

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Appropriations

BILL: SPB 2508

INTRODUCER: For consideration by Appropriations Committee

SUBJECT: Environmental Resources

DATE: February 8, 2022

REVISED: _____

ANALYST
Blizzard/Reagan

STAFF DIRECTOR
Sadberry

REFERENCE

ACTION
Pre-meeting

I. Summary:

SPB 2508 conforms statutes to funding decisions relating to environmental resources in the Senate Proposed General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. Specifically, the bill:

- Expands the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) to authorize the DACS to purchase full fee interests in land, in addition to less-than-fee interests in land, such as conservation easements.
- Authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to enter into agreements with public entities to expedite evaluation of environmental resource permits and Section 404 permits related to a project or activity that serves a public purpose.
- Requires the South Florida Water Management District (district) to certify before the release of state funds that its recommendations to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (corps), in part, do not diminish the quantity of water available to existing legal users and will continue to adapt to meet the needs of the restored natural environment in an effort to ensure accountability regarding the use of state funds.
- Requires water shortages within the Lake Okeechobee Region to be managed pursuant to rules in effect January 1, 2022.
- Requires the district to take into consideration in its recommendations to the corps returning to Lake Okeechobee to a minimum flow and level prevention status and returning the level of certainty for existing legal users to a 1-in-10-year level of certainty in addition to the reduction of high-volume discharges to the estuaries.
- Reenacts section 570.93, Florida Statutes, relating to a cost-share program for agricultural irrigation systems.
- Transfers, through a type II transfer, the William J. (Billy Joe) Rish State Park from the Agency for Persons with Disabilities to the DEP.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022, except as otherwise expressly provided.

II. Present Situation:

Acquisition of State Lands

The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (board) consists of the Governor, as the chair, the Chief Financial Officer, the Attorney General, and the Commissioner of Agriculture.¹ All lands held by the board are required to be held in trust for the use and benefit of the people of the state.² The board has title to approximately three million acres of conservation land.³

Section 253.025, F.S., requires state agencies to follow specific acquisition procedures relating to marketability of title; appraisal maps, surveys, and reports; maximum offers; negotiations; purchase instruments; closing procedures; and joint acquisitions.⁴ The board is authorized by an affirmative vote of at least three of its members, to direct the DEP to purchase lands on an immediate basis using up to 15 percent of the funds allocated to the DEP under the Florida Forever program for the acquisition of lands that:

- Are listed or placed at auction by the Federal Government as part of the Resolution Trust Corporation sale of lands from failed savings and loan associations;
- Are listed or placed at auction by the Federal Government as part of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation sale of lands from failed banks; or
- Will be developed or otherwise lost to potential public ownership, or for which federal matching funds will be lost, by the time the land can be purchased under the program within which the land is listed for acquisition.⁵

Additionally, the board is authorized to waive acquisition requirements so long as the public's interest is reasonably protected.⁶

Rural and Family Lands Protection Program

The Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP) within the DACS is an agricultural land preservation program designed to protect agricultural lands through the acquisition of permanent conservation easements.⁷ The DACS is authorized to enter into conservation easements for any of the following purposes:

- Promotion and improvement of wildlife habitat.
- Protection and enhancement of water bodies, aquifer recharge areas, wetlands, and watersheds.

¹ FLA. CONST. art. IV, s. 4.

² Section 253.001, F.S.

³ Florida Department of Environmental Protection, *State of Florida Lands and Facilities Inventory Search*, (data as of 2/5/2022) available at

[https://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DslPi/stateLandPiChart.action?agencyName=Department%20of%20Environmental%20Protection%20\(BOT\)](https://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DslPi/stateLandPiChart.action?agencyName=Department%20of%20Environmental%20Protection%20(BOT)) (last visited Feb. 6, 2022).

⁴ Section 253.025, F.S.; Fla. Admin. Code Ch. 18-1.

⁵ Section 259.041(15), F.S.

⁶ Section 253.025(1), F.S.

⁷ Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS), *Rural and Family Lands Protection Program*, available at <https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Protect-Our-Environment/Rural-and-Family-Lands-Protection-Program> (last visited Feb. 6, 2022).

