



CHAMBER ACTION

The Committee on Natural Resources recommends the following:

**Committee Substitute**

Remove the entire bill and insert:

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to water supplies; creating s. 373.227, F.S.; providing for the development of a water conservation guidance manual by the Department of Environmental Protection; providing for purpose and contents of the manual and requirements with respect thereto; requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to adopt the manual by rule by a specified date; providing program requirements for public water supply utilities that choose to design a comprehensive water conservation program based on the water conservation guidance manual; amending s. 373.0361, F.S.; providing additional components of regional water supply plans; providing that a district water management plan may not be used as criteria for the review of permits for consumptive uses of water unless the plan or applicable portion thereof has been adopted by rule; providing construction; amending s. 373.0831, F.S.; revising the criteria by which



29 | water supply development projects may receive priority  
30 | consideration for funding assistance; providing for  
31 | permitting and funding of a proposed alternative water  
32 | supply project identified in the relevant approved  
33 | regional water supply plan; amending s. 373.1961, F.S.;  
34 | encouraging water management district governing boards to  
35 | establish revolving loan trust funds for specified  
36 | purposes; amending s. 373.250, F.S.; authorizing water  
37 | management districts to require the use of reclaimed water  
38 | in lieu of surface or groundwater when the use of  
39 | uncommitted reclaimed water is environmentally,  
40 | economically, and technically feasible; providing  
41 | construction with respect to such authority; amending  
42 | 373.536, F.S.; expanding requirements of the 5-year water  
43 | resource development work program for water management  
44 | districts; amending s. 378.212, F.S.; authorizing the  
45 | granting of a variance from pt. IV of ch. 378, F.S., the  
46 | Resource Extraction Reclamation Act, under specified  
47 | circumstances; providing an additional circumstance for  
48 | which a variance may be granted or renewed; providing that  
49 | a variance may be granted from the requirements of parts  
50 | III or IV of chapter 378, or part IV of chapter 373, when  
51 | a project provides an improvement in water availability in  
52 | a basin and does not cause adverse impacts to water  
53 | resources in the basin; amending s. 378.404, F.S.;  
54 | authorizing the department to grant variances from the  
55 | provisions of part IV of chapter 378 to accommodate  
56 | reclamation that provides for water supply development or



57 | water resource development under specified circumstances;  
 58 | amending s. 403.064, F.S.; providing that the conclusions  
 59 | of a reuse feasibility study required of an applicant for  
 60 | a permit to construct or operate a specified domestic  
 61 | wastewater treatment facility shall be given significant  
 62 | consideration in an analysis of the feasibility of  
 63 | providing reclaimed water for reuse under part II of  
 64 | chapter 373; amending s. 403.1835, F.S.; authorizing the  
 65 | Department of Environmental Protection to make specified  
 66 | deposits for the purpose of enabling below-market interest  
 67 | rate loans for treatment of polluted water; amending s.  
 68 | 403.1837, F.S.; eliminating certain restrictions on the  
 69 | issuance of bonds by the Florida Water Pollution Control  
 70 | Financing Corporation; deleting obsolete provisions;  
 71 | providing for a study of the feasibility of discharging  
 72 | reclaimed wastewater into canals and the aquifer system in  
 73 | a specified area as an environmentally acceptable means of  
 74 | accomplishing described objectives; requiring reports;  
 75 | providing an effective date.

76 |  
 77 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

78 |  
 79 | Section 1. Section 373.227, Florida Statutes, is created  
 80 | to read:

81 | 373.227 Water Conservation Guidance Manual.--

82 | (1) The Legislature recognizes that the proper  
 83 | conservation of water is an important means of achieving the  
 84 | economic and efficient utilization of water necessary to



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85 constitute a reasonable-beneficial use. The Legislature  
86 encourages the development and use of water conservation  
87 measures that are effective, flexible, and affordable. In the  
88 context of the use of water for public supply provided by a  
89 water utility, the Legislature intends for a variety of  
90 conservation measures to be available and used to encourage  
91 efficient water use. The Legislature finds that the social,  
92 economic, and cultural conditions of this state relating to the  
93 use of public water supply vary by geographic region, and thus  
94 water utilities must have the flexibility to tailor water  
95 conservation measures to best suit individual circumstances.  
96 For purposes of this section, the term "public water supply  
97 utility" shall include both publicly owned and privately owned  
98 public water supply utilities.

