

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 6027 Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council, Citrus County

SPONSOR(S): Massullo

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 388

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee	12 Y, 0 N	Melkun	Moore
2) Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee	11 Y, 0 N	White	Pigott
3) State Affairs Committee	23 Y, 0 N	Melkun	Williamson

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council (Council) was established in 2003 by the Legislature in response to regional concerns for the health of Citrus and Hernando county waterways. The Council is comprised of 14 voting members appointed by the Legislature and includes, from each county, two waterfront property owners; an attorney; a member of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce; an environmental engineer; an engineer; and a person with training in biology or another scientific discipline.

It is the Council's responsibility to review audits and all data specifically related to lake and river restoration techniques and sport fish population recovery strategies; evaluate whether additional studies are needed; explore all possible sources of funding to conduct restoration activities; and report to the Legislature on the progress made and any recommendations for the next fiscal year. The Council last submitted an annual report in 2015.

In 2014, the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) created the Springs Coast Steering, Management, and Technical Committees to manage and prioritize the five first-magnitude springs that fall within the jurisdiction of the district. Each committee includes members representing the local, regional, and state governments as well as the agriculture industry, environmental organizations, water suppliers, industrial water users, regional planning councils, and academia. According to SWFWMD, much of the work of the committees coincides with the charge of the Council.

The bill repeals the Council.

The bill may have an insignificant positive fiscal impact on the state.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Background

Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council

The Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council (Council) was established in 2003 by the Legislature in response to regional concerns for the health of Citrus and Hernando county waterways.¹ The Council, created within the Withlacoochee and Coastal Rivers Basin Boards of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), is comprised of 14 voting members: seven members appointed by the President of the Senate and seven members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The members include:

- Two waterfront property owners from each county, one from the east side and one from the west side of the county;
- An attorney from each county;
- A member of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce from each county;
- An environmental engineer from each county;
- An engineer from each county, and
- A person with training in biology or another scientific discipline from each county.²

The Council members from each county were required to form two separate county task forces to assess and make recommendations on waterways within their respective counties. The Citrus County Task Force was directed to develop plans for restoring the Tsala-Apopka Chain of Lakes, while the Hernando County Task Force was directed to develop plans for restoring the Weeki Wachee River and Springs.³

In addition, the Legislature established a technical advisory group (TAG) to assist the Council and two county task forces by informing the members on the scientific and technical issues regarding water quality within the area.⁴ The TAG consists of one representative each from SWFWMD, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Transportation, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Coastal Rivers Basin Board, the Withlacoochee River Basin Board, the public works department of each county, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.⁵

It is the Council's responsibility to review audits and all data specifically related to lake and river restoration techniques and sport fish population recovery strategies, including data and strategies for shoreline restoration, sand and other sediment control and removal, exotic species management, floating tussock management or removal, navigation, water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat improvement; evaluate whether additional studies are needed; explore all possible sources of funding to conduct restoration activities; and report to the Legislature, before November 25 of each year, on the progress made and any recommendations for the next fiscal year.⁶ In 2006, the Legislature expanded the Council's responsibilities to include all waterways of Citrus and Hernando Counties.⁷ The Council last submitted an annual report in 2015.

¹ Chapter 2003-287, Laws of Fla.; see MGC Environmental, *Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council*, available at <http://www.mgcenvironmental.com/waterways.htm> (last visited Oct. 30, 2019).

² Chapter 2006-43, Laws of Fla.

³ Chapter 2003-287, Laws of Fla.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Chapter 2006-43, Laws of Fla.

⁶ See SWFWMD, *Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council Report to the Legislature*, 1 (2015), available at <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/sites/default/files/medias/documents/2015%20Report%20to%20the%20Legislature.pdf> (last visited Oct. 30, 2019); ch. 2003-287, Laws of Fla.

⁷ Chapter 2006-43, Laws of Fla.

Springs Coast Committees

In 2014, SWFWMD created the Springs Coast Steering, Management, and Technical Committees to manage and prioritize the five first-magnitude springs that fall within the jurisdiction of the district: Rainbow, Crystal River/Kings Bay, Homosassa, Chassahowitzka, and Weeki Wachee.⁸ Each committee includes members representing the local, regional, and state governments as well as the agriculture industry, environmental organizations, water suppliers, industrial water users, regional planning councils, and academia.⁹ According to SWFWMD, much of the work of the committees coincides with the charge of the Council.¹⁰

Effect of the Bill

The bill repeals the Council.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Repeals chs. 2003-287 and 2006-43, Laws of Fla., to repeal the Council.

Section 2. Provides an effective date of upon becoming a law.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

The bill may have an insignificant positive fiscal impact on state agency expenditures because state agencies and SWFWMD will no longer be required to expend resources or provide staff support to the Council.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

⁸ SWFWMD, *Springs Coast Steering, Management and Technical Committees*, available at <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/springs/springs-coast-steering-management-and-technical-committees> (last visited Oct. 31, 2019).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Email from Cara Martin, Government and Community Affairs Office Chief, SWFWMD, Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council, (Sept. 3, 2019) (on file with the Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee).

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to require counties or municipalities to spend funds or take action requiring the expenditure of funds; reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenues in the aggregate; or reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.