

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Appropriations

BILL: SB 2506

INTRODUCER: Appropriations Committee

SUBJECT: Natural Resources

DATE: April 3, 2025

REVISED: _____

ANALYST

STAFF DIRECTOR

REFERENCE

ACTION

Reagan

Sadberry

AP Submitted as Comm. Bill/FAV

I. Summary:

SB 2506 provides conforming changes necessary to implement the Senate's Proposed General Appropriations Act for the 2025-2026 fiscal year by amending the environmental spending distributions of the gaming compact revenues. Specifically, the bill amends s. 380.095, F.S.:

- Regarding land acquisitions to:
 - Require the annual distribution be provided to the Incidental Trust Fund within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) for the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program; and
 - Remove the provision that the funds be appropriated in Administered Funds and that eligible state agencies may submit budget amendments for release of these funds.
- Regarding land management activities to add costs associated with land management contracts between a state agency, water control districts, local governments, and soil and water conservation districts as an authorized use of land management funds.
- Regarding the distribution to the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund to limit to \$300 million, rather than all remaining undistributed funds, the distribution to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the Water Quality Improvement Grant Program.
- Regarding agricultural water conservation and agricultural water supply planning to create a distribution of the lesser of 13.021 percent or \$30 million to the General Inspection Trust Fund within the DACS for agricultural water conservation and agricultural water supply planning.
- Provide that any remaining funds shall be transferred to the General Revenue Fund.

The bill amends s. 403.0673, F.S., to require DEP to dedicate at least \$50 million of the funds from the gaming compact revenues to projects within a rural area of opportunity. The bill also amends s. 403.891, F.S., to require that funds in excess of \$400 million distributed pursuant to s. 201.15, F.S., relating to documentary stamp tax revenues, or s. 380.095, F.S., relating to gaming compact revenues be transferred to the General Revenue Fund at the end of the fiscal year.

The bill amends s. 380.093, F.S., to require as a Tier 1 criteria within the scoring system used by the DEP to rank projects in the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience plan the degree to which the project reduces the flood risk and, thereby, increases credits awards to a community participating in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System.

The bill amends s. 570.93, F.S., to direct the DACS to establish an agricultural non-point source regional water program that includes implementation of works, technologies, or practices that improve water quality in impaired water bodies.

The revisions to the distribution of funds from the gaming compact revenues results for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in approximately \$204 million in additional revenues to the General Revenue Fund. See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2025.

II. Present Situation:

2021 Gaming Compact

Gaming compacts are regulated by the Federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, s. 25 U.S.C. 2701, et seq., and ch. 285, part II, F.S. The State of Florida (state) entered into a gaming compact with the Seminole Tribe of Florida (Seminole Tribe) on April 7, 2010 (the 2010 Compact). In ch. 2021-268, Laws of Florida (CS/SB 2A), the Legislature ratified a new Gaming Compact between the Seminole Tribe and the state, which was executed by Governor Ron DeSantis and the Seminole Tribe on April 23, 2021, as amended on May 17, 2021 (the 2021 Compact). The 2021 Compact was approved by the United States Department of the Interior on August 6, 2021, and became effective upon the publication of notice in the Federal Register. The 2021 Compact supersedes the 2010 Compact.

Revenue Sharing under the 2021 Gaming Compact

The 2021 Compact establishes a guaranteed minimum payment period for the first five years of the compact. During the five-year period, the Seminole Tribe is to make guaranteed minimum revenue share payments as specified, to total \$2.5 billion. The revenue share payments must be paid by the Seminole Tribe to the state as follows:

- Percentage payments for slots, raffles, drawings, and new games range from 12 percent of net win¹ up to \$2 billion, to 25 percent of net win greater than \$3.5 billion.
- Percentage payments for table games range from 15 percent of net win up to \$1 billion, to 25 percent of net win greater than \$2 billion.
- Percentage payment for tribal sports betting is 13.75 percent of net win excluding the net win received by the Seminole Tribe on pari-mutuel sports betting.
- Percentage payment for pari-mutuel sports betting is 10 percent of net win received by the Seminole Tribe on pari-mutuel sports betting.

¹ The term "Net Win" is defined in the 2010 Gaming Compact and the 2021 Gaming Compact as "the total receipts from the play of all Covered Games less all prize payouts and free play or promotional credits issued by the Tribe." See 2021 Gaming Compact Part III, Section T, available at <https://www.seminolecompact.com/> (last visited Jan. 22, 2024).

