

Bears creating a nuisance in Florida

by UPI

MIAMI -- Florida wildlife authorities say they are trying to find a solution to a growing population of bears, which are creating a nuisance.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission received 2,969 complaints about bears last year, compared to just 450 in 1998, the South Florida Sun-Sentinel reported Wednesday.

Bears once roamed the forested land now occupied by Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach.

With housing developments expanding into what's left of their habitat, state officials must come up with a way to help people learn to live with bears, the newspaper says.

Bear hunting has been banned in Florida since 1994 but hunters are now suggesting it be resumed.

"When we had bear hunting, we didn't have the issue we have today," says Mark Dombrowski, president of the Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association.

"If it's not a problem bear, I don't see the need to hunt and kill it," says Laura Bevin of the Humane Society of the United States.

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