- Perpetuation of open space on lands with significant natural areas.
- Protection of agricultural lands threatened by conversion to other uses.⁸

The DACS developed a priority list in 2018 which includes a total of 373,311 acres and divides the 144 projects into three tiers.⁹

Water Resource Permitting

The DEP, in coordination with the water management districts and certain local governments, regulates activities that may affect wetlands and alter surface water flows through the Environmental Resource Permit program. To receive a permit, an applicant must demonstrate that the proposed activity will not be harmful to the water resources. Additionally, an applicant must provide reasonable assurances that the activity will not violate applicable water quality standards.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) is the principle protection for wetlands.¹⁰ Under the federal law, no person may discharge dredge or fill materials into navigable waters without a permit.¹¹ In 2020, Florida was authorized to implement the section 404 program.¹² Upon program approval, the corps was required to transfer all pending applications within assumed waters.¹³ In January 2021, the corps transferred over 500 applications, and nine months after the DEP had been administering the program, it had received a total of 3,098 applications. The DEP estimated that the workload would be a total of 770 permits per year.¹⁴ The DEP has worked to improve efficiency through:

- Enhanced training of in-office staff on federal reporting commitments;
- Collaboration with water management districts to have eligible employees complete wetland delineations;
- Appointment of a 404 lead position; and
- Requests for 23 new positions in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.¹⁵

South Florida Water Management District

There are five regional water management districts set up largely on hydrologic boundaries. Water management districts historically have been funded by local tax dollars. Each district is

⁸ Section 570.71, F.S.

⁹ DACS, *Rural and Family Lands Protection Program*, available at <https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Protect-Our-Environment/Rural-and-Family-Lands-Protection-Program> (last visited Feb. 6, 2022).

¹⁰ 33 U.S.C. s. 1344.

¹¹ 33 U.S.C. s. 1344(a). Navigable waters are waters of the U.S., including the territorial seas. 33 U.S.C. s. 1362(7).

¹² 85 FR 83553.

¹³ DEP, *Florida's State 404 Program*, 9 (Oct. 21, 2021)

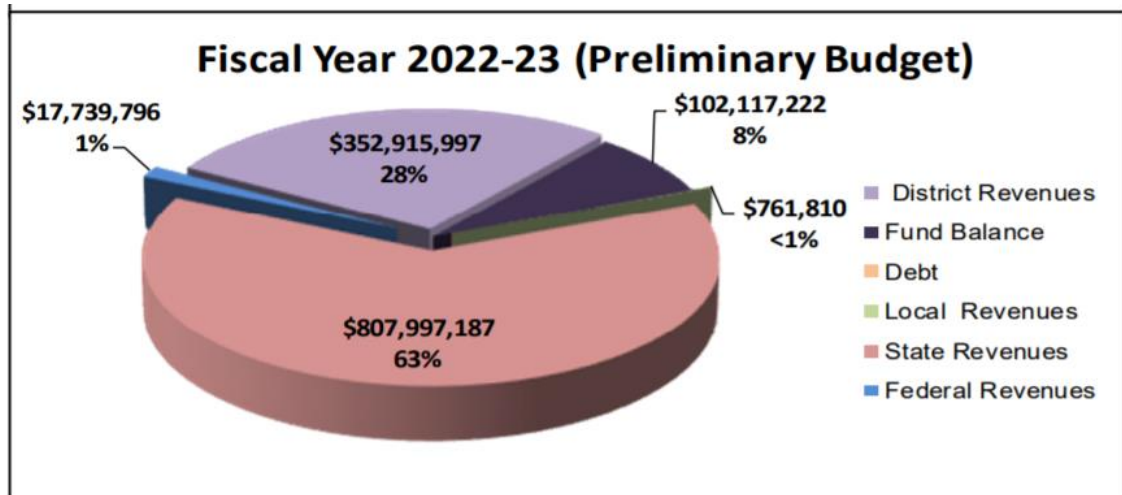
<https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?PublicationType=Committees&CommitteeId=3113&Session=2022&DocumentType=Meeting+Packets&FileName=eaf+10-21-21.pdf> (last visited Feb. 1, 2022).