- The Seminole Tribe’s guaranteed minimum revenue share payment is \$400 million per year for the first five years.
- At the end of the third year of the five-year guaranteed minimum payment period, if the total revenue share payments are less than \$1.5 billion, the Seminole Tribe must pay the difference to the state.
- At the end of the fifth year of the five-year guaranteed minimum payment period, if the total revenue share payments are less than \$2.5 billion, the Seminole Tribe must pay the difference to the state.

The specific revenue share payment amounts paid by the Seminole Tribe to the state will be calculated as outlined in the chart below in accordance with the 2021 Compact.

SUMMARY OF REVENUE SHARE PAYMENTS -2021 Gaming Compact (Revenue Share Payments by the Seminole Tribe to the State)	
Net Win - Slots, Raffles and Drawings; New Games, if Authorized by the State	
\$0-2B:	12%;
\$2-2.5B:	17.5%
\$2.5-3B:	20%
\$3-3.5B:	22.5%
\$3.5B+:	25%
Net Win - Slots, Raffles and Drawings; New Games, if Authorized by the State	
\$0-1B:	15%;
\$1-1.5B:	17.5%
\$1.5-2B:	22.5%
\$2B+:	25%
Net Win – Sports Betting	
Guaranteed Minimum Compact Term Payment of \$2.5B (Two billion, five hundred million dollars) (includes all Revenue Share Payments for the first five years of the 2021 Gaming Compact)	

Conservation Lands

Article X, section 18 of the Florida Constitution requires that “the fee interest in real property held by an entity of the state and designated for natural resources conservation purposes as provided by general law shall be managed for the benefit of the citizens of this state...”²

Conservation Land Management

The Board of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (board) is charged with the management, control, supervision, conservation, and protection of all lands owned by, or which may hereafter inure to, the state or any of its agencies, departments, boards or commissions.³ Section 253.034, F.S., specifies that state lands acquired pursuant to ch. 259, F.S., are required to be managed to ensure the conservation of the state’s plant and animal species and to ensure the accessibility of state lands for the benefit and enjoyment of all people of the state, both present and future.⁴ Additionally, all lands acquired and managed under ch. 259, F.S., are required to be managed in

² FLA. CONST. art. X, s. 18.

³ Section 253.03, F.S.

⁴ Section 253.034(5)(a), F.S.

a manner that provides the greatest combination of benefits to the public and to the resources, for public outdoor recreation which is compatible with the conservation and protection of public lands, and for the purposes for which the lands were acquired.⁵

The board is authorized to enter into leases or similar instruments for the use, benefit, and possession of public lands by agencies which may properly use and possess such lands for the benefit of the state.⁶ The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is the main land management entity for the state. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACCS) and the DEP also manage state lands.⁷

Each manager of conservation lands is required to submit a land management plan to the division at least every 10 years.⁸ The land management plan must contain, at a minimum, all of the following elements:

- A physical description of the land.
- A quantitative data description of the land which includes an inventory of forest and other natural resources; exotic and invasive plants; hydrological features; infrastructure, including recreational facilities; and other significant land, cultural, or historical features.
- A detailed description of each short-term and long-term land management goal, the associated measurable objectives, and the related activities that are to be performed to meet the land management objectives.
- A schedule of land management activities which contains short-term and long-term land management goals and the related measurable objectives and activities.
- A summary budget for the scheduled land management activities of the land management plan. For state lands containing or anticipated to contain imperiled species habitat, the summary budget shall include any fees anticipated from public or private entities for projects to offset adverse impacts to imperiled species or such habitat, which fees shall be used solely to restore, manage, enhance, repopulate, or acquire imperiled species habitat.⁹ The summary budget is required to be prepared in such a manner that it facilitates computing an aggregate of land management costs for all state-managed lands using the following categories:
 - Resource management;
 - Administration;
 - Support;
 - Capital improvements;
 - Recreation visitor services; and
 - Law enforcement activities.¹⁰

⁵ Section 259.032(7), F.S.; s. 259.032(7)(a)2, F.S., provides that “such management may include, but not be limited to, the following public recreational uses: fishing, hunting, camping, bicycling, hiking, nature study, swimming, boating, canoeing, horseback riding, diving, model hobbyist activities, birding, sailing, jogging, and other related outdoor activities compatible with the purposes for which the lands were acquired.”

⁶ Section 253.03(2), F.S.

⁷ See [Land Management Uniform Accounting Council Annual Report \(last visited Jan. 22, 2024\)](#).

