

By Senator Argenziano

3-145B-06

See HB 265

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

16
17 WHEREAS, section 372.002, Florida Statutes, protects
18 the right of citizens of this state to hunt, and

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

21
22 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

23
24 Section 1. Section 372.0025, Florida Statutes, is
25 created to read:

26 372.0025 No net loss of hunting lands.--

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

28 (a) "Commission" means the Fish and Wildlife
29 Conservation Commission.

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

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

3 (c) "Hunting" means the lawful pursuit, trapping,
4 shooting, capture, collection, or killing of wildlife or the
5 lawful attempt to pursue, trap, shoot, capture, collect, or
6 kill wildlife.

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

11 (3) The commission, in exercising its authority under
12 the State Constitution and statutes, shall exercise its
13 authority, consistent with subsection (2), in a manner that
14 supports, promotes, and enhances hunting opportunities to the
15 extent authorized by state law.

16 (4) Commission land management decisions and actions,
17 including decisions made by private owners to close hunting
18 land managed by the commission, shall not result in any net
19 loss of habitat land acreage available for hunting
20 opportunities on commission-managed lands that exists on the
21 effective date of this act. The commission shall expeditiously
22 find replacement acreage for hunting to compensate for
23 closures of any existing hunting land.

24 (5) Any agency or water management district that owns
25 or manages state lands shall assist and coordinate and
26 cooperate with the commission to allow hunting on such lands
27 if such lands are determined by the commission to be suitable
28 for hunting. To ensure no net loss of land acreage available
29 for hunting, agencies and water management districts shall
30 cooperate with the commission to open new, additional hunting
31 lands to replace lost hunting acreage.

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

4 (a) The acreage managed by the commission which was
5 closed to hunting during the previous fiscal year and the
6 reasons for the closures.

7 (b) The acreage managed by the commission which was
8 opened to hunting to compensate for closures of existing land
9 pursuant to subsection (4).

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

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

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

18 (c) The acreage for each property and the county where
19 each property is located.

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