

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/CS/SB 302, 1st Eng. — Coastal Resiliency**

by Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government; Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and Senators Garcia, Avila, and Sharief

The bill requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to initiate rulemaking by January 1, 2027, to establish a statewide permitting process for the use of nature-based methods to improve coastal resiliency. The rules must include, among other things, criteria for implementing nature-based methods; procedures for reviewing applications; general permits that avoid significant adverse impacts; incentives for the use of new strategies and technologies, such as 3D printing; and permitting processes that allow failed coastal infrastructure to be replaced with nature-based infrastructure following storm events.

The bill directs DEP to develop design guidelines and standards for the use of green infrastructure or hybrid green-gray infrastructure to address coastal resiliency. The bill also requires DEP and local governments to promote public awareness and education regarding the value of nature-based solutions for coastal resiliency.

In addition, the bill authorizes nature-based solutions to improve coastal resiliency within aquatic preserves, including living seawalls, shoreline and vegetation planting, seagrass planting, wave attenuation devices, and green or hybrid green-gray stormwater infrastructure. It also authorizes the placement of living shorelines and seawalls within the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve and permits minimum dredging and filling to restore and enhance natural systems.

The bill prohibits dredging or filling within the Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve, except for public navigation projects; activities necessary to enhance the preserve or eliminate public health hazards or stagnant waters; and the construction or maintenance of marinas, public boat ramps, piers, and docks. The bill requires that certain authorized dredging or filling be approved by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund only after public notice.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2026.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 109-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/HB 441 — Conservation Lands**

by Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee and Reps. Kendall, Tant, and others (CS/SB 546 by Environment and Natural Resources Committee and Senators Mayfield and Harrell)

The bill requires the Division of State Lands and water management districts to publish certain information at least 30 days before any meeting to review the proposed sale or exchange of conservation lands. Such information includes:

- The parcels proposed for sale or exchange;
- The portions of the lands which will be preserved in a permanent conservation easement;
- A statement explaining why the lands are no longer needed for conservation purposes or how the exchange will result in a conservation benefit to the state; and
- Any applicable recommendations.

The bill also provides that, for exchanges involving state-owned lands, each parcel must have at least one appraisal that follows board-approved appraisal criteria, techniques, and methods.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2026.

*Vote: Senate 37-0; House 109-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/CS/CS/HB 589 — Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Permits**

by State Affairs Committee; Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee; Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee; and Rep. Nix and others (CS/CS/SB 698 by Rules Committee; Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and Senator Martin)

The bill provides that if a building or plumbing permit is issued for a single-family residence that requires the use of an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system (septic system), a municipality or political subdivision of the state may not require an owner or builder to obtain a construction permit for the septic system as a condition of issuing the building or plumbing permit. The bill requires the owner or builder to provide proof that they submitted an application for the septic system when applying for the building or plumbing permit.

The bill requires a property owner or applicant for a septic system permit to assume all legal, financial, and safety liabilities arising from the construction of a septic system if the construction commences before the issuance of the septic system permit.

The bill also provides that any new rules relating to the use and installation of a septic system that are adopted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection will not apply to permit applications submitted within 90 days after the date the rules are adopted. This provision is effective July 1, 2026.

Except as otherwise provided, if approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 109-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/CS/SB 848, 1st Eng. — Stormwater Treatment**

by Rules Committee; Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and Senator Truenow

The bill amends numerous provisions related to stormwater treatment through the use of regional stormwater systems and water quality enhancement areas (WQEAs).

The bill requires environmental resource permit (ERP) applicants for regional stormwater management systems to provide documentation of adequate financial responsibility, which must be updated every five years. ERPs for regional stormwater management systems must include a graphic depicting the drainage area served by the system. The bill allows ERP applicants located within a regional stormwater management system's drainage area to purchase and use pollution reduction allocations from the system to meet stormwater treatment performance criteria. The drainage area must be based on a hydrologic unit code (HUC) 12 subbasin as set by the U.S. Geological Survey, unless the applicant can demonstrate through modeling or other evaluations that the proposed area outside the HUC 12 would provide the same degree of compensating treatment.