⁸ Section 253.034(5), F.S.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Section 259.037(3)(a), F.S.

Each land management plan is required to provide a desired outcome, describe both short-term and long-term management goals, and include measurable objectives to achieve those goals.¹¹ Short-term goals are required to be achievable within a two-year planning period, and long-term goals are required to be achievable within a 10-year planning period.¹² These short-term and long-term management goals are the basis for all subsequent land management activities.¹³

Short-term and long-term management goals must include measurable objectives for the following, as appropriate:

- Habitat restoration and improvement.
- Public access and recreational opportunities.
- Hydrological preservation and restoration.
- Sustainable forest management.
- Exotic and invasive species maintenance and control.
- Capital facilities and infrastructure.
- Cultural and historical resources.
- Imperiled species habitat maintenance, enhancement, restoration, or population restoration.¹⁴

Land management plans are required to be updated every 10 years on a rotating basis.¹⁵ Each manager of conservation lands is required to update a land management plan whenever the manager proposes to add new facilities or make substantive land use or management changes that were not addressed in the approved plan, or within one year of the addition of significant new lands.¹⁶

Regional land management review teams are required to evaluate the extent to which the existing management plan provides sufficient protection to threatened or endangered species, unique or important natural or physical features, geological or hydrological functions, or archaeological features, and the extent to which the land is being managed for the purposes for which it was acquired and the degree to which actual management practices, including public access, are in compliance with the adopted management plan.¹⁷

If the land management review team determines that reviewed lands are not being managed for the purposes for which they were acquired or in compliance with the adopted land management plan, management policy statement, or management prospectus, or if the managing agency fails to address the review findings in the updated management plan, the department is required to provide the review findings to the board, and the managing agency must report to the board its reasons for managing the lands as it has.¹⁸ The manager of the land is required to consider the findings and recommendations of the land management review team in finalizing the 10-year update of the land management plan.¹⁹

¹¹ Section 253.034(5)(a), F.S.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Section 253.034(5)(b), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 253.034(5)(e), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 253.034(5), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 259.036(3), F.S.

¹⁸ Section 259.036(5), F.S.

¹⁹ Section 259.036(2), F.S.

By July 1 of each year, each governmental agency and each private entity designated to manage lands is required to report to the department on the progress of funding, staffing, and resource management of every project for which the agency or entity is responsible.²⁰ The use or possession of any such lands that is not in accordance with an approved land management plan is subject to termination by the board.²¹

Rural and Family Lands Protection Program

The Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP) within the DACS is an agricultural land preservation program designed to protect agricultural lands through the acquisition of conservation easements. The DACS is authorized to enter into conservation easements for any of the following purposes:

- Promotion and improvement of wildlife habitat;
- Protection and enhancement of water bodies, aquifer recharge areas, wetlands, and watersheds;
- Perpetuation of open space on lands with significant natural areas; or
- Protection of agricultural lands threatened by conversion to other uses.

The DACS developed a priority list in 2024, which includes 232 projects, totaling 300,773 acres.²²

Florida Wildlife Corridor

The 2021 Legislature created the Florida Wildlife Corridor Act to “create incentives for conservation and sustainable development while sustaining and conserving green infrastructure that acts as the foundation of the state’s economy and quality of life.”²³ The Legislature appropriated \$300 million,²⁴ directing the DEP to encourage and promote investments in areas that protect and enhance the Wildlife Corridor by establishing a “network of connected wildlife habitats required for the long-term survival of and genetic exchange amongst regional wildlife populations which serves to prevent fragmentation by providing ecological connectivity of the lands needed to furnish adequate habitats and allow safe movement and dispersal.”²⁵

²⁰ Section 259.032(8), F.S.

²¹ Section 253.034(5)(h), F.S.

²² See *DACS 2024 RFLPP Projects Rankings*, available at

https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/12172024_BOT_Item_%237_2024%20RFLPP%20Priority%20List.pdf (last visited Mar. 31, 2025).

²³ Section 259.1055(3), F.S.

²⁴ Chapter 2021-37, L.O.F., s. 152.

²⁵ Section 259.1055(4)(g), F.S.

