

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

592-00702-23

202354c1

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; requiring the
9 distribution to be reduced by a specified amount;
10 deleting obsolete language; providing an effective
11 date.

12
13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
14

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

17 375.041 Land Acquisition Trust Fund.—

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

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

26 (b) Of the funds remaining after the payments required
27 under paragraph (a), but before funds may be appropriated,
28 pledged, or dedicated for other uses:

29 1. A minimum of the lesser of 25 percent or \$200 million

592-00702-23

202354c1

30 shall be appropriated annually for Everglades projects that
31 implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan as set
32 forth in s. 373.470, including the Central Everglades Planning
33 Project subject to Congressional authorization; the Long-Term
34 Plan as defined in s. 373.4592(2); and the Northern Everglades
35 and Estuaries Protection Program as set forth in s. 373.4595.
36 From these funds, \$32 million shall be distributed each fiscal
37 year through the 2023-2024 fiscal year to the South Florida
38 Water Management District for the Long-Term Plan as defined in
39 s. 373.4592(2). After deducting the \$32 million distributed
40 under this subparagraph, from the funds remaining, a minimum of
41 the lesser of 76.5 percent or \$100 million shall be appropriated
42 each fiscal year through the 2025-2026 fiscal year for the
43 planning, design, engineering, and construction of the
44 Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan as set forth in s.
45 373.470, including the Central Everglades Planning Project, the
46 Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir Project, the Lake
47 Okeechobee Watershed Project, the C-43 West Basin Storage
48 Reservoir Project, the Indian River Lagoon-South Project, the
49 Western Everglades Restoration Project, and the Picayune Strand
50 Restoration Project. The Department of Environmental Protection
51 and the South Florida Water Management District shall give
52 preference to those Everglades restoration projects that reduce
53 harmful discharges of water from Lake Okeechobee to the St.
54 Lucie or Caloosahatchee estuaries in a timely manner. For the
55 purpose of performing the calculation provided in this
56 subparagraph, the amount of debt service paid pursuant to
57 paragraph (a) for bonds issued after July 1, 2016, for the
58 purposes set forth under this paragraph shall be added to the

592-00702-23

202354c1

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

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

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

83 4. The sum of \$64 million is appropriated and shall be
84 transferred to the Everglades Trust Fund for the 2018-2019
85 fiscal year, and each fiscal year thereafter, for the EAA
86 reservoir project pursuant to s. 373.4598. Any funds remaining
87 in any fiscal year shall be made available only for Phase II of

592-00702-23

202354c1

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

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

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

106 (I) Implementing the Florida Keys Stewardship Act, chapter
107 2016-225, Laws of Florida, by entering into financial assistance
108 agreements with local governments located in the Florida Keys
109 Area of Critical State Concern or the City of Key West Area of
110 Critical State Concern to promote the protection or restoration
111 of Florida Bay, the Florida Keys, and nearshore marine
112 ecosystems, including coral reefs; or

113 (II) Acquiring land within the Florida Keys Area of
114 Critical State Concern as authorized pursuant to s. 259.045,
115 with increased priority given to acquisitions that achieve a
116 combination of conservation goals, including protecting this

592-00702-23

202354c1

117 state's water resources and natural groundwater recharge.
118 b. The distribution must be reduced by an amount equal to
119 the debt service paid pursuant to paragraph (a) on bonds issued
120 after July 1, 2023, for the purposes set forth in this
121 subparagraph ~~Notwithstanding subparagraph 3., for the 2022-2023~~
122 ~~fiscal year, funds shall be appropriated as provided in the~~
123 ~~General Appropriations Act. This subparagraph expires July 1,~~
124 ~~2023.~~

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