

By the Committee on Water & Resource Management and
Representative Kelly

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to Lake Panasoffkee; creating
3 the Lake Panasoffkee Restoration Council within
4 the Southwest Florida Water Management
5 District; providing for voting members;
6 providing for advisory group members; providing
7 for organization and meetings; providing powers
8 and duties; requiring annual reports; providing
9 for staff assistance; providing for members'
10 per diem and travel expenses; providing for a
11 Lake Panasoffkee restoration program; providing
12 for tasks of the district, council, Department
13 of Environmental Protection, Game and Fresh
14 Water Fish Commission, and pertinent local
15 governments; providing for award of restoration
16 contracts contingent on certain funding;
17 providing an effective date.

18
19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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21 Section 1. Lake Panasoffkee Restoration
22 Council.--There is created within the Southwest Florida Water
23 Management District the Lake Panasoffkee Restoration Council.
24 (1)(a) The council shall consist of seven voting
25 members: two representatives of lakefront property owners, one
26 environmental engineer, one person with training in biology or
27 another scientific discipline, one person with training as an
28 attorney, one person with training as an engineer, and one
29 representative of the sport-fishing industry, all to be
30 appointed by the Sumter County Commission. No person serving
31 on the council may be appointed to any other statewide

1 council, board, or commission. The council members shall
2 serve as advisors to the governing board of the Southwest
3 Florida Water Management District. The council is subject to
4 the provisions of chapters 119 and 120, Florida Statutes.

5 (b) The council shall include nonvoting advisory group
6 members which shall consist of: one representative each from
7 the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Florida
8 Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Department
9 of Transportation, the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish
10 Commission, the Withlacoochee River Basin Board, and the
11 United States Army Corps of Engineers, to be appointed by
12 their respective agencies, all of whom must have training in
13 biology or another scientific discipline.

14 (2) Immediately after their appointment, the voting
15 members of the council shall meet and organize by electing a
16 chair, a vice chair, and a secretary, whose terms shall be for
17 2 years each. Council officers shall not serve consecutive
18 terms.

19 (3) The council shall meet at the call of its chair,
20 at the request of six of its members, or at the request of the
21 chair of the governing board of the Southwest Florida Water
22 Management District.

23 (4) The council shall have the powers and duties to:

24 (a) Review audits and all data specifically related to
25 lake restoration techniques and sport fish population recovery
26 strategies, including data and strategies for shoreline
27 restoration, sediment control and removal, exotic species
28 management, floating tussock management or removal,
29 navigation, water quality, and fisheries habitat improvement,
30 particularly as they may apply to Lake Panasoffkee.

31 (b) Evaluate whether additional studies are needed.

1 (c) Explore all possible sources of funding to conduct
2 the restoration activities.

3 (d) Advise the governing board of the Southwest
4 Florida Water Management District regarding the best approach
5 to restoring Lake Panasoffkee, and make recommendations as to
6 which techniques should be part of the restoration program.
7 The governing board of the Southwest Florida Water Management
8 District shall respond in writing to the council if any
9 recommendations from the council require reevaluation. The
10 response shall detail reasons for reevaluation.

11 (e) Report to the Legislature before November 25 of
12 each year on the progress of the Lake Panasoffkee restoration
13 program and any recommendations for the next fiscal year.

14 (5) The Southwest Florida Water Management District
15 shall provide staff to assist the council in carrying out the
16 provisions of this act.

17 (6) Members of the council shall receive no
18 compensation for their services, but are entitled to be
19 reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses incurred during
20 execution of their official duties, as provided in s. 112.061,
21 Florida Statutes. State and federal agencies shall be
22 responsible for the per diem and travel expenses of their
23 respective appointees to the council and the Southwest Florida
24 Water Management District shall be responsible for per diem
25 and travel expenses of other appointees to the council.

26 Section 2. Lake Panasoffkee restoration program.--

27 (1) The Southwest Florida Water Management District,
28 in conjunction with the Department of Environmental
29 Protection, the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission,
30 the Sumter County Commission, and the Lake Panasoffkee
31 Restoration Council, shall review existing restoration

1 proposals to determine which ones are the most environmentally
2 sound and economically feasible methods of improving the
3 fisheries and natural systems of Lake Panasoffkee.

4 (2) The Southwest Florida Water Management District,
5 in consultation and by agreement with the Department of
6 Environmental Protection, the Game and Fresh Water Fish
7 Commission, and pertinent local governments, shall develop
8 tasks to be undertaken by those entities necessary to initiate
9 the Lake Panasoffkee restoration program recommended by the
10 Lake Panasoffkee Restoration Council. These tasks shall
11 include:

12 (a) Evaluating different methodologies for removing
13 the extensive tussocks and build up of organic matter along
14 the shoreline, and the aquatic vegetation in the lake.

15 (b) Conducting any additional studies as recommended
16 by the Lake Panasoffkee Restoration Council.

17 (3) Contingent on the Legislature appropriating funds
18 for the Lake Panasoffkee restoration program and in
19 conjunction with financial participation by federal, other
20 state, and local governments, the appropriate agencies shall,
21 through competitive bid, award contracts to implement the
22 activities of the Lake Panasoffkee restoration program.

23 Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
24 law.