The bill authorizes ERP applicants to use compensating stormwater treatment as a mitigation measure when existing ambient water quality prevents compliance with water quality standards. The bill provides that the use of enhancement credits from a WQEA constitutes compensating stormwater treatment under the ERP program. The bill provides that the use of a WQEA credit transfers the legal responsibility for complying with applicable regulatory water quality treatment requirements from the purchaser and user of the credit to the generator of the credit. The bill prohibits referring to pollutant reductions as "credits," except for enhancement credits generated from a WQEA. The bill provides that water quality enhancement service areas must consist of a HUC 8 subbasin as set by the U.S. Geological Survey.

The bill requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to adopt WQEA rules no later than October 1, 2026. Pending the adoption of such rules, DEP must accept applications for WQEA provisional permits and issue such permits if the applicant provides reasonable assurance that it will meet applicable statutory criteria. Enhancement credits may be used from a WQEA established under a provisional permit. The bill authorizes DEP to modify a provisional permit to conform to the adopted rules but requires continued recognition of any enhancement credits issued under the provisional permit.

The bill provides that regional stormwater systems and WQEAs operated by non-local governmental entities may not provide stormwater treatment, achieve net improvement of water quality, or convey enhancement credits for proposed port activities that cause or contribute to stormwater pollution at certain seaports.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2026.

*Vote: Senate 36-0; House 112-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/CS/HB 1019 — Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances**

by State Affairs Committee; Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee; and Reps. Conerly, Blanco, and others (CS/CS/SB 1230 by Fiscal Policy Committee; Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and Senators Harrell, Truenow, and Berman)

The bill creates the Joe Casello Act. The bill provides that, effective July 1, 2026, aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) containing intentionally added perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) may not be used for any nonemergency instruction, training, or testing, and all entities in possession of AFFF must report inventories to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Effective July 1, 2027, the bill prohibits the sale, purchase, or distribution of AFFF and requires entities with remaining inventories to submit a disposal plan to DEP.

Effective July 1, 2029, the bill prohibits the possession and use of AFFF. The bill creates exceptions for (1) airports; (2) military applications where alternatives do not exist; (3) emergency firefighting situations where alternative firefighting foam is not available; and (4) AFFF retrofit projects submitted under an application with state or local firefighting authorities.

A person who violates these provisions is subject to civil penalties of up to \$10,000 per violation per day and additional penalties for failure to report inventories or submit disposal plans. The bill authorizes DEP to seek injunctive relief to enforce compliance.

The bill directs DEP to adopt rules governing the containment, collection, and disposal of AFFF; maintain a registry of firefighting foam alternatives that do not contain PFAS; and provide technical assistance and grants to support the transition to PFAS-free products. The bill also authorizes DEP to administer grants or cost-share programs to assist local fire departments and airports with this transition.

The bill also requires public entities that dispose of domestic wastewater biosolids and treated effluent that have a designed average daily flow of 25,000 gallons or more to conduct quarterly sampling for PFAS and submit the results to DEP. Such sampling and reporting are for informational purposes only until national water quality standards are established for PFAS.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2026.

*Vote: Senate 37-0; House 107-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/CS/HB 1103 — Local Administration of Vessel Restrictions**

by Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee; Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee; and Reps. Andrade, Basabe, and others (CS/SB 1682 by Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government and Senator Trumbull)

The bill allows counties and municipalities to authorize, by ordinance, code enforcement officers to administer laws relating to vessels at risk of becoming derelict, vessels designated as public nuisances, and vessels with long-term anchoring permits. Such ordinances may take effect only after review and approval of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Code enforcement officers may issue noncriminal infractions pursuant to the uniform boating citation system for violations of the laws relating to long-term anchoring and at risk and public nuisance vessels.

The bill revises an exemption for vessels that are established as a domicile from Monroe County's anchoring limitation area vessel relocation requirements until at least 60, rather than 100, new moorings are available for public use within one mile of the Key West Bight City Dock.

The bill authorizes local governments to adopt ordinances regulating vessel speed and operation within 300 feet of a confluence of water bodies presenting a blind corner, up to a distance of 1,000 feet if necessary to ensure safe navigation and visibility for approaching vessels. The boundary of such boating-restricted areas must be clearly marked.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2026.

*Vote: Senate 37-0; House 109-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/HB 1219 — Waterbody Designations**

by Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee and Rep. Snyder (CS/CS/SB 1288 by Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government; Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and Senators Harrell and Truenow)

The bill designates a mangrove island in Jupiter Sound as the Andrew “Red” Harris Spoil Island. It directs the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to erect suitable markers denoting the designation.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2026.

