



1           WHEREAS, the Southwest Florida Water Management  
2 District and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission,  
3 along with other state, regional, and local entities, have  
4 developed proposals to restore portions of the Citrus/Hernando  
5 waterways, NOW, THEREFORE,

6  
7 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

8  
9           Section 1. The Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration  
10 Council.--There is created within the Southwest Florida Water  
11 Management District, with assistance from the Fish and  
12 Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Citrus/Hernando  
13 Waterways Restoration Council.

14           (1)(a) The council shall consist of eight voting  
15 members, as follows: one representative of waterfront property  
16 owners from each county, one representative of the sport  
17 fishing industry from each county, one environmental engineer,  
18 one person with training in biology or another scientific  
19 discipline, one person with training as an attorney, and one  
20 person with training as an engineer, each to be appointed by  
21 the Citrus County Commission or the Hernando County  
22 Commission. No person serving on the council may be appointed  
23 to a council, board, or commission of any council advisory  
24 group agency. The council members shall serve as advisors to  
25 the governing board of the Southwest Florida Water Management  
26 District. The council is subject to the provisions of chapters  
27 119 and 120, Florida Statutes.

28           (b) There shall be an advisory group to the council  
29 which shall consist of one representative each from the  
30 Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Department of  
31 Environmental Protection, the Department of Transportation,

1 the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the  
2 Withlacoochee River Basin Board, and the United States Army  
3 Corps of Engineers, each of whom shall be appointed by his or  
4 her respective agency, and each of whom, with the exception of  
5 the representative from the Withlacoochee River Basin Board,  
6 shall have had training in biology or another scientific  
7 discipline.

8 (2) Immediately after appointment, the council shall  
9 meet and organize by electing a chair, a vice chair, and a  
10 secretary, whose terms shall be for 2 years each. Council  
11 officers shall not serve consecutive terms. Each council  
12 member shall be a voting member.

13 (3) The council shall meet at the call of its chair,  
14 at the request of six of its members, or at the request of the  
15 chair of the governing board of the Southwest Florida Water  
16 Management District.

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

18 (a) Review audits and all data specifically related to  
19 lake restoration techniques and sport fish population recovery  
20 strategies, including data and strategies for shoreline  
21 restoration, sediment control and removal, exotic species  
22 management, floating tussock management or removal,  
23 navigation, water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat  
24 improvement, particularly as they may apply to the  
25 Citrus/Hernando waterways.

26 (b) Evaluate whether additional studies are needed.

27 (c) Explore all possible sources of funding to conduct  
28 the restoration activities.

29 (d) Report to the Speaker of the House of  
30 Representatives and the President of the Senate before  
31 November 25 of each year on the progress of the

1 Citrus/Hernando Waterways restoration program and any  
2 recommendations for the next fiscal year.

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

6 (6) Members of the council shall receive no  
7 compensation for their services, but are entitled to be  
8 reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses incurred during  
9 execution of their official duties, as provided in s. 112.061,  
10 Florida Statutes. State and federal agencies shall be  
11 responsible for the per diem and travel expenses of their  
12 respective appointees to the council, and the Southwest  
13 Florida Water Management District shall be responsible for per  
14 diem and travel expenses of other appointees to the council.

15 Section 2. The Citrus/Hernando Waterways restoration  
16 program.--

17 (1) The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and  
18 the Southwest Florida Water Management District, in  
19 conjunction with the Department of Environmental Protection,  
20 pertinent local governments, and the Citrus/Hernando Waterways  
21 Restoration Council, shall review existing restoration  
22 proposals to determine which ones are the most environmentally  
23 sound and economically feasible methods of improving the fish  
24 and wildlife habitat and natural systems of the  
25 Citrus/Hernando waterways.

26 (2) To initiate the Citrus/Hernando Waterways  
27 restoration program recommended by the Citrus/Hernando  
28 Waterways Restoration Council, the Fish and Wildlife  
29 Conservation Commission, with assistance from the Southwest  
30 Florida Water Management District and in consultation and by  
31 agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection and

1 pertinent local governments, shall develop tasks to be  
2 undertaken by those entities for the enhancement of fish and  
3 wildlife habitat. These agencies shall:

4 (a) Evaluate different methodologies for removing the  
5 extensive tussocks and buildup of organic matter along the  
6 shoreline and of the aquatic vegetation in the lake.

7 (b) Conduct any additional studies as recommended by  
8 the Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council.

9 (3) Contingent on the Legislature's appropriating  
10 funds for the Citrus/Hernando Waterways restoration program  
11 and in conjunction with financial participation by federal,  
12 other state, and local governments, the appropriate agencies  
13 shall, through competitive bid, award contracts to implement  
14 the activities of the Citrus/Hernando Waterways restoration  
15 program.

16 Section 3. The sum of \$45,000 is appropriated from the  
17 General Revenue Fund to the Southwest Florida Water Management  
18 District for the purpose of paying administrative, per diem,  
19 and travel expenses of the Citrus/Hernando Waterways  
20 Restoration Council.

21 Section 4. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation  
22 Commission is authorized to conduct a demonstration  
23 restoration project on the Tsala-Apopka Chain of Lakes for the  
24 purpose of removing, with proper permits, overlying  
25 undesirable vegetation and associated organic material down to  
26 mineralized soils, thus allowing for the establishment of a  
27 more desirable aquatic plant community on hard, sandy substrate  
28 and creating better habitat for fish and wildlife. The sum of  
29 \$100,000 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the  
30 Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for the purpose of  
31 conducting the demonstration restoration project.

