick (Top Female), Kyle Barrett (Top Male), and Treasure Coast Hospice (Top Team). Each received a trophy from Lox Momma Creations. Congratulations to Kerry Garceau on winning the card game for the Savage rifle donated by Scott Sommer. Additionally, congratulations to Muck King Enterprises, the winner of the sponsors' double-barrel shotgun. Through your sponsorship, you have demonstrated dedication not only to the sport but also to the community. Your investment has enabled us to provide a memorable experience for all participants, fostering camaraderie and a passion for conservation.

We sincerely appreciate your ongoing partnership and the positive impact it has on our organization and the broader community. Your support allows us to continue promoting conservation and organizing events that bring people together. Once again, thank you for your invaluable sponsorship. We look forward to seeing you at the 2025 clay shoot and celebrating the success of this event together.

With sincere gratitude,
FSCA Leadership

****Platinum Sponsors****

- Sommer Outdoors
- Local 630
- CR Dunn
- Larry Daniels
- Top Guns Ammo

****Gold Sponsor****

- Indian River Co Airboat Association

****Station Sponsors****

- Muck King Enterprises
- The Trailer Dr
- Lox Momma Creations
- Loxahatchee Napa
- Shotshells FL LLC
- Place of Hope
- Treasure Coast Hospice

****Station Sponsors****

- Expert Elevator
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- Stat Promo Solutions
- Butler Construction
- EZ Removal Services
- Foundation Chiropractor
- Hayes Welding

Congratulations to Bishop Wright for Recieving the Lifetime Achievment Award

I am honored and humbled to receive this Lifetime Achievement Award. To say I was caught off guard would be an understatement. Throughout my tenure with FSCA, my wife Caroll has been by my side, making me a better person every step of the way.

In the 90s, I was fortunate to have some amazing mentors who played a significant role in shaping FSCA into the club it is today. People like John and Mariana Jones, Barbara Jean Powell, Tom Shirley, Jack Moller, Freddy Fisikelli, Walt Branden, Frank Dienager, and Jack Stanley, among others, opened doors and showed us the boundaries of what we could achieve.

I have always strived to be a mentor to anyone within our conservation circle. As many of you know, I've been part of FSCA for 30 years. I attribute the success of this organization to its founding fathers and every president who has guided FSCA through the years.

I have been blessed to work alongside dedicated conservationists who not only possessed great common sense but also a Gladesman background. They were always willing to put the club's momentum ahead of their personal opinions when necessary. We have always lived by the 80/20 rule, which has kept our club healthy. (The 80/20 rule means that 80% of the time, the majority of the group is on the same page. When you find yourself in the 20% minority, you learn that you can't always change the outcome, but you don't quit. You stay focused with the majority.)

Thank you, everyone, for this award. It is deeply appreciated. One person can't do everything alone; it requires support and a strong team behind him. Thank you for standing by me and for this incredible honor.

Sincerely,
WINNERS NEVER QUIT
Bishop Wright Jr.
Honorary Board Member
Life Member of FSCA



Pictures by Sandra Effertz Photography