99 (2) In furtherance of the findings in subsection (1), the  
100 Department of Environmental Protection shall develop a water  
101 conservation guidance manual containing a menu of water  
102 conservation measures from which public water supply utilities  
103 may select in the development of a comprehensive, goal-based  
104 water conservation program tailored for their individual service  
105 areas that is effective and does not impose undue costs or  
106 burdens on customers. The water conservation guidance manual  
107 shall promote statewide consistency in the approach to utility  
108 conservation while maintaining appropriate flexibility. The  
109 manual may contain measures such as water conservation audits;  
110 informative billing practices to educate customers as to their  
111 patterns of water use, the costs of water, and ways to conserve  
112 water; ordinances requiring low-flow plumbing fixtures or



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113 efficient landscape irrigation; rebate programs for the  
114 installation of water-saving plumbing or appliances; general  
115 water conservation educational programs, including bill inserts;  
116 measures to promote the more effective and efficient reuse of  
117 reclaimed water; water conservation or drought rate structures  
118 that encourage customers to conserve water through appropriate  
119 price signals; and programs to apply utility profits generated  
120 through conservation and drought rates to additional water  
121 conservation programs or water supply development. The manual  
122 shall specifically set forth that it is the responsibility of  
123 the appropriate utility to determine the specific rates it will  
124 charge its customers and that the role of the department or  
125 water management district is confined to the review of those  
126 rate structures to determine whether they encourage water  
127 conservation. The water conservation guidance manual shall also  
128 set forth that a utility need not adopt a water conservation or  
129 drought rate structure if the utility employs other measures  
130 that are equally or more effective. The manual shall provide  
131 for different levels of complexity and expected levels of effort  
132 in conservation programs depending on the size of the utility.  
133 However, all utilities shall be expected to have at least basic  
134 programs in each of the following areas:

135 (a) Individual metering, to the extent feasible as  
136 determined by the utility.

137 (b) Water accounting and loss control.

138 (c) Cost-of-service accounting and metered rates for  
139 water.

140 (d) Information programs on water conservation.



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141        (e) Landscaping water efficiency programs.

142        (3) The water conservation guidance manual shall be  
143 developed no later than June 15, 2004. The department shall  
144 develop the manual in consultation with interested parties,  
145 which, at a minimum shall include representatives from the water  
146 management districts, three utilities that are members of the  
147 American Water Works Association, two utilities that are members  
148 of the Florida Water Environment Association, a representative  
149 of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, representatives of counties  
150 and municipalities, and representatives of environmental  
151 organizations. The department shall, by December 15, 2004, adopt  
152 the water conservation guidance manual by rule. Once the  
153 department adopts the water conservation guidance manual by  
154 rule, the water management districts may apply the manual in the  
155 review of water conservation requirements for obtaining a permit  
156 pursuant to part II of chapter 373 without the need to adopt the  
157 manual pursuant to s. 120.54. Once the water conservation  
158 guidance manual is adopted by rule, a public water supply  
159 utility may choose to comply with the standard water  
160 conservation requirements adopted by the appropriate water  
161 management district for obtaining a consumptive use permit from  
162 that district or may choose to develop a comprehensive, goal-  
163 based water conservation program from the options contained in  
164 the manual. If the utility chooses to design a comprehensive  
165 water conservation program based on the water conservation  
166 guidance manual, the proposed program must include the  
167 following:



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168        (a) An inventory of water system characteristics and  
169 conservation opportunities.

170        (b) Demand forecasts.

