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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to funding for environmental resource  
3           management; creating s. 380.095, F.S.; providing  
4           legislative findings and intent; requiring the  
5           Department of Revenue to deposit into the Indian  
6           Gaming Revenue Trust Fund within the Department of  
7           Financial Services a specified percentage of the  
8           revenue share payments received under the gaming  
9           compact between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the  
10          State of Florida; providing requirements for the  
11          distribution of such funds; creating s. 260.0145,  
12          F.S.; creating the Local Trail Management Grant  
13          Program within the Department of Environmental  
14          Protection for a specified purpose; providing for the  
15          administration and prioritization of awards;  
16          specifying the authorized and prohibited uses of grant  
17          funds; requiring the department to submit an annual  
18          report to the Governor and the Legislature by a  
19          specified date; providing requirements for the report;  
20          amending s. 259.1055, F.S.; authorizing the Fish and  
21          Wildlife Conservation Commission to enter into  
22          voluntary agreements with private landowners for  
23          environmental services within the Florida wildlife  
24          corridor; providing requirements for such agreements;  
25          authorizing the use of land management funds;  
26          requiring the Land Management Uniform Accounting  
27          Council to recommend the efficient and effective use  
28          of certain funds available to state agencies for land  
29          management activities; providing requirements for such

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30 recommendations; requiring the council to adopt and  
31 submit its initial recommendation to the Executive  
32 Office of the Governor and the Legislature by a  
33 specified date; requiring biennial updates; amending  
34 s. 403.0673, F.S.; revising the projects the  
35 department is required to prioritize within the water  
36 quality improvement grant program; revising the  
37 components required for the grant program's annual  
38 report; providing appropriations; requiring the  
39 department to coordinate with the Water School at  
40 Florida Gulf Coast University for specified purposes;  
41 requiring the Water School to conduct a specified  
42 study; providing requirements for the study; requiring  
43 the department to submit a report to the Executive  
44 Office of the Governor and the Legislature by a  
45 specified date; providing appropriations; requiring  
46 the South Florida Water Management District to enter  
47 into a contract with the Water School at Florida Gulf  
48 Coast University to conduct a study of the health and  
49 ecosystem of Lake Okeechobee; providing requirements  
50 for the study; requiring that a report be submitted to  
51 the Executive Office of the Governor and the  
52 Legislature by a specified date; authorizing the  
53 Department of Environmental Protection to submit  
54 budget amendments for the release of specified funds;  
55 providing a contingent effective date.

56  
57 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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59 Section 1. Section 380.095, Florida Statutes, is created to  
60 read:

61 380.095 Dedicated funding for conservation lands,  
62 resiliency, and clean water infrastructure.-

63 (1) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.-The Legislature recognizes that the  
64 conservation and preservation of the land and water resources of  
65 this state are essential to maintaining the quality of life  
66 enjoyed by Floridians and to sustaining and growing a thriving  
67 state economy, including legacy industries such as tourism,  
68 agriculture, and fishing.

69 (a) The Legislature recognizes that historic investments in  
70 land conservation have fostered and will continue to foster the  
71 preservation of Florida's heritage, allow for the strategic  
72 expansion and interconnectivity of the Florida wildlife  
73 corridor, and promote the protection of crucial habitat  
74 necessary for the survival, protection, and recovery of  
75 threatened and endangered native species, including the Florida  
76 panther.

77 (b) The Legislature further recognizes that as the state  
78 acquires land, the state needs to be a good steward of the land,  
79 which necessitates the need for a commitment to provide funding  
80 at levels sufficient to ensure the proper management of such  
81 lands. These investments provide opportunities for expanded  
82 public access to state lands, including state parks, the Florida  
83 Greenways and Trails System, and game lands, among others, for  
84 recreation; and promote opportunities to protect such lands from  
85 wildfire damage and the infiltration of dangerous nonnative  
86 plant and animal species, among other benefits.

87 (c) The Legislature finds that the state is particularly

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88 vulnerable to adverse impacts from increases in the frequency  
89 and duration of rainfall events and sea level rise. The  
90 consequences of such events not only endanger human lives and  
91 properties, but also threaten Florida's natural habitats and  
92 biodiversity. The Legislature further recognizes that enhancing  
93 the state's resiliency to storm events and sea level rise is  
94 essential to Florida's economic stability and growth.

95 (d) Furthermore, the Legislature recognizes the need for  
96 additional revenue sources to address the gap in funding that is  
97 necessary to address water quality impacts, and that the  
98 projections for significant population growth further exacerbate  
99 such need.

