

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to springs protection; creating part IV of  
 3           ch. 369, F.S., entitled "Springs Protection"; providing a  
 4           short title; providing legislative findings and intent;  
 5           providing definitions; establishing the Florida Springs  
 6           Stewardship Task Force; providing for task force  
 7           membership and duties; requiring a report to the Governor  
 8           and Legislature; providing for assistance and cooperation  
 9           from state agencies and local governments; providing for  
 10          expiration of the task force; providing an effective date.

11  
 12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 14           Section 1. Part IV of chapter 369, Florida Statutes,  
 15           consisting of sections 369.401, 369.402, 369.403, and 369.404,  
 16           is created to read:

17                                   Part IV

18                                   SPRINGS PROTECTION

19           369.401 Short title.--This part may be cited as the  
 20           "Florida Springs Stewardship Act."

21           369.402 Legislative findings and intent.--The Legislature  
 22           finds that:

23           (1) Florida's springs are valuable resources that provide  
 24           recreational and tourism opportunities and are a great financial  
 25           benefit to local economies and that Florida's springs provide  
 26           critical habitat for endangered or threatened species of plants  
 27           and animals.

28           (2) The flow and water quality of Florida's springs are

29 direct reflections of the aquifer systems in Florida and  
30 consequently are indicators of the condition of a significant  
31 portion of the state's water supply.

32 (3) Cooperative efforts can best develop the mechanisms to  
33 identify best management practices for the protection,  
34 restoration, and preservation of Florida's springs.

35 (4) The citizens of Florida desire to be good stewards of  
36 the state's resources and that through educational awareness  
37 programs will voluntarily implement best management practices  
38 into their daily activities.

39 (5) The most cost-effective means to provide protection,  
40 restoration, and preservation of Florida's springs is through a  
41 nonregulatory approach.

42 369.403 Definitions.--For purposes of this part, the term:

43 (1) "Seep" means a place where the water table aquifer  
44 intersects the land surface and flows onto the land.

45 (2) "Spring" means a point where groundwater is discharged  
46 onto the earth's surface, including under any surface water of  
47 the state, and excluding seeps.

48 (3) "Zone of influence" means the geographic area that  
49 contributes most directly to the water quantity and quality of a  
50 spring.

51 369.404 Florida Springs Stewardship Task Force.--

52 (1) The Florida Springs Stewardship Task Force is hereby  
53 created and shall consist of eight members as follows:

54 (a) One representative from the Department of  
55 Environmental Protection.

56 (b) One representative from the Department of Agriculture

57 and Consumer Services.

58 (c) One representative from the water management district  
59 with the greatest number of first magnitude springs within its  
60 jurisdiction.

61 (d) Two members appointed by the President of the Senate,  
62 one of whom shall be a representative of the development  
63 community and one of whom shall be a representative of a local  
64 chamber of commerce.

65 (e) Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
66 Representatives, one of whom shall be a locally elected county  
67 or municipal official and one of whom shall be a representative  
68 of the environmental community.

69 (f) One member appointed by the Commissioner of  
70 Agriculture who shall be a representative of the agricultural  
71 community.

72 (2) Task force members shall be appointed no later than  
73 August 1, 2007. Members shall choose a chair and vice-chair from  
74 the membership of the task force.

75 (3) The task force shall:

76 (a) Collect and inventory all existing data identifying  
77 zones of influence for each of Florida's 33 known first  
78 magnitude springs and identifying land uses in these areas.

79 (b) Identify and compile a list of existing best  
80 management practices for identified land uses.

81 (c) Identify any and all existing and reasonably expected  
82 funding sources available to implement best management practices  
83 that protect Florida's first magnitude springs and propose a  
84 priority list of projects for the funding.

85           (d) Take public input and testimony regarding issues  
86 related to spring protection, restoration, and preservation.

87           (e) Propose a program of increased emphasis on education  
88 and outreach that encourages the implementation of best  
89 management practices for agricultural and nonagricultural land  
90 uses, including specific provisions for cost-share assistance  
91 with the implementation of best management practices as well as  
92 recognition of agricultural and nonagricultural landowners who  
93 participate in the best management practices program.

94           (4) The task force shall submit a report summarizing the  
95 data collected, public input and testimony, and the findings and  
96 proposals of the task force to the President of the Senate and  
97 the Speaker of the House of Representatives no later than  
98 January 31, 2008.

99           (5) All state agencies are directed, and all other  
100 agencies and local governments are requested, to render  
101 assistance to and cooperate with the task force.

102           (6) The task force shall expire on January 31, 2008.  
103           Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.