171        (c) An explanation of the proposed program.

172        (d) Specific numeric water conservation targets for the  
173 utility as a whole and for appropriate customer classes, with a  
174 justification of the appropriateness of the numeric targets,  
175 based on that utility's particular customer characteristics and  
176 conservation opportunities.

177        (e) A demonstration that the program will promote  
178 effective water conservation at least as well as standard water  
179 use conservation requirements adopted by the appropriate water  
180 management district.

181        (f) A timetable for the utility and the water management  
182 district to evaluate progress in meeting the water conservation  
183 targets and making needed program modifications.

184        (4) If the utility provides reasonable assurance that the  
185 proposed conservation program is consistent with the water  
186 conservation guidance manual and contains the elements above,  
187 then the water management district shall approve the proposed  
188 program and the program shall satisfy water conservation  
189 requirements imposed as a condition to obtaining a permit under  
190 part II of chapter 373. The department, in consultation with the  
191 aforementioned entities, may periodically amend or revise the  
192 water conservation guidance manual rule as appropriate to  
193 reflect changed circumstances or new technologies or approaches.  
194 When the guidance manual is modified, the water management  
195 districts shall approve the changes within 6 months after the



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196 modifications. The findings and provisions in this section shall  
197 not be construed to apply to users of water other than public  
198 water supply utilities.

199 Section 2. Paragraphs (h) and (i) are added to subsection  
200 (2) of section 373.0631, Florida Statutes, and subsection (6) of  
201 said section is amended, to read:

202 373.0361 Regional water supply planning.--

203 (2) Each regional water supply plan shall be based on at  
204 least a 20-year planning period and shall include, but not be  
205 limited to:

206 (h) Reservations of water adopted by rule pursuant to s.  
207 373.223(4).

208 (i) An analysis, developed in cooperation with the  
209 department, of areas or instances in which the variance  
210 provisions of s. 378.212(1)(g) may be used to create water  
211 supply development or water resource development projects.

212 (6) Nothing contained in the water supply development  
213 component of the district water management plan shall be  
214 construed to require local governments, government-owned or  
215 privately owned water utilities, self-suppliers, or other water  
216 suppliers to select a water supply development option identified  
217 in the component merely because it is identified in the plan,  
218 nor may the plan be used in the review of permits under part II  
219 unless the plan, or applicable portion thereof, has been adopted  
220 by rule. However, this subsection does not prohibit a water  
221 management district from employing the data or other information  
222 used to establish the plan in reviewing permits under part II,





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223 | nor shall it ~~not~~ be construed to limit the authority of the  
224 | department or governing board under part II.

225 | Section 3. Subsection (3) of section 373.0831, Florida  
226 | Statutes, is amended, and paragraph (c) is added to subsection  
227 | (4) of said section, to read:

228 | 373.0831 Water resource development; water supply  
229 | development.--

230 | (3) The water management districts shall fund and  
231 | implement water resource development as defined in s. 373.019.  
232 | The water management districts are encouraged to implement water  
233 | resource development as expeditiously as possible in areas  
234 | subject to regional water supply plans. Each governing board  
235 | shall include in its annual budget the amount needed for the  
236 | fiscal year to implement water resource development projects, as  
237 | prioritized in its regional water supply plans.

238 | (4)

239 | (c) If a proposed alternative water supply development  
240 | project is identified in the relevant approved regional water  
241 | supply plan, the project shall receive:

242 | 1. A 20-year consumptive use permit, if it otherwise meets  
243 | the permit requirements under ss. 373.223 and 373.236 and rules  
244 | adopted thereunder.

245 | 2. Priority funding pursuant to s. 373.1961(2) with the  
246 | implementation of the water resource development component of  
247 | the proposed project.

