

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 1105 Special Observances

SPONSOR(S): Perman and others

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 924

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Government Operations Subcommittee	13 Y, 0 N	Thompson	Williamson
2) State Affairs Committee	15 Y, 0 N	Thompson	Hamby

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Current law establishes 50 legal holidays and special observance days. Current law does not contain a legal holiday or special observance related to an ecosystem such as the Everglades. The bill designates April 7 of each year as "Everglades Day."

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state or local governments.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2012.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Background

Everglades

The Everglades is a two million acre wetland ecosystem that reaches from central Florida, near Orlando, all the way south to Florida Bay. During the wet season, Lake Okeechobee overflows, releasing water into a very slow moving, shallow, saw grass marsh dubbed the "river of grass."¹

The Everglades contains diverse environments, resources, and conditions that have helped to shape the course of history and development in South Florida and remain a key component of the physical and economic landscape.² However, agriculture and urban development have reduced the size of the Everglades considerably. Originally covering almost 11,000 square miles, today the Everglades is half the size that it was a century ago.³

Marjory Stoneman Douglas

Marjory Stoneman Douglas, writer and conservationist, was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on April 7, 1890. She moved to Miami, Florida in 1915, at the age of 25. In 1947, she published the book "The Everglades: River of Grass," which significantly impacted the environmental history of Florida redefining the Everglades as an essential source of free flowing fresh water. Marjory Stoneman Douglas helped found the conservation organization Friends of the Everglades,⁴ led the campaign to establish the Everglades National Park,⁵ and was present at the Park's dedication by President Harry Truman in 1947.⁶

Everglades National Park

Everglades National Park is the largest designated sub-tropical wilderness reserve on the North American continent.⁷ Authorized by Congress in 1934 and established in 1947,⁸ the park celebrates its 65th anniversary in 2012. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization designated the park a Biosphere Reserve in 1976,⁹ and a World Heritage site in 1979.¹⁰ The park also was designated a Wetland of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention in 1987.¹¹ The

¹ National Wildlife Federation, Everglades, at <http://www.nwf.org/Wildlife/Wild-Places/Everglades.aspx> (last visited January 20, 2012).

² Unites States Geological Society Fact Sheet, at http://fl.biology.usgs.gov/Center_Publications/Fact_Sheets/everglades.pdf (last visited January 18, 2012).

³ South Florida Water Management District, America's Everglades, at <http://my.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xweb%20protecting%20and%20restoring/americas%20everglades> (last visited January 20, 2012).

⁴ Friends of the Everglades, at <http://www.everglades.org/> (last visited January 20, 2012).

⁵ National Park Service, Unites States Department of the Interior, Everglades, at <http://www.nps.gov/ever/index.htm> (last visited January 20, 2012).

⁶ Marjory Stoneman Douglas Writer & Conservationist, Special Collections, University of Miami Libraries, at <http://scholar.library.miami.edu/msdouglas/index.html> (last visited January 18, 2012).

⁷ National Park Service, Unites States Department of the Interior, at <http://www.nps.gov/ever/index.htm> (last visited January 20, 2012).

⁸ The Act of May 1934 (48 Stat 816).

⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Biosphere Reserves Directory, United States of America, Everglades & Dry Tortugas, at <http://www.unesco.org/mabdb/br/brdir/directory/biores.asp?mode=all&code=USA+09> (last visited January 18, 2012).

¹⁰ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Heritage List, at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76> (last visited January 18, 2012).

¹¹ The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands, at http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-list/main/ramsar/1-31-218_4000_0__ (last visited January 20, 2012).

boundaries of Everglades National Park protect the southern one-fifth of the Everglades ecosystem.¹²

Legal Holidays and Special Observance Days

Current law establishes 50 legal holidays and special observance days.¹³ Legal holidays and special observances may apply throughout the state or they may be limited to particular counties. Designation of a day as a legal holiday does not necessarily make that day a paid holiday for public employees.¹⁴ Currently, there is not a legal holiday or special observance day related to an ecosystem such as Everglades Day.

Proposed Changes

The bill designates April 7 of each year as “Everglades Day.”

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1 creates s. 683.185, F.S., to designate April 7 of each year as “Everglades Day.”

Section 2 provides an effective date of July 1, 2012.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to affect county or municipal governments.

¹² National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, Nature & Science, at <http://www.nps.gov/ever/naturescience/index.htm> (last visited January 25, 2012).

¹³ See chapter 683, F.S.

¹⁴ Section 110.117, F.S., establishes which legal holidays are paid holidays for public employees.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill does not appear to create a need for rulemaking or require additional rulemaking authority.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.