

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to carbon sequestration; creating s.
3 403.945, F.S.; providing definitions; providing
4 legislative findings; creating the Carbon
5 Sequestration Task Force adjunct to the Department of
6 Environmental Protection; providing for task force
7 membership and duties; requiring the task force to
8 submit specified reports to the Secretary of
9 Environmental Protection and to the Governor and
10 Legislature by specified dates; providing for
11 expiration of the task force; providing construction;
12 providing that participation in certain programs or
13 activities is voluntary; requiring certain frameworks
14 or enforcement mechanisms to have explicit legislative
15 approval; providing an effective date.

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

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19 **Section 1. Section 403.945, Florida Statutes, is created**
20 **to read:**

21 403.945 Carbon Sequestration Task Force.—

22 (1) As used in this section, the term:

23 (a) "Blue carbon" means carbon sequestered by marine and
24 coastal ecosystems.

25 (b) "Carbon sequestration" means the long-term storage of

26 carbon in plants, soils, geologic formations, and the ocean
27 through land and aquatic habitat management.

28 (2) The Legislature finds that:

29 (a) Maintaining coastal and freshwater wetlands, nearshore
30 and offshore aquatic ecosystems, conservation lands, healthy and
31 sustainable agriculture, shellfish aquaculture, and timber and
32 silvicultural industries is vital to the state's economy,
33 environment, and natural resources, including significant
34 environmental contributions to water quality and quantity, air
35 purification, carbon sequestration, blue carbon, coastal
36 resilience, and habitat for threatened and endangered wildlife.

37 (b) The continued expansion of urban sprawl and the
38 development of coastal areas have led to losses of the state's
39 natural and agricultural lands and decreases in water quality
40 and quantity that have harmed coastal ecosystems and industries,
41 including imperiled wetlands, coral reefs, seagrasses, and
42 shellfish aquaculture.

43 (c) To ensure healthy and sustainable agriculture,
44 shellfish aquaculture and silvicultural industries, and natural
45 and working lands and waters, a statewide program is necessary
46 to provide incentives for landowners and managers to continue
47 activities and land uses that sequester carbon.

48 (3) The Carbon Sequestration Task Force, a task force as
49 defined in s. 20.03, is created adjunct to the department to
50 provide recommendations for the development of a statewide

51 carbon sequestration program. The task force shall operate in a
52 manner consistent with the requirements of s. 20.052.

53 (4) (a) The task force shall be composed of the following
54 members:

55 1. The Secretary of Environmental Protection, or his or
56 her designee.

57 2. The Commissioner of Agriculture, or his or her
58 designee.

59 3. The executive director of the Fish and Wildlife
60 Conservation Commission, or his or her designee.

61 4. The Chief Resilience Officer, or his or her designee.

62 5. The State Geologist.

63 6. A representative from the National Estuary Program,
64 appointed by the Secretary of Environmental Protection.

65 7. A member of an environmental not-for-profit
66 organization, appointed by the Secretary of Environmental
67 Protection.

68 8. A landowner of working agricultural lands, appointed by
69 the Commissioner of Agriculture.

70 9. A representative from a state university with expertise
71 in energy or sustainability, appointed by the Secretary of
72 Environmental Protection.

73 10. A representative from the University of Florida
74 Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, appointed by the
75 Commissioner of Agriculture.

76 11. A representative from the Florida Sea Grant Program,
77 appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture.

78 (b) Appointments to the task force must be made by August
79 1, 2025.

80 (c) Each appointed member serves at the pleasure of the
81 appointing official.

82 (d) A vacancy on the task force must be filled in the same
83 manner as the original appointment.

84 (e) The task force shall elect a chair from among the
85 members.

86 (f) The task force shall convene no later than September
87 1, 2025. The task force shall meet quarterly or upon the call of
88 the chair. The task force shall hold its meetings in person or
89 through teleconference or other electronic means.

90 (5) The duties of the task force shall include all of the
91 following:

92 (a) Identify and inventory terrestrial and aquatic
93 environments suitable for carbon sequestration in this state.

94 (b) Consider possible methods of increasing carbon
95 sequestration within the natural environment through state land
96 and marine resource use policies; agricultural, aquacultural,
97 and silvicultural practices; and other practices to achieve
98 restoration of natural resources and long-term conservation.

99 (c) Develop a standardized methodology, including
100 appropriate technology and existing research, to establish

101 baseline carbon levels and account for increases in carbon
102 sequestration over time.

103 (d) Evaluate additional ecosystem services and benefits of
104 terrestrial and aquatic environments that may promote
105 conservation and ecosystem restoration success, including water
106 recharge, stormwater filtration, threatened or endangered
107 wildlife habitat, nutrient reduction, flood mitigation and
108 protection, coastal resilience, air quality, soil health, and
109 food security.

110 (e) Recommend short-term and long-term benchmarks for
111 increasing carbon sequestration in terrestrial and aquatic
112 ecosystems.

113 (f) Identify existing carbon markets and other
114 considerations relevant to participation by the state in such
115 markets.

116 (g) Identify potential funding mechanisms to encourage
117 carbon sequestration practices and activities in this state.

118 (6) By October 1, 2026, the task force shall submit to the
119 Secretary of Environmental Protection a report summarizing the
120 task force activities and findings in its first year, including
121 a nonrecurring budget request for the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

122 (7) By October 1, 2027, the task force shall submit to the
123 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the
124 House of Representatives a report that compiles the findings and
125 recommendations of the task force. The task force shall

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126 terminate on April 30, 2028.

127 (8) This act does not authorize access to private property
128 without the express written consent of the landowner.

129 Participation in any carbon sequestration program or activity
130 recommended by the task force is strictly voluntary. Landowners
131 may not be penalized or denied access to other state programs
132 for declining to participate. Any future regulatory framework or
133 enforcement mechanism related to carbon sequestration must
134 require explicit legislative approval.

135 **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.