

By Senator Altman

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20121554

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to state lands; amending s. 253.42,  
3       F.S.; providing for certain individuals and  
4       corporations to submit requests to the Board of  
5       Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to  
6       exchange state-owned land for conservation easements  
7       over privately held land; providing criteria for  
8       consideration of such requests; encouraging certain  
9       operations on such lands; providing an effective date.

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11       WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that significant economic  
12       forces compel the state to be innovative in seeking new ways to  
13       expand the protection and conservation of undeveloped lands  
14       while reducing the overall fiscal impact to the state, and

15       WHEREAS, many of these undeveloped lands are held in  
16       private ownership by individuals or by private or public  
17       corporations and are contiguous to existing state-owned land,  
18       and

19       WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that these entities may  
20       have additional management resources that would assist in the  
21       conservation and protection of natural resources on such lands  
22       and allow the state to increase the amount of land under  
23       protective covenants, and

24       WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Legislature to encourage  
25       the use of conservation easements over privately held land  
26       through the exchange of state-owned land, to secure the future  
27       of natural resource-based recreation areas, and to ensure the  
28       survival of plant and animal species and the conservation of  
29       finite and renewable natural resources, NOW, THEREFORE,

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31 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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33 Section 1. Subsection (4) is added to section 253.42,  
34 Florida Statutes, to read:

35 253.42 Board of trustees may exchange lands.—The provisions  
36 of this section apply to all lands owned by, vested in, or  
37 titled in the name of the board whether the lands were acquired  
38 by the state as a purchase, or through gift, donation, or any  
39 other conveyance for which no consideration was paid.

40 (4) (a) An individual or any private or public corporation  
41 that owns privately held land contiguous to state-owned land may  
42 submit a request directly to the board to exchange state-owned  
43 land for conservation easements placed over the privately held  
44 land.

45 (b) If the privately held land is surrounded by state-owned  
46 land on at least 30 percent of its perimeter and the exchange  
47 does not create an inholding, the board shall consider such  
48 request within 60 days after receipt of the request.

49 (c) Special consideration shall be given to a request  
50 submitted pursuant to this subsection which allows the state to  
51 retain a conservation easement in perpetuity. Low-impact  
52 operations, such as grazing, forest management, prescribed  
53 burning, and wildlife management practices, are strongly  
54 encouraged on such lands.

55 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.