100 (e) Therefore, the Legislature finds that it is in the best  
101 interest of the residents of the State of Florida to dedicate  
102 revenues from the gaming compact between the Seminole Tribe of  
103 Florida and the State of Florida to acquire and manage  
104 conservation lands, and to make significant investments in  
105 resiliency efforts and clean water infrastructure.

106 (2) DISTRIBUTION.—Notwithstanding s. 285.710, the  
107 Department of Revenue shall, upon receipt, deposit 96 percent of  
108 any revenue share payment received under the compact as defined  
109 in s. 285.710 into the Indian Gaming Revenue Clearing Trust Fund  
110 within the Department of Financial Services. The funds deposited  
111 into the trust fund shall be distributed as follows:

112 (a) The lesser of 26.042 percent or \$100 million each  
113 fiscal year to support the Florida wildlife corridor as defined  
114 in s. 259.1055, including the acquisition of lands or  
115 conservation easements within the Florida wildlife corridor. To  
116 be eligible for funding, the acquisition project must be

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117 included on a land acquisition priority list developed pursuant  
118 to s. 259.035 or s. 570.71. The funds must be appropriated in  
119 Administered Funds each fiscal year. Eligible state agencies  
120 may, on a first-come, first-served basis, submit a budget  
121 amendment to request release of funds pursuant to chapter 216.  
122 Release is contingent upon approval, if required.

123 (b) The lesser of 26.042 percent or \$100 million each  
124 fiscal year for the management of uplands and the removal of  
125 invasive species. From these funds, amounts shall be applied as  
126 follows:

127 1. The lesser of 36 percent or \$36 million to the  
128 Department of Environmental Protection, of which:

129 a. The lesser of 88.889 percent of the funds available  
130 pursuant to this subparagraph or \$32 million to the State Park  
131 Trust Fund within the department for land management activities  
132 within the state park system; and

133 b. The lesser of 11.111 percent of the funds available  
134 pursuant to this subparagraph or \$4 million to the Internal  
135 Improvement Trust Fund within the department for the purpose of  
136 implementing the Local Trail Management Grant Program created  
137 pursuant to s. 260.0145.

138 2. The lesser of 32 percent or \$32 million to the  
139 Incidental Trust Fund within the Department of Agriculture and  
140 Consumer Services for land management activities.

141 3. The lesser of 32 percent or \$32 million to the State  
142 Game Trust Fund within the Fish and Wildlife Conservation  
143 Commission for land management activities, including management  
144 activities for gopher tortoises and Florida panthers.

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146 For sub-subparagraph 1.a. and subparagraphs 2. and 3., a land  
147 manager may not use more than 25 percent of the distribution for  
148 operation capital outlay or capital assets.

149 (c) The lesser of 26.042 percent or \$100 million each  
150 fiscal year to the Resilient Florida Trust Fund within the  
151 Department of Environmental Protection for the Statewide  
152 Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan to be used in  
153 accordance with s. 380.093.

154 (d) After the distributions pursuant to paragraphs (a),  
155 (b), and (c), the remainder each fiscal year to the Water  
156 Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund within the  
157 Department of Environmental Protection for the Water Quality  
158 Improvement Grant Program, to be used in accordance with s.  
159 403.0673.

160  
161 Allocations to trust funds shall be transferred monthly by  
162 nonoperating authority to the named trust fund.

163 Section 2. Section 260.0145, Florida Statutes, is created  
164 to read:

165 260.0145 Local Trail Management Grant Program.—

166 (1) The Local Trail Management Grant Program is created  
167 within the department to assist local governments with costs  
168 associated with the operation and maintenance of trails within  
169 the Florida Greenways and Trails System. Funding for the program  
170 is subject to appropriation.

171 (2) A local government may receive multiple grant awards  
172 per application cycle.

173 (3) The department shall give priority to each of the  
174 following:

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175 (a) A local government that provides cost share for the  
176 costs associated with the operation and maintenance of the  
177 trails, except for trails within fiscally constrained counties  
178 or rural areas of opportunity.

179 (b) Trails within the Florida wildlife corridor as defined  
180 in s. 259.1055.

181 (4) A local government may only use grant funds for the  
182 operation and maintenance of trails, including, but not limited  
183 to, the purchase of equipment and capital assets; the funding of  
184 necessary repairs to ensure the safety of trail users; and other  
185 necessary maintenance, such as pressure washing, bush pruning,  
186 and clearing debris. A local government may not use grant funds  
187 for the planning, design, or construction of trails.

188 (5) Beginning January 15, 2025, and each January 15  
189 thereafter, the department shall submit a report to the  
190 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
191 House of Representatives in accordance with s. 286.001 listing  
192 the grants awarded pursuant to this section. The report must  
193 include the following information for each grant award: the  
194 grant recipient's name, a description of the individual  
195 components of the trail, a description of the maintenance  
196 activities funded, the total management cost for the trail  
197 components, and the cost share, if any, provided by the  
198 recipient.