248 | Section 4. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section  
249 | 373.1961, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

250 | 373.1961 Water production.--



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251 (2) The Legislature finds that, due to a combination of  
252 factors, vastly increased demands have been placed on natural  
253 supplies of fresh water, and that, absent increased development  
254 of alternative water supplies, such demands may increase in the  
255 future. The Legislature also finds that potential exists in the  
256 state for the production of significant quantities of  
257 alternative water supplies, including reclaimed water, and that  
258 water production includes the development of alternative water  
259 supplies, including reclaimed water, for appropriate uses. It is  
260 the intent of the Legislature that utilities develop reclaimed  
261 water systems, where reclaimed water is the most appropriate  
262 alternative water supply option, to deliver reclaimed water to  
263 as many users as possible through the most cost-effective means,  
264 and to construct reclaimed water system infrastructure to their  
265 owned or operated properties and facilities where they have  
266 reclamation capability. It is also the intent of the Legislature  
267 that the water management districts which levy ad valorem taxes  
268 for water management purposes should share a percentage of those  
269 tax revenues with water providers and users, including local  
270 governments, water, wastewater, and reuse utilities, municipal,  
271 industrial, and agricultural water users, and other public and  
272 private water users, to be used to supplement other funding  
273 sources in the development of alternative water supplies. The  
274 Legislature finds that public moneys or services provided to  
275 private entities for such uses constitute public purposes which  
276 are in the public interest. In order to further the development  
277 and use of alternative water supply systems, including reclaimed  
278 water systems, the Legislature provides the following:



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279 (a) The governing boards of the water management districts  
280 where water resource caution areas have been designated shall  
281 include in their annual budgets an amount for the development of  
282 alternative water supply systems, including reclaimed water  
283 systems, pursuant to the requirements of this subsection.  
284 Beginning in 1996, such amounts shall be made available to water  
285 providers and users no later than December 31 of each year,  
286 through grants, matching grants, revolving loans, or the use of  
287 district lands or facilities pursuant to the requirements of  
288 this subsection and guidelines established by the districts.  
289 Without diminishing amounts available through other means  
290 described in this paragraph, the governing boards are encouraged  
291 to consider establishing revolving loan funds to expand the  
292 total funds available to accomplish the objectives of this  
293 section. A revolving loan fund created pursuant to this  
294 paragraph shall be a nonlapsing fund from which the water  
295 management district may make loans with interest rates below  
296 prevailing market rates to public or private entities for the  
297 purposes described in this section. The governing board may  
298 adopt resolutions to establish revolving loan funds which shall  
299 specify the details of the administration of the fund, the  
300 procedures for applying for loans from the fund, the criteria  
301 for awarding loans from the fund, the initial capitalization of  
302 the fund, and the goals for future capitalization of the fund in  
303 subsequent budget years. Revolving loan funds created pursuant  
304 to this paragraph shall be used to expand the total sums and  
305 sources of cooperative funding available for the development of  
306 alternative water supplies. The Legislature does not intend for



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307 the creation of revolving loan trust funds to supplant or  
308 otherwise reduce existing sources or amounts of funds currently  
309 available through other means.

310 Section 5. Paragraph (c) is added to subsection (2) of  
311 section 373.250, Florida Statutes, to read:

312 373.250 Reuse of reclaimed water.--

313 (2)(a) For purposes of this section, "uncommitted" means  
314 the average amount of reclaimed water produced during the three  
315 lowest-flow months minus the amount of reclaimed water that a  
316 reclaimed water provider is contractually obligated to provide  
317 to a customer or user.

318 (b) Reclaimed water may be presumed available to a  
319 consumptive use permit applicant when a utility exists which  
320 provides reclaimed water, which has uncommitted reclaimed water  
321 capacity, and which has distribution facilities, which are  
322 initially provided by the utility at its cost, to the site of  
323 the affected applicant's proposed use.

