

By Senator Oelrich

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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.

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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, is
16 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

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30 consequently are indicators of the condition of a significant
31 portion of the state's water resources.

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 water resources,
35 including springs.

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

40 369.403 Definitions.--For purposes of this part, the term:

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

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

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

49 369.404 Florida Springs Stewardship Task Force.--

50 (1) The Florida Springs Stewardship Task Force is hereby
51 created and shall consist of nine members as follows:

52 (a) One representative from the Department of Environmental
53 Protection to be appointed by the Secretary of Environmental
54 Protection.

55 (b) One representative from the Department of Agriculture
56 and Consumer Services to be appointed by the Commissioner of
57 Agriculture.

58 (c) One representative from the Department of Community

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59 Affairs to be appointed by the Secretary of Community Affairs.

60 (d) One representative from the water management district
61 with the greatest number of first magnitude springs within its
62 jurisdiction to be appointed by the executive director of that
63 water management district.

64 (e) Two members appointed by the President of the Senate,
65 one of whom shall be a representative of the development
66 community and one of whom shall be a representative of a local
67 chamber of commerce.

68 (f) Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
69 Representatives, one of whom shall be a locally elected county or
70 municipal official and one of whom shall be a representative of
71 the environmental community.

72 (g) One member appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture
73 who shall be a representative of the agricultural community.

74 (2) Task force members shall be appointed no later than
75 August 1, 2008. Members shall choose a chair and vice chair from
76 the membership of the task force.

77 (3) The task force shall:

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

81 (b) Identify and compile a list of existing best management
82 practices for identified land uses and other water pollutant
83 controls.

84 (c) Identify any and all existing and reasonably expected
85 funding sources available to implement best management practices
86 and other water pollutant controls that protect Florida's first
87 magnitude springs and propose a priority list of projects for the

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88 | funding.

89 | (d) Take public input and testimony regarding issues
90 | related to spring protection, restoration, and preservation.

91 | (e) Propose a program of increased emphasis on education
92 | and outreach that encourages the implementation of best
93 | management practices for agricultural and nonagricultural land
94 | uses and other water pollutant controls, including specific
95 | provisions for cost-share assistance with the implementation of
96 | best management practices as well as recognition of agricultural
97 | and nonagricultural landowners who participate in the best
98 | management practices program.

99 | (4) The task force shall submit a report summarizing the
100 | data collected, public input and testimony, and the findings and
101 | proposals of the task force to the President of the Senate and
102 | the Speaker of the House of Representatives no later than January
103 | 31, 2009.

104 | (5) All state agencies are directed, and all other agencies
105 | and local governments are requested, to render assistance to and
106 | cooperate with the task force.

107 | (6) The task force shall expire on January 31, 2009.

108 | Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.