

By Senator Richter

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing the vital importance of  
Walton County's coastal dune lakes to the ecological  
and economic health of this state.

WHEREAS, the unique coastal dune and watershed system known  
as coastal dune lakes is one of the rarest and most unique  
natural systems in the world, occurring only in Australia, New  
Zealand, Madagascar, Oregon, South Carolina, and Northwest  
Florida, and

WHEREAS, Walton County is known worldwide for its sugar-  
white sand beaches and emerald gulf waters and is home to 15  
named coastal dune lakes that constitute a rarely occurring  
natural phenomenon based on dynamic and intermittent exchange  
with the Gulf, and

WHEREAS, these coastal dune lakes, Lake Powell, Alligator  
Lake, Lake Allen, Camp Creek, Little Redfish Lake, Stallworth  
Lake, Deer Lake, Big Redfish Lake, Campbell Lake, Eastern Lake,  
Draper Lake, Morris Lake, Western Lake, Oyster Lake, and Fuller  
Lake, are fed by streams, groundwater seepage, rain, and storm  
surge, with water conditions between lakes varying greatly, from  
completely fresh to significantly saline, and

WHEREAS, the coastal dune lakes, which are listed as  
"globally imperiled" by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory,  
create a uniquely pristine environment that exists nowhere else  
in Florida, and contribute to Walton County's ranking as one of  
the top ten most biodiverse areas in the nation, and

WHEREAS, this complex hydrologic system is habitat for  
struggling plant communities without which the integrity and

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30 preservation of a stable dune complex cannot exist; functions as  
31 an aquatic nursery; and provides habitat for a wide array of  
32 animal life, including protected and endangered species, and

33 WHEREAS, protection of Walton County's coastal dune lakes  
34 provides important ecological benefits, such as storm protection  
35 and restoration of essential water flow into the Gulf, and

36 WHEREAS, the coastal dune lakes are vital to the economies  
37 of Walton County, providing opportunities for fishing, hiking,  
38 birding, canoeing, kayaking, ecotouring, plein-air painting,  
39 photographic expeditions, and other activities that provide  
40 recreation and intimate connection with nature, and

41 WHEREAS, the current "Outstanding Florida Water"  
42 designation of Lake Powell establishes a foundation and provides  
43 a precedent for the effort to protect the unparalleled beauty  
44 and diversity of Florida's natural, cultural, and economic  
45 legacies for future generations, and

46 WHEREAS, recognition of the coastal dune lakes by the  
47 Legislature will strengthen existing policies in the Walton  
48 County Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code, NOW,  
49 THEREFORE,

50  
51 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

52  
53 That Walton County's coastal dune lakes are designated as  
54 state ecological treasures; that the vital importance of Walton  
55 County's coastal dune lakes to the ecological and economic  
56 health of this state is recognized; and that the natural beauty  
57 of Florida's ecological treasures, the coastal dune lakes, is  
58 celebrated.