

Getting the collar: Researchers tracking Florida black bears

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State researchers are using radio collars to track the movement of 16 female black bears living in or near a state forest in the Florida Panhandle.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission said Thursday researchers recently placed the collars on the bears which will periodically report their location. Wildlife officials said the collars will eventually fall off the bears.

Citing the growing bear population, [state officials](#) in 2015 authorized the state's first bear hunt in 21 years. A total of 304 bears were killed last October. But the commission voted in June to hold off on any future hunts until more information could be gathered.

Researchers also plan to visit winter dens used by bears to see how many cubs there are. They also will place collars on the cubs to see how many survive their first year.

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