

**By** the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources; and  
Senator Rodriguez

592-03543-21

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to seagrass mitigation banks; amending  
3           s. 253.03, F.S.; authorizing the Board of Trustees of  
4           the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to authorize  
5           leases for seagrass mitigation banks under certain  
6           conditions; providing construction; requiring the  
7           Department of Environmental Protection to modify  
8           specified mitigation banking rules for specified  
9           purposes; providing an effective date.

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

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13           Section 1. Subsection (17) is added to section 253.03,  
14 Florida Statutes, to read:

15           253.03 Board of trustees to administer state lands; lands  
16 enumerated.—

17           (17) The board of trustees may authorize leases for  
18 seagrass mitigation banks under s. 373.4136 to ensure the  
19 preservation and regeneration of seagrass, as defined in s.  
20 253.04(3)(a), and to offset the unavoidable impacts of projects  
21 when seagrass banks meet the public interest criteria under  
22 chapters 253 and 258. This subsection does not prohibit  
23 mitigation for impacts to seagrass or other habitats on  
24 sovereignty submerged lands, upon approval of the board of  
25 trustees.

26           Section 2. The Department of Environmental Protection shall  
27 modify rules adopted pursuant to s. 373.4136, Florida Statutes,  
28 to remove any duplicative financial assurance requirements and  
29 to ensure that permitted seagrass mitigation banks comply with

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30 the federal mitigation banking rules.

31 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.