199 Section 3. Present subsection (6) of section 259.1055,  
200 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (7), and a new  
201 subsection (6) is added to that section, to read:

202 259.1055 Florida wildlife corridor.—

203 (6) MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES.—The Fish and Wildlife

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204 Conservation Commission is authorized to enter into voluntary  
205 agreements with private landowners for environmental services  
206 within the Florida wildlife corridor.

207 (a) The agreements must require that the landowner protect  
208 and restore water resources; improve management of wildlife  
209 habitat, including the long-term conservation of forest and  
210 grassland soils and native plants; manage the land in a manner  
211 that keeps the desired ecosystem healthy for protected species,  
212 such as the gopher tortoise and the Florida panther; or provide  
213 other incentives to landowners to continue and improve land uses  
214 that are both economically sustainable and beneficial to the  
215 environment of this state.

216 (b) The commission shall ensure that any agreement for  
217 environmental services entered into requires the landowner to  
218 manage the land in a manner that improves or enhances the land  
219 beyond what is required under any other agreement or contract  
220 the landowner may have with the state.

221 (c) Subject to appropriation, the commission may use land  
222 management funds received pursuant to s. 380.095 for this  
223 purpose.

224 Section 4. (1) The Land Management Uniform Accounting  
225 Council (LMUAC) shall recommend the most efficient and effective  
226 use of the funds available to state agencies for land management  
227 activities pursuant to s. 380.095, Florida Statutes. The  
228 recommendations must be based on a review of the resources of  
229 each land management agency to determine current expenditures,  
230 including personnel costs, spent specifically on upland  
231 management activities and invasive species removal. The  
232 recommendations must include a calculation methodology to



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233 distribute the funds to the state agencies specified in s.  
234 380.095(2) (b), Florida Statutes.

235 (2) The LMUAC shall adopt its initial recommendation and  
236 submit it to the Executive Office of the Governor, the President  
237 of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives  
238 by January 3, 2027. Thereafter, the LMUAC shall update its  
239 recommendation in the biennial report developed pursuant to s.  
240 259.037, Florida Statutes.

241 Section 5. Subsections (3) and (7) of section 403.0673,  
242 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

243 403.0673 Water quality improvement grant program.—A grant  
244 program is established within the Department of Environmental  
245 Protection to address wastewater, stormwater, and agricultural  
246 sources of nutrient loading to surface water or groundwater.

247 (3) The department shall consider and prioritize those  
248 projects that:

249 (a) Have the maximum estimated reduction in nutrient load  
250 per project;

251 (b) Demonstrate project readiness;

252 (c) Are cost-effective;

253 (d) Have a cost share identified by the applicant, except  
254 for rural areas of opportunity;

255 (e) Have multiyear project implementation schedules with  
256 previous state commitment and involvement in the project,  
257 considering previously funded phases, the total amount of  
258 previous state funding, and previous partial appropriations for  
259 the proposed project; ~~or~~

260 (f) Are in a location where reductions are needed most to  
261 attain the water quality standards of a waterbody not attaining

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262 nutrient or nutrient-related standards; or

263 (g) Were determined eligible in a previous application  
264 cycle and were able to demonstrate project readiness but were  
265 not awarded a grant.

266

267 Any project that does not result in reducing nutrient loading to  
268 a waterbody identified in subsection (1) is not eligible for  
269 funding under this section.

270 (7) Beginning January 15, 2024, and each January 15  
271 thereafter, the department shall submit a report regarding the  
272 projects funded pursuant to this section to the Governor, the  
273 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
274 Representatives. The report must include a list of those  
275 projects receiving funding and those projects not receiving  
276 funding which were determined eligible by the department and  
277 were able to demonstrate project readiness. The report must  
278 include ~~and~~ the following information for each project:

279 (a) A description of the project;

280 (b) The cost of the project;

281 (c) The estimated nutrient load reduction of the project;

282 (d) The location of the project;

283 (e) The waterbody or waterbodies where the project will  
284 reduce nutrients; ~~and~~

285 (f) The total cost share being provided for the project;  
286 and

287 (g) The progress made in the implementation of multiyear  
288 projects, including the funds spent, remaining costs, and  
289 remaining timeline for full implementation.

290 Section 6. For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$2

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291 million in recurring funds is appropriated from the General  
292 Revenue Fund to the University of Florida to update continually  
293 both the Florida Wildlife Corridor plan and the Florida  
294 Ecological Greenways Network plan.

