



Office of the Mayor and Town Council

Peggy R. Bell
Mayor

MEMORANDUM

Mary Ann Mixon
Council Member, Seat 1

To: Honorable Members of the Town Council

From: Mayor Peggy R. Bell
Council Member Mary Ann Mixon, Seat 1

Date: January 20, 2016

Re: Opposing the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission’s Action to Permit Bear Hunting

REQUEST

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA, OPPOSING THE FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION’S ACTION TO PERMIT BEAR HUNTING; URGING THE COMMISSION TO RECONSIDER THE RESUMPTION OF BEAR HUNTING IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

On October 24, 2015, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) opened four (4) out of seven (7) Bear Management Units (BMUs) in Florida to allow black bear hunting. This was the first time that bear hunting was allowed in Florida since 1972. The purpose of this bear hunt was to “stabilize Florida’s large, resilient and growing bear populations” and was expected to allow for a week long bear hunting season with the objective of killing up to 320 black bears in total. The FWC estimates that the total population of bears in the four (4) BMU’s was 3,150; however, the FWC sold 3,776 bear permits. Not surprisingly, within two (2) days of opening the hunting season, the BMU’s began the closure of hunting due to the rapid pace in which the killing of black bears was taking place. A total of 304 bears were killed in less than a week. If bear hunting is allowed to continue, this has the potential to once again place the Florida Black Bear on Florida’s Endangered and Threatened Species List.

The Town of Cutler Bay is committed to supporting efforts that protect our fragile environment and wild life. The Town supports the efforts of concerned municipalities and conservation groups throughout the State and promotes the increased use of alternative efforts to manage the black bear population in Florida.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Town Council adopt the attached Resolution urging the FWC to reconsider the resumption of black bear hunting in the State of Florida.

