

By Senator Avila

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the restoration of Osborne Reef;
3 providing legislative findings and intent; requiring
4 the Department of Environmental Protection to submit a
5 status report on the Osborne Reef cleanup and tire
6 removal project to the Legislature by a specified
7 date; requiring the department to develop a
8 restoration plan for the reef by a specified date;
9 providing requirements for the restoration plan;
10 requiring the department to submit a report to the
11 Legislature upon completion of the plan; providing
12 requirements for the report; providing an effective
13 date.

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

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17 Section 1. Osborne Reef; restoration plan.-

18 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.-

19 (a) The Legislature finds that:

20 1. More than 1 million tires were deposited in the ocean
21 off the coast of Broward County during the 1970s to create an
22 artificial reef habitat by providing structures to which coral
23 could attach and attract additional marine life; however, many
24 of the tires have corroded, broken loose, and dislodged along
25 the coastline, damaging the existing fragile coral reef system
26 and prompting the Legislature to appropriate millions of dollars
27 to retrieve the tires.

28 2. Coral reefs are an important part of this state's
29 coastal ecosystem, creating habitats that provide shelter, food,

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30 and breeding grounds for plants and animals.

31 (b) The Legislature intends to restore Osborne Reef to
32 being capable of creating a habitat for plants and animals, and
33 to dedicate resources toward restoring the artificial reef and
34 the nearby natural coral reef systems once the cleanup of the
35 site has been completed.

36 (2) STATUS REPORT.—By December 1, 2023, the Department of
37 Environmental Protection shall submit a report to the President
38 of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on
39 the status of the Osborne Reef cleanup and tire removal project.
40 At a minimum, the report must include a description of the
41 condition of the remaining Osborne Reef structure, any
42 restoration efforts undertaken to restore the reef structure,
43 the number of tires retrieved since the project began and the
44 number of tires that still need to be retrieved, and an
45 estimated timeline for the completion of the cleanup and tire
46 removal project.

47 (3) RESTORATION PLAN.—

48 (a) By July 1, 2024, the Department of Environmental
49 Protection shall develop a comprehensive coral reef restoration
50 plan for Osborne Reef to be commenced, subject to appropriation
51 by the Legislature, upon the completion of the cleanup and tire
52 removal project. At a minimum, the restoration plan must include
53 a preliminary plan for the restoration of the existing reef, the
54 restoration of any nearby natural reefs that were destroyed by
55 the tire installation, the shifting of resources from tire
56 retrieval to reef restoration, and coordination with other coral
57 reef restoration projects and resources.

58 (b) Upon completion of the plan, the department shall

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59 provide a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker
60 of the House of Representatives. The report must include an
61 update on the status of the restoration plan and any
62 recommendations for statutory changes necessary to achieve the
63 identified restoration goals.

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