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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
03/25/2025	.	
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The Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (Gruters) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 76 - 267

and insert:

(f) Preserves natural shoreline habitat; or

(g) Provides retention of natural open space in otherwise densely built-up areas.

Any land approved by the Acquisition and Restoration Council under this subsection must have a management plan and a



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11 designated manager who will be responsible for implementing the
12 management plan.

13 (9) The Acquisition and Restoration Council, created in s.
14 259.035, shall maintain a list of nonprofit entities that are
15 qualified to enforce the provisions of a conservation easement.

16 Section 2. Paragraph (1) is added to subsection (2) of
17 section 259.032, Florida Statutes, and subsection (1) of that
18 section is reenacted, to read:

19 259.032 Conservation and recreation lands.—

20 (1) It is the policy of the state that the citizens of this
21 state shall be assured public ownership of natural areas for
22 purposes of maintaining this state's unique natural resources;
23 protecting air, land, and water quality; promoting water
24 resource development to meet the needs of natural systems and
25 citizens of this state; promoting restoration activities on
26 public lands; and providing lands for natural resource-based
27 recreation. In recognition of this policy, it is the intent of
28 the Legislature to provide such public lands for the people
29 residing in urban and metropolitan areas of the state, as well
30 as those residing in less populated, rural areas. It is the
31 further intent of the Legislature, with regard to the lands
32 described in paragraph (2)(c), that a high priority be given to
33 the acquisition, restoration, and management of such lands in or
34 near counties exhibiting the greatest concentration of
35 population and, with regard to the lands described in subsection
36 (2), that a high priority be given to acquiring lands or rights
37 or interests in lands that advance the goals and objectives of
38 the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's approved species
39 or habitat recovery plans, or lands within any area designated



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40 as an area of critical state concern under s. 380.05 which, in
41 the judgment of the advisory council established pursuant to s.
42 259.035, or its successor, cannot be adequately protected by
43 application of land development regulations adopted pursuant to
44 s. 380.05. Finally, it is the Legislature's intent that lands
45 acquired for conservation and recreation purposes be managed in
46 such a way as to protect or restore their natural resource
47 values, and provide the greatest benefit, including public
48 access, to the citizens of this state.

49 (2) The Governor and Cabinet, sitting as the Board of
50 Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, may expend
51 moneys appropriated by the Legislature to acquire the fee or any
52 lesser interest in lands for any of the following public
53 purposes:

54 (a) To conserve and protect environmentally unique and
55 irreplaceable lands that contain native, relatively unaltered
56 flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to, or scarce
57 within, a region of this state or a larger geographic area;

58 (b) To conserve and protect lands within designated areas
59 of critical state concern, if the proposed acquisition relates
60 to the natural resource protection purposes of the designation;

61 (c) To conserve and protect native species habitat or
62 endangered or threatened species, emphasizing long-term
63 protection for endangered or threatened species designated G-1
64 or G-2 by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory, and especially
65 those areas that are special locations for breeding and
66 reproduction;

67 (d) To conserve, protect, manage, or restore important
68 ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, if the protection and



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69 conservation of such lands is necessary to enhance or protect
70 significant surface water, groundwater, coastal, recreational,
71 timber, or fish or wildlife resources which cannot otherwise be
72 accomplished through local and state regulatory programs;

73 (e) To promote water resource development that benefits
74 natural systems and citizens of the state;

75 (f) To facilitate the restoration and subsequent health and
76 vitality of the Florida Everglades;

77 (g) To provide areas, including recreational trails, for
78 natural resource-based recreation and other outdoor recreation
79 on any part of any site compatible with conservation purposes;

80 (h) To preserve significant archaeological or historic
81 sites;

82 (i) To conserve urban open spaces suitable for greenways or
83 outdoor recreation which are compatible with conservation
84 purposes;

85 (j) To preserve agricultural lands under threat of
86 conversion to development through less-than-fee acquisitions; ~~or~~

87 (k) To complete critical linkages through fee or less-than-
88 fee acquisitions that will help preserve and protect the green
89 and blue infrastructure and vital habitat for wide-ranging
90 wildlife, such as the Florida panther, within the Florida
91 wildlife corridor as defined in s. 259.1055(4); or

92 (l) To protect dry sandy beaches and provide areas,
93 including public parking and ancillary facilities, related to
94 public dry sandy beach access.

95 Section 3. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (1) of
96 section 259.035, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

97 259.035 Acquisition and Restoration Council.-



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98 (1) There is created the Acquisition and Restoration
99 Council.

100 (a) The council shall consist ~~be composed~~ of 12 ~~10~~ voting
101 members, 5 ~~4~~ of whom shall be appointed by the Governor. Of
102 these five ~~four~~ appointees, three must ~~shall~~ be from scientific
103 disciplines related to land, water, or environmental sciences,
104 ~~and~~ the fourth must ~~shall~~ have at least 5 years of experience in
105 managing lands for both active and passive types of recreation,
106 and the fifth must be a specialist in beach and shore
107 preservation or the management of public dry sandy beaches. They
108 shall serve 4-year terms, except that, initially, to provide for
109 staggered terms, two of the appointees shall serve 2-year terms.
110 All subsequent appointments shall be for 4-year terms. An
111 appointee may not serve more than 6 years. The Governor may at
112 any time fill a vacancy for the unexpired term of a member
113 appointed under this paragraph.