324 (c) A water management district may require the use of  
325 reclaimed water in lieu of surface or groundwater when the use  
326 of uncommitted reclaimed water is environmentally, economically,  
327 and technically feasible. However, nothing in this paragraph  
328 shall be construed to give a water management district the  
329 authority to require a provider of reclaimed water to redirect  
330 reclaimed water from one user to another, or to provide  
331 uncommitted water to a specific user if such water is  
332 anticipated to be used by the provider, or a different user  
333 selected by the provider, within a reasonable amount of time.



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334 Section 6. Subsection (6) of section 373.536, Florida  
335 Statutes, is amended to read:

336 373.536 District budget and hearing thereon.--

337 (6) FINAL BUDGET; ANNUAL AUDIT; CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN;  
338 WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT WORK PROGRAM.--

339 (a) Each district must, by the date specified for each  
340 item, furnish copies of the following documents to the Governor,  
341 the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of  
342 Representatives, the chairs of all legislative committees and  
343 subcommittees having substantive or fiscal jurisdiction over the  
344 districts, as determined by the President of the Senate or the  
345 Speaker of the House of Representatives as applicable, the  
346 secretary of the department, and the governing board of each  
347 county in which the district has jurisdiction or derives any  
348 funds for the operations of the district:

349 1. The adopted budget, to be furnished within 10 days  
350 after its adoption.

351 2. A financial audit of its accounts and records, to be  
352 furnished within 10 days after its acceptance by the governing  
353 board. The audit must be conducted in accordance with the  
354 provisions of s. 11.45 and the rules adopted thereunder. In  
355 addition to the entities named above, the district must provide  
356 a copy of the audit to the Auditor General within 10 days after  
357 its acceptance by the governing board.

358 3. A 5-year capital improvements plan, to be furnished  
359 within 45 days after the adoption of the final budget. The plan  
360 must include expected sources of revenue for planned



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361 improvements and must be prepared in a manner comparable to the  
362 fixed capital outlay format set forth in s. 216.043.

363 4. A 5-year water resource development work program to be  
364 furnished within 45 days after the adoption of the final budget.  
365 The program must describe the district's implementation strategy  
366 for the water resource development component of each approved  
367 regional water supply plan developed or revised under s.  
368 373.0361. The work program must address all the elements of the  
369 water resource development component in the district's approved  
370 regional water supply plans, and must identify which projects in  
371 the work program will provide water, explain how each water  
372 resource development project will produce additional water  
373 available for consumptive uses, estimate the quantity of water  
374 to be produced by each project, and provide an assessment of the  
375 contribution of the district's regional water supply plans in  
376 providing sufficient water to meet the water supply needs of  
377 existing and future reasonable beneficial uses for a 1-in-10-  
378 year drought event. Within 45 days after its submittal, the  
379 department shall review the proposed work program and submit its  
380 findings, questions, and comments to the district. The review  
381 must include a written evaluation of the program's consistency  
382 with the furtherance of the district's approved regional water  
383 supply plans, and the adequacy of proposed expenditures. As part  
384 of the review, the department shall give interested parties the  
385 opportunity to provide written comments on each district's  
386 proposed work program. Within 60 days after receipt of the  
387 department's evaluation, the governing board shall state in  
388 writing to the department which changes recommended in the



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389 evaluation it will incorporate into its work program or specify  
 390 the reasons for not incorporating the changes. The department  
 391 shall include the district's responses in a final evaluation  
 392 report and shall submit a copy of the report to the Governor,  
 393 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
 394 Representatives.

395 (b) If any entity listed in paragraph (a) provides written  
 396 comments to the district regarding any document furnished under  
 397 this subsection, the district must respond to the comments in  
 398 writing and furnish copies of the comments and written responses  
 399 to the other entities.

400 Section 7. Subsection (1) of section 378.212, Florida  
 401 Statutes, is amended to read:

402 378.212 Variances.--

403 (1) Upon application, the secretary may grant a variance  
 404 from the provisions of this part, part IV, or the rules adopted  
 405 pursuant thereto. Variances and renewals thereof may be granted  
 406 for any one of the following reasons:

407 (a) There is no practicable means known or available to  
 408 comply with the provisions of this part or the rules adopted  
 409 pursuant thereto.

