



1           WHEREAS, the renewable economic potential of the  
2 Citrus/Hernando waterways is significant, and

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

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

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11           Section 1. The Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration  
12 Council.--

13           (1) There is created within the Withlacoochee and  
14 Coastal Rivers Basin Boards of the Southwest Florida Water  
15 Management District a council to be known as the  
16 Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council. The council  
17 shall be coordinated by representatives of the following  
18 agencies: the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the  
19 Department of Environmental Protection, and the Southwest  
20 Florida Water Management District. The council is subject to  
21 chapters 119 and 120, Florida Statutes.

22           (2) Members of the council shall consist of 14 voting  
23 members with seven appointed by the President of the Senate  
24 and seven appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
25 Representatives. The council shall consist of representatives  
26 as follows:

27           a. Two waterfront property owners from each county,  
28 one from the east side of the county and one from the west  
29 side of the county.

30           b. An attorney from each county.  
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1           c. A member of the Board of Directors of the Chamber  
2 of Commerce from each county.

3           d. An environmental engineer from each county.

4           e. An engineer from each county.

5           f. A person from each county with training in biology  
6 or another scientific discipline.

7           (3) The council members from each county shall form  
8 two separate county task forces from the council to review and  
9 make recommendations on all waterways. The Hernando County  
10 Task Force shall develop plans for the restoration of all  
11 waterways in Hernando County. The Citrus County Task Force  
12 shall develop plans for the restoration of all waterways in  
13 Citrus County.

14           (4) There shall be a technical advisory group to the  
15 council and the two county task forces which shall consist of  
16 one representative each from the Southwest Florida Water  
17 Management District, the Department of Environmental  
18 Protection, the Department of Transportation, the Fish and  
19 Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Coastal Rivers Basin  
20 Board, the Withlacoochee River Basin Board, the United States  
21 Army Corps of Engineers, and the county department of public  
22 works, each of whom shall be appointed by his or her  
23 respective agency, and each of whom, with the exception of the  
24 representatives from the Withlacoochee River Basin Board and  
25 Coastal Rivers Basin Board, shall have had training in biology  
26 or another scientific discipline.

27           (5) Each member shall be appointed to a 4-year term.  
28 Immediately after appointment, the council shall meet and  
29 organize by electing a chair, a vice chair, and a secretary,  
30 whose terms shall be for 2 years each. Council officers may  
31 not serve consecutive terms. Each council member shall be a

1 voting member. Additionally, the two county task forces shall  
2 elect a chair and a secretary whose terms shall be for 2 years  
3 each.

4 (6) The council or the county task forces shall meet  
5 at the call of its chair, at the request of six of its  
6 members, or at the request of the chair of the governing board  
7 of the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

8 (7) The council shall have the powers and duties to:

9 (a) Review audits and all data specifically related to  
10 lake and river restoration techniques and sport fish  
11 population recovery strategies, including data and strategies  
12 for shoreline restoration, sand and other sediment control and  
13 removal, exotic species management, floating tussock  
14 management or removal, navigation, water quality, and fish and  
15 wildlife habitat improvement, particularly as they may apply  
16 to the Citrus/Hernando waterways.

17 (b) Evaluate whether additional studies are needed.

18 (c) Explore all possible sources of funding to conduct  
19 the restoration activities.

20 (d) Report to the President of the Senate and the  
21 Speaker of the House of Representatives before November 25 of  
22 each year on the progress of the Citrus/Hernando Waterways  
23 restoration program and any recommendations for the next  
24 fiscal year.

25 (8) The Southwest Florida Water Management District  
26 shall act as lead entity for the purpose of providing staff  
27 and administrative support to assist the council in carrying  
28 out the provisions of this act.

29 (9) Members of the council shall receive no  
30 compensation for their services, but are entitled to be  
31 reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses incurred during

1 execution of their official duties, as provided in section  
2 112.061, Florida Statutes. State and federal agencies are  
3 responsible for the per diem and travel expenses of their  
4 respective appointees to the council and the Southwest Florida  
5 Water Management District is responsible for per diem and  
6 travel expenses of other appointees to the council.

7 Section 2. The Citrus/Hernando Waterways restoration  
8 program.--

9 (1) The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and  
10 the Southwest Florida Water Management District, in  
11 conjunction with the Department of Environmental Protection,  
12 pertinent local governments, and the Citrus/Hernando Waterways  
13 Restoration Council, shall review existing restoration  
14 proposals to determine which ones are the most environmentally  
15 sound and economically feasible methods of improving the fish  
16 and wildlife habitat and natural systems of the  
17 Citrus/Hernando waterways.

18 (2) To initiate the Citrus/Hernando Waterways  
19 restoration program recommended by the Citrus/Hernando  
20 Waterways Restoration Council, the Fish and Wildlife  
21 Conservation Commission, with assistance from the Southwest  
22 Florida Water Management District and in consultation and by  
23 agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection and  
24 pertinent local governments, shall develop tasks to be  
25 considered by those entities for the enhancement of fish and  
26 wildlife habitat. These tasks shall include the following:

27 (a) An evaluation of different methodologies for  
28 removing the extensive tussocks and buildup of organic matter  
29 along the shoreline and of the aquatic vegetation in the lake.

30 (b) The conduct of any additional studies as required  
31 by the Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council.

