



January 5, 2018

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Conservation
Commission**

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620 South Meridian Street
Tallahassee, Florida
32399-1600
Voice: 850-488-4676

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MyFWC.com

Lori Kettler
Deputy General Counsel, Regulatory Affairs
PETA Foundation
1536 16th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Kettler:

Thank you for your December 19, 2017 letter to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) regarding python removal programs in the Everglades.

The Florida Everglades is a valuable, internationally recognized ecosystem. As we have stated, in our prior responses to your previous letters on this issue, the Burmese python is an invasive species that has become established in south Florida, including the Florida Everglades and poses a serious threat to native wildlife. To help address the threat of this invasive species, FWC is committed to engaging the public in Everglades conservation through invasive species removal. Members of the public are allowed and encouraged to lethally remove pythons to help reduce the threat of this species to our native ecosystem. Avenues for involvement of members of the public include the following:

- Burmese pythons can be harvested or captured and removed from private land throughout the year with landowner permission and by legal methods for the local area.
- The FWC issued an Executive Order (EO 17-11) that allows for the lethal take of Burmese pythons and other nonnative reptiles from twenty-two Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), Public Small Game Hunting Areas (SGA), and Wildlife and Environmental Areas (WEA). Burmese pythons may be taken throughout the year from any of these lands without a hunting license or management area permit. Firearms may be used only during time that firearms are allowed in each area.
- Members of the public that chose to remove Burmese pythons can also win prizes for their efforts as part of FWC's Python Pickup Program.
- The FWC and the South Florida Water Management District contract individuals with experience removing Burmese pythons from the Florida Everglades Ecosystem to expand removal efforts in public conservation lands.

These programs have been designed with the intent that members of the public follow all applicable rules and laws regarding Burmese pythons, including humane treatment of animals.

Name of Addressee

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Date

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact Kristen Sommers, Section Leader of the Wildlife Impact Management Section at FWC. She can be reached by email at Kristen.Sommers@MyFWC.com or by phone at (850) 488-3831.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harold Vielhauer", written in a cursive style.

Harold "Bud" Vielhauer
General Counsel