

By the Committees on Environmental Protection, Water & Resource Management and Representatives Saunders, Sembler and Bronson

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to water resources; creating s.
3 373.45923, F.S.; providing legislative findings
4 and intent; authorizing the South Florida Water
5 Management District to participate as local
6 sponsor for the Restudy of the Central and
7 Southern Florida Project; providing duties of
8 the Joint Legislative Committee on Everglades
9 Oversight; providing for public hearings;
10 providing reporting requirements; providing for
11 project cooperation agreements; providing for
12 legislative authorization; providing an
13 effective date.

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

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17 Section 1. Section 373.45923, Florida Statutes, is
18 created to read:

19 373.45923 Comprehensive Review Study of the Central
20 and Southern Florida Project.--

21 (1) The Legislature finds that the Comprehensive
22 Review Study, or Restudy, for the Central and Southern Florida
23 Project, for which federal participation was authorized and
24 directed by the Federal Water Resources Development Acts of
25 1992 and 1996 together with related Congressional resolutions,
26 is of critical importance for sustaining the ecology, economy,
27 and social well-being of south Florida. The South Florida
28 Water Management District's participation as local sponsor for
29 the Restudy is therefore authorized. It is the intent of this
30 Legislature to facilitate and support the South Florida Water
31 Management District in its role as local sponsor for the

1 Restudy and to thereby ensure that all projects or operational
2 changes resulting from the Restudy are implemented in a manner
3 consistent with this chapter, the Everglades Program
4 undertaken pursuant to s. 373.4592, and the policy provided by
5 s. 373.016, including promotion of the availability of
6 sufficient water for all existing and future
7 reasonable-beneficial uses and natural systems.

8 (2) To accomplish the legislative intent of subsection
9 (1), the Joint Legislative Committee on Everglades Oversight
10 created pursuant to s. 11.80 shall be responsible for
11 monitoring all funding and expenditures for projects or
12 operational changes resulting from the Restudy. The South
13 Florida Water Management District shall assist the joint
14 committee by providing any comprehensive plan, preliminary
15 financing plan, feasibility plan, project cooperation
16 agreement, or proposed plan of action resulting from the
17 Restudy, or any other information determined by the joint
18 committee to be necessary for accomplishing the purposes of
19 this section.

20 (a) Comprehensive plan for the Restudy.--Immediately
21 following the 1998 Legislative Session, the South Florida
22 Water Management District shall provide to the joint committee
23 all alternatives evaluated by the Restudy to that date, which
24 shall be reviewed by the joint committee as an interim
25 project. The joint committee shall review the proposed
26 comprehensive plan during the 45-day public comment period and
27 shall provide to the United States Army Corps of Engineers and
28 the South Florida Water Management District written comments
29 as it deems appropriate, that shall include, but not be
30 limited to, the extent to which the proposed comprehensive
31 plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of this

1 chapter and considers all competing policy needs within s.
2 373.016, as well as all competing water uses. The joint
3 committee shall conduct at least two public hearings prior to
4 finalizing written comments prepared pursuant to this
5 paragraph. Upon completion of the comprehensive plan for the
6 Restudy, the plan shall be submitted to the Governor, the
7 President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
8 Representatives, and the joint committee.

9 (b) Project cooperation agreements.--Unless the
10 project modification is specifically authorized by the
11 Legislature, which authorization may be by a general
12 appropriation, during the next Regular Legislative Session
13 following submission of information on project scope,
14 schedules, and costs, the South Florida Water Management
15 District shall not execute a project cooperation agreement for
16 any proposed project or operational change resulting from the
17 Restudy, including any action seeking further Congressional
18 authorizations or approvals to modify project works or
19 operations or to acquire land. If the Legislature does not
20 approve, modify, or reject project modifications as described
21 in this paragraph, the South Florida Water Management District
22 may proceed with execution of the project cooperation
23 agreement, provided that the district's financial
24 responsibility under the project cooperation agreement can be
25 met without the need for any future appropriations by the
26 Legislature.

27 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
28 law.

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