114 (b) The five ~~four~~ remaining appointees shall consist ~~be~~
115 ~~composed~~ of the Secretary of Environmental Protection, the
116 director of the Florida Forest Service of the Department of
117 Agriculture and Consumer Services, the executive director of the
118 Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, ~~and~~ the director of
119 the Division of Historical Resources of the Department of State,
120 and the director of the Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed
121 Areas, or their respective designees.

122 Section 4. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section
123 259.036, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

124 259.036 Management review teams.—

125 (1) To determine whether conservation, preservation, and
126 recreation lands titled in the name of the board are being



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127 managed for purposes that are compatible with conservation,
128 preservation, or recreation in accordance with a land management
129 plan adopted pursuant to s. 259.032, the board, acting through
130 the department, shall cause periodic management reviews to be
131 conducted as follows:

132 (a) The department shall establish a regional land
133 management review team composed of the following members:

134 1. One individual who is from the county or local community
135 in which the parcel or project is located and who is selected by
136 the county commission in the county which is most impacted by
137 the acquisition.

138 2. One individual from the Division of Recreation and Parks
139 of the department.

140 3. One individual from the Florida Forest Service of the
141 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

142 4. One individual from the Fish and Wildlife Conservation
143 Commission.

144 5. One individual from the department's district office in
145 which the parcel is located.

146 6. A private land manager, preferably from the local
147 community, mutually agreeable to the state agency
148 representatives.

149 7. A member or staff from the jurisdictional water
150 management district or local soil and water conservation
151 district board of supervisors.

152 8. A member of a conservation organization.

153 9. One individual from the Office of Coastal and Aquatic
154 Managed Areas.

155 Section 5. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section



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156 259.04, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

157 259.04 Board; powers and duties.—

158 (1) For projects and acquisitions selected for purchase
159 pursuant to ss. 259.035 and 259.105:

160 (a) The board is given the responsibility, authority, and
161 power to develop and execute a comprehensive, statewide 5-year
162 plan to conserve, restore, and protect environmentally
163 endangered lands, ecosystems, lands necessary for outdoor
164 recreational needs, dry sandy beaches, and other lands as
165 identified in ss. 259.032 and 259.105. This plan shall be kept
166 current through continual reevaluation and revision. The
167 advisory council or its successor shall assist the board in the
168 development, reevaluation, and revision of the plan.

169 Section 6. Subsection (21) is added to section 259.105,
170 Florida Statutes, to read:

171 259.105 The Florida Forever Act.—

172 (21) (a) The Legislature finds that Florida beaches are an
173 extremely valuable economic and recreational resource. If this
174 state fails to adequately prioritize the acquisition and
175 management of public beaches, adequate provisions for such
176 beaches will not be made to ensure public access. Therefore, the
177 Division of State Lands and the Office of Coastal and Aquatic
178 Managed Areas shall establish a pilot program to conduct an
179 inventory of existing dry sandy beaches in preparation for an
180 application to the Acquisition and Restoration Council pursuant
181 to subsection (7). The inventory must do all of the following:

182 1. Determine the number of dry sandy beaches in this state.

183 2. Investigate the adequacy of existing public dry sandy
184 beaches.



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185 3. Identify deficiencies in existing public dry sandy
186 beaches relating to public access and ancillary facilities.

187 4. Determine criteria for selecting and prioritizing the
188 acquisition of privately owned beach parcels. Such selection
189 criteria must prioritize acquiring suitable contiguous dry sandy
190 beach parcels and expanding the acreage of existing dry sandy
191 beaches in heavily populated counties.

192 5. Determine specific criteria and numeric performance
193 standards pursuant to subsection (7).

194 (b) The Division of State Lands and the Office of Coastal
195 and Aquatic Managed Areas shall use the inventory to

196
197 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

198 And the title is amended as follows:

199 Delete lines 6 - 23

200 and insert:

201 property; reenacting and amending s. 259.032, F.S.;

202 revising purposes for which the Governor and Cabinet

203 may expend moneys appropriated by the Legislature to

204 acquire the fee or any lesser interest in lands;

205 amending s. 259.035, F.S.; revising the composition of

206 the Acquisition and Restoration Council; amending s.

207 259.036, F.S.; revising the composition of the

208 regional land management review team; amending s.

209 259.04, F.S.; revising the goal of a comprehensive,

210 statewide 5-year plan to conserve, restore, and

211 protect certain lands; amending s. 259.105, F.S.;

212 providing legislative findings; requiring the Division

213 of State Lands and the Office of Coastal and Aquatic



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Managed Areas to establish a pilot program to