410 (b) Compliance with a particular requirement or  
 411 requirements from which a variance is sought will necessitate  
 412 the taking of measures which must be spread over a considerable  
 413 period of time. A variance granted for this reason shall  
 414 prescribe a timetable for the taking of the measures required.



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415 (c) To relieve or prevent hardship, including economic  
416 hardship, of a kind other than those provided for in paragraphs  
417 (a) and (b).

418 (d) To accommodate specific phosphate mining, processing  
419 or chemical plant uses that otherwise would be inconsistent with  
420 the requirements of this part.

421 (e) To provide for an experimental technique that would  
422 advance the knowledge of reclamation and restoration methods.

423 (f) To accommodate projects, including those proposing  
424 offsite mitigation, that provide a significant regional benefit  
425 for wildlife and the environment.

426 (g) To accommodate reclamation that provides water supply  
427 development or water resource development consistent with the  
428 applicable regional water supply plan approved pursuant to s.  
429 373.0361. A variance may be granted from the requirements of  
430 this part, part IV, or part IV of chapter 373, or the rules  
431 adopted pursuant thereto, when a project provides an improvement  
432 in water availability in the basin and does not cause adverse  
433 impacts to water resources in the basin.

434 Section 8. Subsection (9) is added to section 378.404,  
435 Florida Statutes, to read:

436 378.404 Department of Environmental Protection; powers and  
437 duties.--The department shall have the following powers and  
438 duties:

439 (9) To grant variances from the provisions of this part to  
440 accommodate reclamation that provides for water supply  
441 development or water resource development, consistent with the  
442 applicable regional water supply plan approved pursuant to s.





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443 373.0361, appropriate stormwater management, wildlife habitat,  
 444 or recreation, provided regional water resources and public  
 445 health and safety are not adversely affected.

446 Section 9. Subsections (1) and (6) of section 403.064,  
 447 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

448 403.064 Reuse of reclaimed water.--

449 (1) The encouragement and promotion of water conservation,  
 450 and reuse of reclaimed water, as defined by the department, are  
 451 state objectives and are considered to be in the public  
 452 interest. The Legislature finds that the reuse of reclaimed  
 453 water is a critical component of meeting the state's existing  
 454 and future water supply needs while sustaining natural systems.  
 455 The Legislature further finds that for those wastewater  
 456 treatment plants permitted and operated under an approved reuse  
 457 program by the department, the reclaimed water shall be  
 458 considered environmentally acceptable and not a threat to public  
 459 health and safety. The Legislature encourages the development  
 460 of incentive-based programs for reuse implementation.

461 (6) A reuse feasibility study prepared under subsection  
 462 (2) satisfies a water management district requirement to conduct  
 463 a reuse feasibility study imposed on a local government or  
 464 utility that has responsibility for wastewater management, and  
 465 the conclusions of the study shall be given significant  
 466 consideration in an analysis of the feasibility of providing  
 467 reclaimed water for reuse under part II of chapter 373.

468 Section 10. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of section  
 469 403.1835, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

470 403.1835 Water pollution control financial assistance.--



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471 (3) The department may provide financial assistance  
472 through any program authorized under s. 603 of the Federal Water  
473 Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act), Pub. L. No. 92-500, as  
474 amended, including, but not limited to, making grants and loans,  
475 providing loan guarantees, purchasing loan insurance or other  
476 credit enhancements, and buying or refinancing local debt. This  
477 financial assistance must be administered in accordance with  
478 this section and applicable federal authorities. The department  
479 shall administer all programs operated from funds secured  
480 through the activities of the Florida Water Pollution Control  
481 Financing Corporation under s. 403.1837, to fulfill the purposes  
482 of this section.