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.* at 11.

governed by a board appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The DEP also provides general oversight of water management districts at the state level.¹⁶

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD or district) includes 30 percent of the state’s total area, encompassing 18,000 square miles and spanning all or part of 16 counties. The total preliminary budget for the district is approximately \$1.3 billion. The following chart¹⁷ provides a breakdown of the district’s 2022-2023 Fiscal Year preliminary budget:



A large portion of the state funds provided to the SFWMD is attributable to the inclusion of funding for large scale ecosystem restoration projects largely relating to Lake Okeechobee and Everglades restoration. Overall, the district operates and maintains 2,179 miles of canals, 2,131 miles of levees and berms, 89 pumping stations, 918 water control structures and weirs, and 621 project culverts structures.¹⁸

Central and Southern Florida Project & Everglades Restoration

The SFWMD is authorized to act as local sponsor of the Central and Southern Florida Project (C&SF Project).¹⁹ The C&SF Project was established in 1948 as a multi-purpose project to provide for flood control, regional water supply, prevention of saltwater intrusion, water supply to Everglades National Park, wildlife preservation, recreation, and navigation.²⁰ To achieve these purposes, in a partnership between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (corps) and the state, the C&SF Project developed a water management system that includes 1,000 miles each of levees

¹⁶ See South Florida Water Management District, *SFWMD FY2022-2023 Preliminary Budget*, (Jan. 14, 2022), available at https://www.sfwmd.gov/sites/default/files/South_Florida_Water_Management_District_FY2022-2023_Preliminary_Budget_January_14_2022.pdf (last visited Feb. 7, 2022).

¹⁷ *Id.* at 71.

¹⁸ *Id.* at 6.

¹⁹ Section 373.1501(4), F.S.

²⁰ Corps and SFWMD, *Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study, Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement*, 1-1 (April 1999) [hereinafter *Restudy*], available at https://www.sfwmd.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CENTRAL_AND_SOUTHERN_FLORIDA_PROJECT_COMPREHENSIVE_REVIEW_STUDY.pdf (last visited Feb. 2, 2022).

and canals, 150 water control structures, and 16 major pump stations.²¹ As time went on, concerns regarding the effects of the C&SF Project began mounting. The design of the system, while effective for flood control, resulted in unintended consequences including:

- Extreme fluctuations in high and low water levels in the lake;
- Extreme fluctuations between too much and too little freshwater discharged into the coastal estuaries;
- Detrimental hydrological conditions in freshwater wetland habitats; and
- Unsuitable freshwater flows to Florida Bay, Biscayne Bay, and the Lake Worth Lagoon.²²

In light of the unintended consequences of the C&SF project, Congress required the corps to reevaluate the performance and impacts of the project and to provide recommended improvements and modifications to restore the south Florida ecosystem and to protect the water quality in, and reduce the loss of freshwater from the Everglades and Florida Bay.²³ The corps, in coordination with the state, developed the Restudy which provided a recommended plan for Everglades restoration. The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) was approved by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000.²⁴ The SFWMD is local sponsor to a majority of the CERP projects.

State Water Resource Plan Direct Expenditure Authorization

The State Water Resource Plan, ch. 373, F.S., authorizes the DEP to collaborate with the SFWMD to implement the comprehensive plan (CERP)²⁵ to ensure to the greatest extent possible that the project components go forward as planned.²⁶ The DEP must approve each project component before it is submitted to Congress. Prior to the release of state funds for the implementation of the comprehensive plan, the DEP approval must be based on whether the SFWMD complied with s. 373.1501(5), F.S., which requires the district, in part, to:

- Analyze and evaluate all needs to be met in a comprehensive manner and consider all applicable water resource issues, including water supply, water quality, flood protection, threatened and endangered species, and other natural system and habitat needs;
- Determine with reasonable certainty that all project components are consistent with applicable law and regulations, and can be permitted and operated as proposed; and
- Consistent with ch., 373, F.S., the purposes for the restudy, and other applicable federal law, provide reasonable assurances that the quantity of water available to existing legal users shall not be diminished by implementation of project components so as to adversely impact existing legal users, that existing levels of service for flood protection will not be diminished outside the geographic area of the project component, and that water management practices will continue to adapt to meet the needs of the restored natural environment.

²¹ Restudy at 1-10.

²² Restudy at iii.

²³ The Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-303, Oct. 12, 1996).

