

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to reclaimed water; requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to conduct a study in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the water management districts on the expansion of the beneficial use of reclaimed water, stormwater, and excess surface water and to submit a report based upon such study; providing requirements for the report; requiring the departments to provide the public an opportunity for input and for public comment; requiring that the report be submitted to the Governor and the Legislature by a specified date; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Use of reclaimed water, stormwater, and excess surface water.—

(1) The Department of Environmental Protection, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the five water management districts, shall conduct a comprehensive study and submit a report on the expansion of the beneficial use of reclaimed water, stormwater, and excess surface water in this state.

(2) The report must:

27 (a) Identify factors that prohibit or complicate the
28 expansion of the beneficial use of reclaimed water, stormwater,
29 and excess surface water and recommend how those factors can be
30 mitigated or eliminated.

31 (b) Identify measures that would lead to the efficient use
32 of reclaimed water.

33 (c) Identify the environmental, engineering, public
34 health, public perception, and fiscal constraints of such an
35 expansion, including utility rate structures for reclaimed
36 water.

37 (d) Identify areas in the state where traditional water
38 supply sources are limited and the use of reclaimed water,
39 stormwater, or excess surface water for irrigation or other
40 purposes is necessary.

41 (e) Recommend permit incentives, such as extending current
42 authorizations for long-term consumptive use permits for all
43 entities that substitute reclaimed water for traditional water
44 sources that become unavailable or otherwise cost prohibitive.

45 (f) Determine the feasibility, benefit, and cost estimate
46 of the infrastructure needed to construct regional storage
47 features on public or private lands for reclaimed water,
48 stormwater, and excess surface water, including the collection
49 and delivery mechanisms for beneficial uses such as agricultural
50 irrigation, power generation, public water supply, wetland
51 restoration, groundwater recharge, and waterbody base flow
52 augmentation.

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- 53 (3) The departments shall:
- 54 (a) Hold two public meetings, at a minimum, to gather
55 input on the study design.
- 56 (b) Provide an opportunity for public comment before
57 submitting the report.
- 58 (4) The report shall be submitted to the Governor, the
59 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
60 Representatives no later than December 1, 2015.
- 61 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.