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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Land Acquisition Trust Fund; amending s. 375.041, F.S.; providing an appropriation for certain projects related to the Indian River Lagoon Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan; authorizing the Department of Environmental Protection to make grants for such projects; directing the department to submit an annual report to the Governor and Legislature; removing an obsolete provision; providing an effective date.

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

- Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of section 375.041, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
  - 375.041 Land Acquisition Trust Fund.-
- (3) Funds distributed into the Land Acquisition Trust Fund pursuant to s. 201.15 shall be applied:
- (b) Of the funds remaining after the payments required under paragraph (a), but before funds may be appropriated, pledged, or dedicated for other uses:
- 1. A minimum of the lesser of 25 percent or \$200 million shall be appropriated annually for Everglades projects that implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan as set forth in s. 373.470, including the Central Everglades Planning

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Project subject to congressional authorization; the Long-Term Plan as defined in s. 373.4592(2); and the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program as set forth in s. 373.4595. From these funds, \$32 million shall be distributed each fiscal year through the 2023-2024 fiscal year to the South Florida Water Management District for the Long-Term Plan as defined in s. 373.4592(2). After deducting the \$32 million distributed under this subparagraph, from the funds remaining, a minimum of the lesser of 76.5 percent or \$100 million shall be appropriated each fiscal year through the 2025-2026 fiscal year for the planning, design, engineering, and construction of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan as set forth in s. 373.470, including the Central Everglades Planning Project, the Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir Project, the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project, the C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir Project, the Indian River Lagoon-South Project, the Western Everglades Restoration Project, and the Picayune Strand Restoration Project. The Department of Environmental Protection and the South Florida Water Management District shall give preference to those Everglades restoration projects that reduce harmful discharges of water from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie or Caloosahatchee estuaries in a timely manner. For the purpose of performing the calculation provided in this subparagraph, the amount of debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) for bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the

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purposes set forth under this paragraph shall be added to the amount remaining after the payments required under paragraph (a). The amount of the distribution calculated shall then be reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the purposes set forth under this subparagraph.

- 2. A minimum of the lesser of 7.6 percent or \$50 million shall be appropriated annually for spring restoration, protection, and management projects. For the purpose of performing the calculation provided in this subparagraph, the amount of debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) for bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the purposes set forth under this paragraph shall be added to the amount remaining after the payments required under paragraph (a). The amount of the distribution calculated shall then be reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the purposes set forth under this subparagraph.
- 3. The sum of \$5 million shall be appropriated annually each fiscal year through the 2025-2026 fiscal year to the St. Johns River Water Management District for projects dedicated to the restoration of Lake Apopka. This distribution shall be reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the purposes set forth in this subparagraph.

4. The sum of \$64 million is appropriated and shall be transferred to the Everglades Trust Fund for the 2018-2019 fiscal year, and each fiscal year thereafter, for the EAA reservoir project pursuant to s. 373.4598. Any funds remaining in any fiscal year shall be made available only for Phase II of the C-51 reservoir project or projects identified in subparagraph 1. and must be used in accordance with laws relating to such projects. Any funds made available for such purposes in a fiscal year are in addition to the amount appropriated under subparagraph 1. This distribution shall be reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds issued after July 1, 2017, for the purposes set forth in this subparagraph.

- 5. The sum of \$50 million shall be appropriated annually to the South Florida Water Management District for the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project in accordance with s. 373.4599. This distribution must be reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds issued after July 1, 2021, for the purposes set forth in this subparagraph.
- 6. A minimum of the lesser of 7.6 percent or \$50 million shall be appropriated annually each fiscal year for projects dedicated to the conservation and management of the Indian River Lagoon. This distribution shall be reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds issued

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after July 1, 2023, for the purposes set forth in this subparagraph. The Department of Environmental Protection shall use the funds to make grants for projects that implement the updated Indian River Lagoon Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, including multiyear grants for the planning and construction of such projects. The department shall coordinate all such grants with the South Florida Water Management District and the St. Johns River Water Management District. The department, the South Florida Water Management District, and the St. Johns River Water Management District shall coordinate such grants with other water management districts as necessary. Preference shall be given to projects for ecosystem monitoring and habitat restoration, projects to connect onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to central sewer systems, and projects for the management of stormwater, freshwater, and agricultural discharges. Grants for sewer system connection projects and discharge management projects shall require a minimum 50 percent local match. Beginning January 1, 2024, and each January 1 thereafter, the department shall submit a report regarding the projects funded pursuant to this subparagraph to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives Notwithstanding subparagraph 3., for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, funds shall be appropriated as provided in the General Appropriations Act. This subparagraph expires July 1, 2023.

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Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.

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