²⁴ The Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-541, Dec. 11, 2000).

²⁵ Section 373.470 (2)(b), F.S. "Comprehensive plan" means the recommended comprehensive plan contained within the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, April 1999" and submitted to Congress on July, 1999.

²⁶ Section 373.026(8)(b), F.S.

The Water Shortage Plan and Regional Water Shortage Plans

The Water Shortage Plan is intended to protect the SFWMD's water resources from harm; to assure equitable distribution of available water resources among all water users during water shortages; and to provide advance knowledge of the means by which water apportionments and reductions will be made during times of shortage and to promote security for water use permittees.²⁷

The Water Shortage Plan directs the SFWMD to periodically evaluate water conditions within the SFWMD to determine if a water shortage should be declared.²⁸ If the SFWMD determines that there is a possibility that insufficient water will be available to meet estimated present and anticipated user demands from that source, or to protect water resources from serious harm, the SFWMD may declare a water shortage for the affected source class.²⁹

The Water Shortage Plan groups surface water use basins by region, including the Lake Okeechobee Surface Water Use Basin, which includes the following sub basins: the Everglades Agricultural Area Water Use Basin, the Caloosahatchee River Water Use Basin, the St. Lucie River Water Use Basin, and the Lakeshore Perimeter Water Use Basin.³⁰ The Regional Water Shortage Plan for the Lake Okeechobee Region identifies water levels within Lake Okeechobee that are used to determine whether the district shall declare a water shortage.³¹

Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule

The corps, in conjunction with the SFWMD, manages Lake Okeechobee water levels.³² After back-to-back hurricanes in South Florida in 2004 and 2005 and the devastation in Louisiana caused by Hurricane Katrina, the corps launched a major effort to rehabilitate the Herbert Hoover Dike in light of concerns regarding its structural integrity. Additionally, the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule Study was initiated to design an alternative schedule to lower the normal operating limits of the lake.³³

As a result of the study, the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule (LORS) was implemented. The revised schedule lowered the maximum stage of the lake from 18.5 ft. to 17.25 ft. with the primary goal of maintaining the lake between 12.5 ft. and 15.5 ft. The areas most affected by a change to the lake's regulation schedule were the lake itself, particularly the littoral and marsh areas of the lake, and the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries.³⁴

²⁷ Fla. Admin. Code R. 40E-21.011.

²⁸ Fla. Admin. Code R. 40E-21.221.

²⁹ Fla. Admin. Code R. 40E-21.231.

³⁰ Fla. Admin. Code R. 40E-21.631.

³¹ *Id.*

³² For example, currently under LORS, when the lake is at lower levels which is referred to as the water shortage management band, the lake is managed in accordance with the SFWMD's water shortage plan. See Corps, *Central and Southern Florida Project, Water Control Plan for Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades Agricultural Area*, 7-10 (March 2008) available at https://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/h2omgmt/LORSdocs/2008_LORS_WCP_mar2008.pdf (last visited Feb. 7, 2022).

³³ Corps, *Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule, Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement*, ii (Nov. 2007), available at http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/h2omgmt/LORSdocs/ACOE_STATEMENT_APPENDICES_A-G.pdf (last visited Feb. 7, 2022).

³⁴ *Id.* at 1.

Additionally, because the LORS high management band is 1.00 to 1.75 ft. lower than the previous schedule, the revision to the schedule resulted in a loss of storage ranging from 460,000 to 800,000 acre-feet depending on the time of year.³⁵ Additionally, the loss in storage affected water supply users and led to a reduced level of certainty for surface water users in the Lake Okeechobee Region.³⁶

The corps began development of a new Lake Okeechobee System Operation Manual (LOSOM) to reevaluate and define operation for the Lake Okeechobee regulation schedule taking into consideration added water storage capacity within the lake as a result of the Herbert Hoover Dike rehabilitation, as well as, around the lake through various CERP project components.³⁷ Such additional water is expected to return the lake to a minimum flow and prevention strategy, enhance the level of certainty for existing permitted users receiving less than a 1-in-10-year level of certainty, and support environmental objectives.³⁸

