

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to a study of the Little Wekiva River;
3 requiring the Department of Environmental Protection,
4 in consultation with the St. Johns River Water
5 Management District, Seminole County, the Fish and
6 Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the Department
7 of Transportation, to conduct a study and issue a
8 report on sediment accumulation and water quality in
9 the Little Wekiva River by a specified date;
10 authorizing local and state entities or their
11 contractors to conduct restoration efforts during the
12 study period; requiring the department and the water
13 management district to review certain permits along
14 the Little Wekiva River; requiring certain enforcement
15 actions to be taken against noncompliant permittees;
16 providing an effective date.

17
18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

19
20 Section 1. The Department of Environmental Protection, in
21 consultation with the St. Johns River Water Management District,
22 Seminole County, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission,
23 and the Department of Transportation, shall conduct a study and
24 issue a report by December 31, 2021, to identify the source of
25 sediment accumulation in the Little Wekiva River and detail

26 | improvements to the water quality and ecology of the area which
27 | might be achieved by efforts to remove accumulated sediments by
28 | appropriate means, restore the natural river channel, remove
29 | invasive plants, and implement protective measures. The report
30 | must include an estimated cost for each improvement and
31 | potential funding sources. Local and state agencies or their
32 | contractors may conduct restoration efforts during the study
33 | period. The department and the water management district shall
34 | immediately review any permits north of S.R. 436 where the
35 | Little Wekiva River is identified as the receiving waters to
36 | assess whether any permittee is in violation of any permit
37 | conditions, take appropriate action to resolve any compliance
38 | issues, and remediate any impacts related to sedimentation in
39 | the Little Wekiva River and its adjacent wetland habitat. If a
40 | permittee or their contractors are found to be in violation of
41 | any permit condition associated with a project that has had an
42 | accumulation of sediments or has been found to have caused
43 | ecological harm to the Little Wekiva River, the permitting
44 | agencies shall levy all fines authorized by law commensurate
45 | with restoration costs.

46 | Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.