

Florida to stop allowing tortoise kills

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Florida will no longer issue permits allowing developers to bury gopher tortoises alive.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission voted Wednesday to end a 16-year policy that allowed developers to kill tortoises as long as they paid into a fund that protected tortoise habitats in other locations, The South Florida Sun-Sentinel said Thursday.

Under the new policy, developers will be required to have tortoises relocated to approved habitat, the newspaper said.

The commission also voted to reclassify the gopher tortoise as threatened.

Animal advocates said they were dismayed that the commission agreed to give developers until July 30 to submit applications to continue killing tortoises under the old policy.

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