Agricultural Water Conservation Program

The DACS is required to create an agricultural water conservation program. As part of the program, the DACS is required to establish a cost-share program, for irrigation system retrofit and application of mobile irrigation laboratory evaluations and for water conservation and water quality improvements. This cost-share program requirement has been included in the implementing bill since 2019.³⁹ Currently, there are eight DACS-funded agricultural mobile irrigation labs providing service to agricultural producers throughout the state.⁴⁰

William J. (Billy Joe) Rish State Park

The Billy Joe Rish State Park is a 100-acre park located in Cape San Blas, Florida. The park was established in the 1970s as an outdoor recreation area for people with disabilities, their families and their caregivers. The park has been closed since Hurricane Michael, but the DEP recently announced that it was being reopened effective January 31, 2022.⁴¹

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 amends s. 253.025, F.S., to authorize the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, by an affirmative vote of at least three members to direct the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACCS) to purchase lands pursuant to

³⁵ The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *Progress Toward Restoring the Everglades: The Sixth Biennial Review*, 133 (2016) [hereinafter *The Sixth Biennial Review*], available at <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/23672/progress-toward-restoring-the-everglades-the-sixth-biennial-review-2016> (last visited Feb. 7, 2022).

³⁶ Corps, *LOWRP Final Integrated Project Implementation Report and Environmental Impact Statement*, 2-18 (August 2020), available at <https://usace.contentdm.oclc.org/utis/getfile/collection/p16021coll7/id/15175> (last visited Feb. 7, 2022).

³⁷ Corps, *Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM)*, a component of the *Central & Southern Florida (C&SF) System Operating Plan*, <https://www.saj.usace.army.mil/LOSOM/> (last visited Feb. 7, 2022).

³⁸ Corps, *LOWRP Final Integrated Project Implementation Report and Environmental Impact Statement* at 2-18.

³⁹ See e.g., ch. 2021-37, s. 43, Laws of Florida.

⁴⁰ DACS, *Mobile Irrigation Labs*, available at <https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Water/Mobile-Irrigation-Labs> (last visited Feb. 7, 2022).

⁴¹ DEP, *Florida State Parks Announces Opening of William J. “Billy Joe” Rish Recreation Area in Cape San Blas*, (Jan. 28, 2022) available at <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/FLDEP/bulletins/3081577> (last visited Feb. 7, 2022).

ch. 570, F.S., relating to the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP), on an immediate basis.

The bill provides, for the purposes of determining which lands qualify to be purchased on an immediate basis, that the necessity may arise due to federal funds being lost by the time the land can be purchased under the program, rather than federal matching funds. The bill makes a conforming change to include lands on the RFLPP acquisition list.

This section is effective January 1, 2023.

Section 2 amends s. 373.026, F.S., to require each budget amendment requesting the release of state funds for the implementation of a project component or a water control plan or regulation schedule required for the operation of the project to be contingent upon the submission of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) certification required in s. 373.1501(7), F.S.

The bill requires, prior to the release of state funds for the implementation of the comprehensive plan, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approval to be based upon a determination that the SFWMD has complied with s. 373.1501(7), F.S., in addition to s. 373.1501(5), F.S.

The bill requires the secretary of the DEP to determine that the SFWMD's annual work plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of s. 373.1501(7), F.S., prior to the approval of the release of state funds.

This section is effective up on becoming a law.

Section 3 amends s. 373.036, F.S., to require any modifications to the SFWMD's annual work plan to be submitted to the secretary of the DEP for review and approval.

This section is effective upon becoming a law.

Section 4 amends s. 373.1501, F.S., to require the SFWMD to certify to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, with a copy to the DEP, that its recommendations to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (corps) on any proposed new or modified Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule, Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual, or deviation, and related project components comply with s. 373.4598(11), F.S., and:

- Do not diminish the quantity of water available to existing legal users;
- Do not otherwise adversely impact existing legal users;
- Do not diminish the existing levels of service for flood protection within or outside the geographic area of the project component;
- Do not adversely affect adopted minimum flows and levels associated with prevention and recovery strategies; and
- Will continue to adapt to meet the needs of the restored natural environment.

The bill codifies the Lake Okeechobee Region water shortage rule provided in chs. 40E-21 and 40E-22, F.A.C., in effect as of January 1, 2022.

