

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to hunting lands; creating s. 372.0025,
 3 F.S.; providing definitions; requiring certain lands
 4 owned, managed, or leased by the Fish and Wildlife
 5 Conservation Commission to be used for the purpose of
 6 hunting; requiring the commission to support, promote, and
 7 enhance hunting opportunities; requiring the commission to
 8 provide comparable acreage for any loss of existing
 9 hunting lands; requiring agencies and water management
 10 districts to allow certain lands to be used for the
 11 purpose of hunting; requiring annual reports to the
 12 commission and Legislature; providing an effective date.

13
 14 WHEREAS, section 372.002, Florida Statutes, protects the
 15 right of citizens of this state to hunt, and

16 WHEREAS, access and availability of hunting lands is
 17 essential to the exercise of that right, NOW, THEREFORE,

18
 19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

20
 21 Section 1. Section 372.0025, Florida Statutes, is created
 22 to read:

23 372.0025 No net loss of hunting lands.--

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

25 (a) "Commission" means the Fish and Wildlife Conservation
 26 Commission.

27 (b) "Commission-managed lands" means those lands owned by
 28 the commission, those lands owned by the state over which the

29 commission holds management authority, or those privately owned
30 lands that are leased or managed by the commission.

31 (c) "Hunting" means the lawful pursuit, trapping,
32 shooting, capture, collection, or killing of wildlife or the
33 lawful attempt to pursue, trap, shoot, capture, collect, or kill
34 wildlife.

35 (2) Commission-managed lands shall be open to access and
36 use for hunting except as limited by the commission for reasons
37 of public safety, fish or wildlife management, or homeland
38 security or as otherwise limited by law.

39 (3) The commission, in exercising its authority under the
40 State Constitution and statutes, shall exercise its authority,
41 consistent with subsection (2), in a manner that supports,
42 promotes, and enhances hunting opportunities to the extent
43 authorized by state law.

44 (4) Commission land management decisions and actions,
45 including decisions made by private owners to close hunting land
46 managed by the commission, shall not result in any net loss of
47 habitat land acreage available for hunting opportunities on
48 commission-managed lands that exists on the effective date of
49 this act. The commission shall expeditiously find replacement
50 acreage for hunting to compensate for closures of any existing
51 hunting land.

52 (5) Any agency or water management district that owns or
53 manages state lands shall assist and coordinate and cooperate
54 with the commission to allow hunting on such lands if such lands
55 are determined by the commission to be suitable for hunting. To
56 ensure no net loss of land acreage available for hunting,

57 agencies and water management districts shall cooperate with the
 58 commission to open new, additional hunting lands to replace lost
 59 hunting acreage.

60 (6) By October 1 of each year, the executive director of
 61 the commission shall submit to the Legislature a written report
 62 describing:

63 (a) The acreage managed by the commission that was closed
 64 to hunting during the previous fiscal year and the reasons for
 65 the closures.

66 (b) The acreage managed by the commission that was opened
 67 to hunting to compensate for closures of existing land pursuant
 68 to subsection (4).

69 (7) By October 1 of each year, any agency or water
 70 management district that owns or manages state lands shall
 71 submit a written report to the commission and the Legislature
 72 that includes:

73 (a) A list of properties that were open for hunting during
 74 the previous fiscal year.

75 (b) A list of properties that were not open for hunting
 76 during the previous fiscal year.

77 (c) The acreage for each property and the county where
 78 each property is located.

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