

By Senator Peaden

2-1260-06

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to the protection of quail

3 habitat; providing definitions; directing the

4 Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to

5 encourage landowners to participate in a

6 voluntary program of the Unites States

7 Department of Agriculture for protecting quail

8 habitat; providing powers of the commission;

9 authorizing the commission to acquire, by gift,

10 title to lands, including easements;

11 authorizing rulemaking by the commission;

12 directing the Institute of Food and

13 Agricultural Sciences at the University of

14 Florida to conduct research and report to the

15 Legislature; providing appropriations;

16 providing an effective date.

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18 WHEREAS, the national population of the northern

19 bobwhite quail has declined significantly from approximately

20 59 million in 1980 to fewer than 20 million currently, and

21 WHEREAS, Florida had a quail population of

22 approximately 2.5 million in 1980 and currently has a

23 population of fewer than one half million, and

24 WHEREAS, urbanization, intensive forestry practices,

25 and land development have contributed to the loss of suitable

26 habitat for quail, and

27 WHEREAS, the Institute of Food and Agricultural

28 Sciences at the University of Florida, the Fish and Wildlife

29 Conservation Commission, the United States Geological Survey,

30 and Tall Timbers Research Station have been working together

31 in researching ways in which to restore quail habitat, and

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

1 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture
2 has established an initiative known as the Northern Bobwhite
3 Quail Habitat Initiative, which is working to restore 250,000
4 acres of land across the southeastern United States for the
5 purpose of increasing the quail population, and

6 WHEREAS, the education of private landowners concerning
7 the creation and maintenance of suitable habitat is essential
8 to increasing the quail population, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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12 Section 1. Quail habitat protection.--

13 (1) As used in this section, the term:

14 (a) "Commission" means the Fish and Wildlife
15 Conservation Commission.

16 (b) "Quail habitat" means land in this state which is
17 eligible for the Quail Initiative.

18 (c) "Quail Initiative" means the Northern Bobwhite
19 Quail Habitat Initiative within the Conservation Reserve
20 Program of the Farm Service Agency of the United States
21 Department of Agriculture by which eligible landowners may
22 receive financial and technical assistance in managing quail
23 habitat.

24 (2) In order to preserve and restore quail habitat in
25 this state, the commission shall undertake activities to
26 maximize the voluntary participation of landowners in this
27 state in the Quail Initiative. The commission shall prioritize
28 such efforts based on the importance of a parcel of property
29 as quail habitat and the willingness of the landowner to make
30 his or her lands part of the Quail Initiative. In undertaking
31 such activities the commission may:

1 (a) Encourage eligible persons to participate in the
2 Quail Initiative through education, marketing, and other
3 promotional efforts.

4 (b) Negotiate with potentially eligible landowners as
5 to the terms for participating in the Quail Initiative.

6 (c) Provide incentives for landowners who participate
7 in the Quail Initiative.

8 (d) Provide advice to landowners who participate in
9 the Quail Initiative regarding the management of quail
10 habitat, including the provision of quail management or
11 related services.

12 (e) Acquire by gift the fee simple title or any lesser
13 interest in quail habitat, including easements, to the extent
14 such acquisition is consistent with the Quail Initiative.

15 (f) Adopt rules as necessary to administer this
16 section.

17 (g) Enter into agreements with any federal, state, or
18 local governmental agency, or any other entity as necessary to
19 administer this section.

20 (h) Receive or accept grants from any legal source for
21 the purpose of providing or improving quail habitat or
22 maximizing participation in the Quail Initiative in this
23 state.

24 (3) The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at
25 the University of Florida shall, in consultation with the
26 commission, conduct research and report to the Legislature on
27 the best ways to increase the population of quail in this
28 state.

29 Section 2. The sum of \$10,000 is appropriated from the
30 General Revenue Fund to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation
31 Commission for the purpose of implementing this section during

1 the 2006-2007 fiscal year. The sum of \$10,000 is appropriated
2 from the General Revenue Fund to the Institute of Food and
3 Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida for the
4 purpose of conducting research as specified in this section
5 during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

6 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.

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9 SENATE SUMMARY

10 Directs the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to
11 undertake certain activities to encourage participation
12 in a voluntary federal program to protect quail habitat.
13 Provides for powers of the commission and rulemaking by
14 the commission. Directs the Institute of Food and
15 Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida to
16 conduct research regarding quail. Provides
17 appropriations.
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