This section is effective upon becoming a law.

Section 5 amends s. 373.4141, F.S., to authorize the DEP to enter into an agreement or contract with a public entity, which includes a utility regulated under ch. 366, F.S., to expedite the evaluation of environmental resource permits or Section 404 permits related to a project or activity that serves a public purpose. Under the federal program, a similar process is authorized to expedite permits.⁴²

An agreement or contract entered into must be effective for at least three years and the DEP is required to ensure that any agreement or contract entered into does not affect impartial decision-making, either substantively or procedurally. All active agreements must be made available on the DEP's website.

The bill authorizes the DEP to receive funds pursuant to an agreement or contract and requires any such funds to be deposited into the Grants and Donations Trust Fund.

Section 6 amends s. 373.4598, F.S., to require the SFWMD to request the corps in its revelation of the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule to optimally utilize the added water storage capacity to return Lake Okeechobee to a minimum flow and level prevention status and return the level of certainty for existing legal users to a 1-in-10-year level of certainty, in addition to reducing the high-volume freshwater discharges to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries.

The bill also authorizes the use of state funds for the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration project, the Indian River Lagoon-South project, and the C-43 West Basin Reservoir project, in addition to the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir project.

This section is effective upon becoming a law.

Section 7 amends s. 570.71, F.S., to expand the RRFLP to include the acquisition of land, in addition to less-than-fee acquisitions (conservation easements). The bill adds the preservation and protection of natural and working landscapes and the preservation, protection, and enhancement of wildlife corridors and linkages to the purposes for which lands may be acquired under the program.

The bill clarifies rights or interests in lands must include a prohibition on activities that detrimentally affect the natural hydrology of the land. The bill prohibits easements purchased under the program from, at the request of the landowner, restricting a landowner's ability to use, or authorize the use of by third parties, specific parcels of land within a conservation easement for conservation banking or recipient sites for imperiled species or wetlands mitigation banking, provided the specific parcels of land include wetland or upland areas that may be enhanced, restored, or created under the conditions of a wetlands mitigation permit.

The bill expands the priority of lands for which the DACS must give preference to include lands, generally, managed using sustainable practices, not just ranch and timber lands.

⁴² 33 U.S.C. 2352 Funding to process permits, available at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2015-title33/pdf/USCODE-2015-title33-chap36-subchapV-sec2352.pdf>.

Section 8 amends s. 570.715, F.S., to make conforming changes related to the expansion of the RFLPP from conservation easements to full fee land purchases.

The bill authorizes DACS to buy land at fair market value, so long as the public's interest is reasonably protected, as opposed to the maximum offer authorized by law.

Section 9 provides for a Type II transfer of William J. "Billy Joe" Rish Recreational Park from the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) to the DEP. The bill provides that any binding contract or interagency agreement existing before July 1, 2022, between the APD and any other agency, entity, or person relating to the park to continue as binding for the remainder of the term of the contract or agreement.

Sections 10 and 11 reenact ss. 253.0251(7) and 259.105(3)(i), F.S., respectively, to incorporate the changes made to s. 570.715, F.S., relating to the land acquisition procedures for the RRFLP.

These sections take effect upon becoming a law.

Section 12 reenacts s. 570.93, F.S., to require the DACS to establish an agricultural water conservation program that includes a cost-share program for irrigation system retrofit and application of mobile irrigation laboratory evaluations, and for water conservation and water quality improvement.

Section 13 provides that except as otherwise expressly provided for in this act and except for this section, which takes effect upon becoming a law, the act takes effect July 1, 2022.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The Senate Proposed General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 includes \$300,000,000 for the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Additionally, within the Department of Environmental Protection, 33 positions and \$3,320,719 for environmental permitting; \$6,700,000 and positions for management, maintenance, and repairs for William J. (Billy Joe) Rish State Park; and \$320,623,196 to the South Florida Water Management District for projects in the Everglades and related to Lake Okeechobee.

Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VI. Related Issues:

None.

VII. Statutes Affected:

The bill substantially amends the following section of the Florida Statutes: 253.025, 253.0251, 259.105, 373.026, 373.036, 373.1501, 373.4141, 373.4598, 570.71, 570.715, and 570.93.

VIII. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.