

By Representative Albright

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Florida Heritage River
3 Commission; creating s. 373.027, F.S.; creating
4 the Florida Heritage River Commission;
5 providing for appointment of members and powers
6 and duties; providing an effective date.

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

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10 Section 1. Section 373.027, Florida Statutes, is
11 created to read:

12 373.027 Florida Heritage River Commission created;
13 powers and duties.--The Florida Heritage River Commission is
14 hereby created to coordinate the efforts of state, regional,
15 and local government with the American Heritage Rivers Program
16 and the applicable federal agencies responsible for assisting
17 in the implementation of the program. The commission has
18 three objectives: natural resource and environmental
19 protection; economic preservation, development, and
20 revitalization; and historic and cultural preservation.

21 (1) The Department of Environmental Protection shall
22 serve as the overall coordinator for state action. The water
23 management district having jurisdiction shall also assist in
24 this effort and shall make one existing position, including
25 support staff for that position, available to assist in the
26 coordination of state actions with respect to the American
27 Heritage Rivers Program.

28 (2) The commission shall be composed of the Secretary
29 of the Department of Environmental Protection, the executive
30 director of the applicable water management district having
31 jurisdiction, the Secretary of State, a representative of

1 Enterprise Florida, Inc., and a local government
2 representative of each county bordering the St. Johns River.
3 The county representative shall be designated by a majority of
4 the board of county commissioners. In addition, the Governor,
5 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President
6 of the Senate shall each appoint a representative to serve on
7 the commission.

8 (3) The commission shall ensure local and state input
9 and direction to the American Heritage Rivers Program. The
10 commission shall act with due regard for the protection of
11 private property rights provided by the United States and
12 Florida Constitutions and the Florida Statutes. No new
13 regulatory authority is created as a result of the
14 establishment of the commission nor does the commission have
15 standing or authority to sue or intervene in state or federal
16 court. The commission shall not interfere with matters of
17 state, regional, or local government jurisdiction.

18 (4) The commission shall monitor the progress of the
19 American Heritage Rivers Program and its implementation in
20 regard to the St. Johns River.

21 (5) The commission shall identify existing programs of
22 state, regional, and local governments, as well as those of
23 federal agencies, that may provide assistance to communities
24 along the river, including river conservation, community
25 health and economic revitalization, preservation and
26 development. It shall also, to the extent provided by law,
27 provide sources of financial and technical support for
28 communities adjacent to the St. Johns River. It shall promote
29 local community-based efforts to improve communities along the
30 river.

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1 (6) The commission shall solicit and receive input and
2 information from military, business, industry, agriculture,
3 manufacturing, marinas, ports, shipbuilding, power plants and
4 utilities, both public and private, who have an interest in
5 the St. Johns River. The commission shall communicate the
6 information it has collected, including issues and concerns,
7 to the river navigator and various state, local, and federal
8 government agencies and officials. The commission shall also
9 monitor and report the navigator's response and action to the
10 information provided. The commission shall report on the
11 navigator's activities pursuant to his or her official duties.

12 (7) An objective of the commission shall be to improve
13 commercial and sports fishing, boating, and other
14 recreational-based activities along the river.

15 (8) The commission shall identify local, state, and
16 federally-owned property and installations along the river,
17 and ways and means of using the property to improve river
18 conservation and public enjoyment and access to resources in
19 and adjacent to the river.

20 (9) The commission shall coordinate with the river
21 navigator, the designated federal coordinator, in ensuring the
22 purposes of this section and the American Heritage Rivers
23 Program are carried out to the benefit of the citizens of the
24 state and communities along the St. Johns River.

25 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
26 law.

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HOUSE SUMMARY

Creates the Florida Heritage River Commission to coordinate the efforts of state, regional, and local government with the American Heritage Rivers Program and the applicable federal agencies responsible for assisting in the implementation of that program. See bill for details.