483 (b) The department may make or request the corporation to  
484 make loans, grants, and deposits to other entities eligible to  
485 participate in the financial assistance programs authorized  
486 under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, or as a result of  
487 other federal action, which entities may pledge any revenue  
488 available to them to repay any funds borrowed. Notwithstanding  
489 s. 18.10, the department may make deposits to financial  
490 institutions that earn less than the prevailing rate for United  
491 States Treasury securities with corresponding maturities for the  
492 purpose of enabling such financial institutions to make below-  
493 market interest rate loans to entities qualified to receive  
494 loans under this section and the rules of the department.

495 Section 11. Subsection (6) of section 403.1837, Florida  
496 Statutes, is amended to read:

497 403.1837 Florida Water Pollution Control Financing  
498 Corporation.--



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499 (6) The corporation may issue and incur notes, bonds,  
500 certificates of indebtedness, or other obligations or evidences  
501 of indebtedness payable from and secured by amounts received  
502 from payment of loans and other moneys received by the  
503 corporation, including, but not limited to, amounts payable to  
504 the corporation by the department under a service contract  
505 entered into under subsection (5). ~~The corporation may not issue~~  
506 ~~bonds in excess of an amount authorized by general law or an~~  
507 ~~appropriations act except to refund previously issued bonds. The~~  
508 ~~corporation may issue bonds in amounts not exceeding \$50 million~~  
509 ~~in fiscal year 2000-2001, \$75 million in fiscal year 2001-2002,~~  
510 ~~and \$100 million in fiscal year 2002-2003.~~ The proceeds of the  
511 bonds may be used for the purpose of providing funds for  
512 projects and activities provided for in subsection (1) or for  
513 refunding bonds previously issued by the corporation. The  
514 corporation may select a financing team and issue obligations  
515 through competitive bidding or negotiated contracts, whichever  
516 is most cost-effective. Any such indebtedness of the corporation  
517 does not constitute a debt or obligation of the state or a  
518 pledge of the faith and credit or taxing power of the state.

519 Section 12. The Legislature finds that, within the area  
520 identified in the Lower East Coast Regional Water Supply Plan  
521 approved by the South Florida Water Management District pursuant  
522 to s. 373.0361, Florida Statutes, the groundwater levels can  
523 benefit from augmentation. The Legislature finds that the  
524 direct or indirect discharge of reclaimed water into canals and  
525 the aquifer system for transport and subsequent reuse may  
526 provide an environmentally acceptable means to augment water



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527 supplies and enhance natural systems; however, the Legislature  
528 also recognizes that there are water quality and water quantity  
529 issues that must be better understood and resolved. In  
530 addition, there are cost savings possible by collocating  
531 enclosed conduits for conveyance of water for reuse in this area  
532 within canal rights-of-way that should be investigated. Toward  
533 that end, the Department of Environmental Protection, in  
534 consultation with the South Florida Water Management District,  
535 Southeast Florida utilities, affected local governments,  
536 including local governments with principal responsibility for  
537 the operation and maintenance of a water control system capable  
538 of conveying reclaimed wastewater for reuse, representatives of  
539 the environmental and engineering communities, public health  
540 professionals, and individuals having expertise in water  
541 quality, shall conduct a study to investigate the feasibility of  
542 discharging reclaimed wastewater into canals and the aquifer  
543 system as an environmentally acceptable means of augmenting  
544 groundwater supplies, enhancing natural systems, and conveying  
545 reuse water within enclosed conduits within the canal right-of-  
546 way. The study shall include an assessment of the water  
547 quality, water supply, public health, technical, and legal  
548 implications related to the canal discharge and collocation  
549 concepts. The department shall issue a preliminary written  
550 report containing draft findings and recommendations for public  
551 comment by November 1, 2003. The department shall provide a  
552 written report on the results of its study to the Governor and  
553 the relevant substantive committees of the House of  
554 Representatives and the Senate by January 31, 2004. Nothing in



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555 | this section shall be used to alter the purpose of the  
556 | Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan or the implementation  
557 | of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000.

558 |       Section 13. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
559 | law.