

USFWS Proposes to De-List the Wood Stork in Florida

--February 22, 2023--

On February 15, 2023, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) published notice of its proposed rule removing the Southeast U.S. distinct population segment (DPS) of the wood stork from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife due to the recovery of the DPS. If the de-listing is finalized, the prohibitions and conservation measures that apply to listed species would no longer apply to wood storks in Florida. This should eliminate the requirement to consult with USFWS and FWC for this species under the State 404 program after the de-listing.

Comments will be accepted through 11:59 pm until 60 days after the publication date, **April 15**. The notice of the proposed de-listing can be found [here](#).

Currently, the wood stork is protected under Florida law by virtue of its federal listing (Fla. Admin. Code Rule 68A-27.003(1)(f)15), and the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission does not have permitting guidelines for federally-listed species. Thus, we anticipate FWC to engage rulemaking to address the change in listing status at some point after the de-listing decision is finalized.