295 Section 7. From the funds distributed to the Department of  
296 Environmental Protection pursuant to s. 380.095(2)(d), Florida  
297 Statutes, and for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$5  
298 million in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the Water  
299 Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund within the  
300 Department of Environmental Protection to the department to  
301 coordinate with the Water School at Florida Gulf Coast  
302 University to conduct a study to identify and analyze potential  
303 regional projects that meet the eligibility criteria set forth  
304 in s. 403.0673, Florida Statutes. At a minimum, the study must  
305 include the collection and consolidation of data regarding water  
306 quality to identify potential regional projects, including  
307 stormwater, hydrologic improvements, and innovative  
308 technologies, which reduce nutrient loading to water bodies  
309 identified in s. 403.0673(1), Florida Statutes. The department  
310 shall submit a report to the Executive Office of the Governor,  
311 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
312 Representatives by January 3, 2025.

313 Section 8. From the funds distributed to the Indian Gaming  
314 Revenue Clearing Trust Fund within the Department of Financial  
315 Services pursuant to s. 380.095(2)(a), Florida Statutes, and for  
316 the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$100 million in  
317 nonrecurring funds is appropriated from trust funds to  
318 Administered Funds for land acquisition pursuant to s.  
319 380.095(2)(a), Florida Statutes.

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320        Section 9. From the funds distributed to the Department of  
321 Environmental Protection pursuant to s. 380.095(2)(b)1., Florida  
322 Statutes, and for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$4  
323 million in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the Internal  
324 Improvement Trust Fund within the Department of Environmental  
325 Protection for the purpose of implementing the Local Trail  
326 Management Grant Program created pursuant to s. 260.0145,  
327 Florida Statutes.

328        Section 10. From the funds distributed to the Department of  
329 Environmental Protection pursuant to s. 380.095(2)(b)1., Florida  
330 Statutes, and for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$32  
331 million in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the State  
332 Park Trust Fund within the Department of Environmental  
333 Protection for land management activities as specified in s.  
334 380.095(2)(b)1.a., Florida Statutes.

335        Section 11. From the funds distributed to the Department of  
336 Agriculture and Consumer Services pursuant to s.  
337 380.095(2)(b)2., Florida Statutes, and for the 2024-2025 fiscal  
338 year, the sum of \$32 million in nonrecurring funds is  
339 appropriated from the Incidental Trust Fund within the  
340 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for land  
341 management activities as specified in s. 380.095(2)(b)2.,  
342 Florida Statutes.

343        Section 12. From the funds distributed to the Fish and  
344 Wildlife Conservation Commission pursuant to s. 380.095(2)(b)3.,  
345 Florida Statutes, and for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of  
346 \$32 million in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the State  
347 Game Trust Fund within the Fish and Wildlife Conservation  
348 Commission for control of invasive species and upland land

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349 management activities pursuant to s. 380.095(2)(b)3., Florida  
350 Statutes, or s. 259.1055, Florida Statutes.

351 Section 13. From the funds distributed to the Department of  
352 Environmental Protection pursuant to s. 380.095(2)(c), Florida  
353 Statutes, and for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$100  
354 million in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the Resilient  
355 Florida Trust Fund within the Department of Environmental  
356 Protection for the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise  
357 Resilience Plan pursuant to s. 380.093, Florida Statutes.

358 Section 14. From the funds distributed to the Department of  
359 Environmental Protection pursuant to s. 380.095(2)(d), Florida  
360 Statutes, and for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$79  
361 million in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the Water  
362 Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund within the  
363 Department of Environmental Protection for the Water Quality  
364 Improvement Grant Program pursuant to s. 403.0673, Florida  
365 Statutes.

366 Section 15. For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$150  
367 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is  
368 appropriated in the Aid to Local Governments - Grants and Aids -  
369 South Florida Water Management District - Operations  
370 appropriation category to the South Florida Water Management  
371 District for operations and maintenance responsibilities under  
372 the purview of the district. The funds must be placed in  
373 reserve. From the funds, the district shall enter into a  
374 contract with the Water School at Florida Gulf Coast University  
375 to conduct a study of the health and ecosystem of Lake  
376 Okeechobee. The study must take into account the health of  
377 plants, fish, and wildlife to be used for future planning of

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378 invasive plant control, replanting of native vegetation, and  
379 fish and game management. A report must be submitted by January  
380 1, 2025, to the Executive Office of the Governor, the President  
381 of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.  
382 The Department of Environmental Protection is authorized to  
383 submit budget amendments to request release of funds pursuant to  
384 chapter 216, Florida Statutes. Release is contingent upon the  
385 submission of a spend plan and negotiated draft contract between  
386 the South Florida Water Management District and the Florida Gulf  
387 Coast University Water School.

388       Section 16. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law  
389 if SB 7080 or similar legislation is adopted in the same  
390 legislative session or an extension thereof and becomes a law.