*Vote: Senate 37-0; House 114-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/CS/HB 1245 — Biosolids Management**

by State Affairs Committee; Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee; and Rep. Shoaf (CS/CS/CS/SB 1294 by Rules Committee; Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government; Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and Senator Bradley)

The bill provides that the land application of bulk Class AA biosolids may not exceed the appropriate agronomic rate. Land application of bulk Class AA biosolids fertilizer and biosolids compost products at or below the agronomic rate must be managed so that beneficial reuse is the primary objective. The bill prohibits bulk land application of biosolids to the extent that such application constitutes disposal. Disposal is defined as the bulk land application of biosolids when the nutrients cannot reasonably be expected to be taken up by a crop or vegetative cover during the relevant growing season and the application results in the discard of biosolids on the land application site.

The bill requires land application site owners or operators to maintain records related to agricultural land application of certain biosolids products for five years. Written notification of the recordkeeping requirements must be provided to the owner or operator at the time bulk Class AA biosolids are distributed for land application.

The bill directs the Department of Environmental Protection to initiate rulemaking by November 1, 2026, for the bulk distribution and marketing of Class AA biosolids. The bill also directs the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences to publish recommended agronomic rates for bulk Class AA biosolids on a biennial basis beginning November 1, 2027.

The bill prohibits a Class AA biosolids fertilizer product from being marketed or distributed for agricultural land application unless it meets all applicable statutory requirements.

The bill provides that Class AA biosolids compost products that do not claim any plant nutrients or beneficial plant growth properties may not be marketed or distributed for agricultural land application unless the product is certified under the U.S. Composting Council Seal of Testing Assurance Program. The bill prohibits Class AA biosolids from being used for agricultural land application unless, before land application, the product meets all applicable statutory requirements as a biosolids fertilizer product or meets the specifications for biosolids compost products.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on November 1, 2026.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 111-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/CS/HB 1285 — Biosolids Management**

by State Affairs Committee; Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee; and Rep. Boyles (CS/CS/SB 1474 by Rules Committee; Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and Senator Gaetz)

The bill prohibits the Department of Environmental Protection from issuing or renewing a permit for a land application site which authorizes the disposal or land application of septage as Class B biosolids if there is a permitted wastewater treatment facility that accepts septage for higher levels of treatment which is:

- Less than 30 miles from a proposed Class B biosolids land application site;
- Owned or operated by the federal government or a federal agency, a state government body or agency, or a political subdivision of this state; and
- Not defunct, used for other purposes, or out of capacity.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2027.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 110-0*

## Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

### **CS/CS/CS/HB 1417 — Department of Environmental Protection**

by State Affairs Committee; Agriculture & Natural Resources Budget Subcommittee; Natural Resources & Disasters Subcommittee; and Reps. LaMarca and Boyles (CS/CS/CS/SB 1510 by Fiscal Policy Committee; Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government; Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and Senator Massullo)

The bill repeals provisions relating to the Environmental Regulation Commission and removes all references to it in statute.

The bill requires an applicant for certain permits related to stormwater management to incorporate site-specific and appropriate additional protections in the development and implementation of an erosion and sediment control plan for the construction of a solar facility. The operator of a solar facility or a proposed solar facility must implement all construction and operational permit requirements. Within the Northwest Florida Water Management District, the bill requires a new operational phase stormwater management system that serves a solar facility to be designed based on the 100-year, 24-hour design storm for the projected site.

The bill specifies that coastal resiliency projects qualify for public-private partnerships. It authorizes the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to encourage the private sector to invest in coastal resiliency projects. The bill directs DEP to publish biennial progress reports for coastal resiliency projects funded through public-private partnerships and to maintain an online dashboard for real-time updates on project execution.

The bill removes a requirement that owners of residential properties within the Indian River Lagoon Protection program over ten acres must connect to sewer or upgrade their onsite wastewater treatment and disposal system (septic system). The bill requires the permitting agency to notify property owners that their septic systems must be upgraded for certain applications to repair, modify, or replace a septic system.

The bill extends the due date for annual operating permits for major sources of air pollution. The bill also removes language providing that the costs to issue and administer permits shall be considered direct and indirect costs of the major stationary source air-operation permit program.

The bill ratifies DEP's revisions to the minimum flows and levels for the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee Rivers and Priority Springs within rule 62-42.300, Florida Administrative Code.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2026.

*Vote: Senate 34-3; House 110-0*