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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

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Senator Stargel moved the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete everything after the enacting clause  
and insert:

Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Heartland  
Headwaters Protection and Sustainability Act."

Section 2. Section 373.462, Florida Statutes, is created to  
read:

373.462 Legislative findings and intent.—

(1) The Legislature recognizes that by law in 1979,  
portions of Lake and Polk Counties were designated as the Green



451946

12 Swamp Area of Critical State Concern in acknowledgment of its  
13 regional and statewide importance in maintaining the quality and  
14 quantity of Florida's water supply and water resources for the  
15 public and the environment.

16 (2) The Legislature also recognizes the Green Swamp, which  
17 encompasses approximately 560,000 acres, is located in a  
18 regionally significant high recharge area of the Floridan  
19 Aquifer system, and it helps protect coastal communities from  
20 saltwater intrusion.

21 (3) The Legislature finds that the Green Swamp or Polk  
22 County make up the headwaters or portions of the headwaters of  
23 six major river systems in the state, which are the Alafia,  
24 Hillsborough, Kissimmee, Ocklawaha, Peace, and Withlacoochee  
25 Rivers. In addition, due to the area's unique topography and  
26 geology which receives no other water inputs other than  
27 rainfall, the area is essential in maintaining the  
28 potentiometric head of the Floridan Aquifer system that directly  
29 influences the aquifer's productivity for water supply.

30 (4) The Legislature also finds that the Green Swamp and the  
31 surrounding areas are economically, environmentally, and  
32 socially defined by some of the most important and vulnerable  
33 water resources in the state.

34 (5) The Legislature recognizes that the Central Florida  
35 Water Initiative Guiding Document dated January 30, 2015, and  
36 the Southern Water Use Caution Area Recovery Strategy dated  
37 March 2006 recognized the fact that the surface water and  
38 groundwater resources in the heartland counties of Hardee,  
39 Highlands, and Polk are integral to the health, public safety,  
40 and economic future of those regions.



451946

41 (6) The Legislature declares that there is an important  
42 state interest in partnering with regional water supply  
43 authorities and local governments, in accordance with s.  
44 373.705, to protect the water resources of the headwaters of the  
45 Alafia, Hillsborough, Kissimmee, Ocklawaha, Peace, and  
46 Withlacoochee Rivers and the surrounding areas. The Legislature  
47 further declares that funding consideration be given to regional  
48 collaborative solutions, including, but not limited to, the  
49 heartland counties, to manage the water resources of the state.

50 Section 3. Section 373.463, Florida Statutes, is created to  
51 read:

52 373.463 Heartland headwaters annual report.—

53 (1) The Polk Regional Water Cooperative, in coordination  
54 with all of its member county and municipal governments, shall  
55 prepare a comprehensive annual report for water resource  
56 projects identified for state funding consideration within its  
57 members' jurisdictions. The report must include, at a minimum:

58 (a) A list of projects identified by the cooperative for  
59 state funding consideration for each of the following  
60 categories. A project may be listed in more than one category:

- 61 1. Drinking water supply.
- 62 2. Wastewater.
- 63 3. Stormwater and flood control.
- 64 4. Environmental restoration.
- 65 5. Conservation.

66 (b) A priority ranking for each listed project that will be  
67 ready to proceed in the upcoming fiscal year within each  
68 category.

69 (c) The estimated cost of each listed project.



70 (d) The estimated completion date of each listed project.

71 (e) The source and amount of financial assistance to be  
72 provided by the cooperative, the member county or municipal  
73 governments, or other entity for each listed project.

74 (2) By December 1, 2017, and each year thereafter, the  
75 cooperative shall submit the comprehensive annual report to the  
76 Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House  
77 of Representatives, the department, and the appropriate water  
78 management districts.

79 (3) The cooperative shall also annually coordinate with the  
80 appropriate water management district to submit a status report  
81 on projects receiving priority state funding for inclusion in  
82 the consolidated water management district annual report  
83 required by s. 373.036(7).

84 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2017.

85  
86 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

87 And the title is amended as follows:

88 Delete everything before the enacting clause  
89 and insert:

90 A bill to be entitled  
91 An act relating to water protection and  
92 sustainability; creating the "Heartland Headwaters  
93 Protection and Sustainability Act"; creating s.  
94 373.462, F.S.; providing legislative findings and  
95 intent; creating s. 373.463, F.S.; requiring the Polk  
96 Regional Water Cooperative, in coordination with all  
97 of its member county and municipal governments, to  
98 prepare an annual report concerning water resource



451946

99 projects within a specified area; specifying  
100 requirements for such report; requiring the report to  
101 be submitted by a certain date each year to the  
102 Governor, the Legislature, the Department of  
103 Environmental Protection, and the appropriate water  
104 management districts; requiring the cooperative to  
105 coordinate with appropriate water management districts  
106 to prepare status reports on certain projects;  
107 requiring the inclusion of such reports in the  
108 appropriate consolidated water management district  
109 annual reports; providing an effective date.