

By Senator Rodriguez

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Land Acquisition Trust Fund;
3 amending s. 375.041, F.S.; requiring an annual
4 appropriation from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to
5 the Department of Environmental Protection to
6 implement the Florida Keys Stewardship Act or to
7 acquire land within the Florida Keys Area of Critical
8 State Concern for specified purposes; prohibiting the
9 department from using the appropriated funds to
10 implement wastewater management projects or programs;
11 requiring the distribution to be reduced by a
12 specified amount; deleting obsolete language;
13 providing an effective date.

14
15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 Section 1. Subsection (3) of section 375.041, Florida
18 Statutes, is amended to read:

19 375.041 Land Acquisition Trust Fund.—

20 (3) Funds distributed into the Land Acquisition Trust Fund
21 pursuant to s. 201.15 shall be applied:

22 (a) First, to pay debt service or to fund debt service
23 reserve funds, rebate obligations, or other amounts payable with
24 respect to Florida Forever bonds issued under s. 215.618; and
25 pay debt service, provide reserves, and pay rebate obligations
26 and other amounts due with respect to Everglades restoration
27 bonds issued under s. 215.619; and

28 (b) Of the funds remaining after the payments required
29 under paragraph (a), but before funds may be appropriated,

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pledged, or dedicated for other uses:

1. A minimum of the lesser of 25 percent or \$200 million shall be appropriated annually for Everglades projects that implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan as set forth in s. 373.470, including the Central Everglades Planning Project subject to Congressional authorization; the Long-Term Plan as defined in s. 373.4592(2); and the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program as set forth in s. 373.4595. From these funds, \$32 million shall be distributed each fiscal year through the 2023-2024 fiscal year to the South Florida Water Management District for the Long-Term Plan as defined in s. 373.4592(2). After deducting the \$32 million distributed under this subparagraph, from the funds remaining, a minimum of the lesser of 76.5 percent or \$100 million shall be appropriated each fiscal year through the 2025-2026 fiscal year for the planning, design, engineering, and construction of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan as set forth in s. 373.470, including the Central Everglades Planning Project, the Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir Project, the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project, the C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir Project, the Indian River Lagoon-South Project, the Western Everglades Restoration Project, and the Picayune Strand Restoration Project. The Department of Environmental Protection and the South Florida Water Management District shall give preference to those Everglades restoration projects that reduce harmful discharges of water from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie or Caloosahatchee estuaries in a timely manner. For the purpose of performing the calculation provided in this subparagraph, the amount of debt service paid pursuant to

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59 paragraph (a) for bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the
60 purposes set forth under this paragraph shall be added to the
61 amount remaining after the payments required under paragraph
62 (a). The amount of the distribution calculated shall then be
63 reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to
64 paragraph (a) on bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the
65 purposes set forth under this subparagraph.

66 2. A minimum of the lesser of 7.6 percent or \$50 million
67 shall be appropriated annually for spring restoration,
68 protection, and management projects. For the purpose of
69 performing the calculation provided in this subparagraph, the
70 amount of debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) for bonds
71 issued after July 1, 2016, for the purposes set forth under this
72 paragraph shall be added to the amount remaining after the
73 payments required under paragraph (a). The amount of the
74 distribution calculated shall then be reduced by an amount equal
75 to the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds
76 issued after July 1, 2016, for the purposes set forth under this
77 subparagraph.

78 3. The sum of \$5 million shall be appropriated annually
79 each fiscal year through the 2025-2026 fiscal year to the St.
80 Johns River Water Management District for projects dedicated to
81 the restoration of Lake Apopka. This distribution shall be
82 reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to
83 paragraph (a) on bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the
84 purposes set forth in this subparagraph.

85 4. The sum of \$64 million is appropriated and shall be
86 transferred to the Everglades Trust Fund for the 2018-2019
87 fiscal year, and each fiscal year thereafter, for the EAA

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88 reservoir project pursuant to s. 373.4598. Any funds remaining
89 in any fiscal year shall be made available only for Phase II of
90 the C-51 reservoir project or projects identified in
91 subparagraph 1. and must be used in accordance with laws
92 relating to such projects. Any funds made available for such
93 purposes in a fiscal year are in addition to the amount
94 appropriated under subparagraph 1. This distribution shall be
95 reduced by an amount equal to the debt service paid pursuant to
96 paragraph (a) on bonds issued after July 1, 2017, for the
97 purposes set forth in this subparagraph.

98 5. The sum of \$50 million shall be appropriated annually to
99 the South Florida Water Management District for the Lake
100 Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project in accordance with s.
101 373.4599. This distribution must be reduced by an amount equal
102 to the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds
103 issued after July 1, 2021, for the purposes set forth in this
104 subparagraph.

105 6.a.6. The sum of \$20 million shall be appropriated
106 annually to the Department of Environmental Protection for the
107 purpose of:

108 (I) Implementing the Florida Keys Stewardship Act, chapter
109 2016-225, Laws of Florida, by entering into financial assistance
110 agreements with local governments located in the Florida Keys
111 Area of Critical State Concern or the City of Key West Area of
112 Critical State Concern to promote the protection or restoration
113 of Florida Bay, the Florida Keys, and nearshore marine
114 ecosystems, including coral reefs; or

115 (II) Acquiring land within the Florida Keys Area of
116 Critical State Concern as authorized pursuant to s. 259.045,

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117 with increased priority given to acquisitions that achieve a
118 combination of conservation goals, including protecting this
119 state's water resources and natural groundwater recharge.

120 b. Notwithstanding any other law, the department may not
121 use the appropriated funds to implement wastewater management
122 projects or programs.

123 c. The distribution must be reduced by an amount equal to
124 the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds issued
125 after July 1, 2023, for the purposes set forth in this
126 subparagraph ~~Notwithstanding subparagraph 3., for the 2022-2023~~
127 ~~fiscal year, funds shall be appropriated as provided in the~~
128 ~~General Appropriations Act. This subparagraph expires July 1,~~
129 ~~2023.~~

130 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.