The Florida Wildlife Corridor (Wildlife Corridor) is statutorily defined as “the conserved lands”²⁶ and “opportunity areas”²⁷ defined by the DEP as priority one, two, and three categories of the Florida Ecological Greenways Network (FEGN).²⁸ The FEGN “is the primary data layer used to inform the Florida Forever and other state, federal, and regional land acquisition programs regarding the most important ecological corridors and intact landscapes across the state for protection of Florida’s native wildlife, ecosystem services, and ecological resiliency.”²⁹ The priority-category lands “are the most important for protecting [an] ecologically functional connected statewide network of public and private conservation lands.”^{30, 31}

The DEP notes that the existing Wildlife Corridor encompasses over 18 million acres of which 10 million acres are protected conservation lands.³²

The Resilient Florida Grant Program

The Florida Legislature has established several statewide resilience programs, including the Resilient Florida Grant Program, the Comprehensive Statewide Flood Vulnerability and Sea Level Rise Data Set, and the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan.

The Resilient Florida Grant Program provides grants to counties or municipalities for community resilience planning, including vulnerability assessments, plan development, and projects to adapt critical assets.³³ Vulnerability assessments funded through this program must encompass the entire county or municipality; use the most recent publicly available Digital Elevation Model and

²⁶ Defined in s. 259.1055(4)(a), F.S., to mean “federal, state, or local lands owned or managed for conservation purposes, including, but not limited to, federal, state, and local parks; federal and state forests; wildlife management areas; wildlife refuges; military bases and airports with conservation lands; properties owned by land trust and managed for conservation; and privately owned land with a conservation easement, including, but not limited to, ranches, forestry operations, and groves.”

²⁷ Section 259.1055(4)(e), F.S., states “[T]hose lands and waters within the Florida wildlife corridor which are not conserved lands and the green spaces within the Florida wildlife corridor which lack conservation status, are contiguous to or between conserved lands, and provide an opportunity to develop the Florida wildlife corridor into a statewide conservation network.”

²⁸ Section 259.1055(4)(d), F.S. For a layered map reflecting the Wildlife Corridor, Florida Forever Projects and Acquisitions, and FEGN Priority Levels 1-3, see the FDEP’s map available at

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/27b8d8cd961c4f5091655c52c74d3ada/> (last visited Mar. 30, 2025).

²⁹ FDEP, *Florida Wildlife Corridor*, available at <https://floridadep.gov/lands/lands/documents/florida-wildlife-corridor> (last visited Mar. 30, 2024).

³⁰ Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), *CLIP: Critical Lands and Waters Identification Projects*, available at https://www.fnai.org/PDFs/CLIP_v4_user_tutorial.pdf (last visited Mar. 30, 2024). The FNAI provides scientific support to the FDEP.

³¹ Section 259.1055(4)(c), F.S., defines the FEGN as “a periodically updated model developed to delineate large connected areas of statewide ecological significance.”

³² FDEP, *Florida Forever Data Map and Resources*, available at <https://floridadep.gov/lands/environmental-services/content/additional-resources> (last visited Mar. 30, 2025).

³³ Section 380.093(2)(a), F.S. “Critical asset” is defined to include broad lists of assets relating to transportation, critical infrastructure, emergency facilities, natural resources, and historical and cultural resources.

dynamic modeling techniques, if available; and analyze the vulnerability of and risks to critical assets,³⁴ including regionally significant assets.³⁵

The Comprehensive Statewide Flood Vulnerability and Sea Level Rise Data Set and Assessment will provide information necessary to determine the risks to inland and coastal communities.³⁶

The Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan consists of ranked projects that address risks of flooding and sea level rise to coastal and inland communities.³⁷ Examples of projects include construction of living shorelines, seawalls, and pump stations, elevation projects, and infrastructure hardening. Counties, municipalities, water management districts, regional water supply authorities, and other entities may submit to the DEP an annual list of proposed projects. Each project must have a minimum 50 percent cost share, unless the project assists or is within a financially disadvantaged community.³⁸ The DEP ranks the projects using a four-tier scoring system.³⁹ The DEP has adopted rules to implement s. 380.093, F.S., relating to the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan and project submittal requirements. These rules can be found in Chapter 62S-8 of the Florida Administrative Code.⁴⁰ In March of 2025, the DEP submitted the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan totaling nearly \$225 million.⁴¹

In 2022, the Statewide Office of Resilience was created within the Executive Office of the Governor for the purpose of reviewing all flood resilience and mitigation activities in the state and coordinating flood resilience and mitigation efforts with federal, state, and local governmental entities and other stakeholders. The office's Chief Resilience Officer and the DEP worked together to provide the Governor and the Legislature with a report on flood resilience and mitigation efforts across Florida.⁴²

³⁴ Critical assets include transportation assets and evacuation routes (airports, bridges, bus terminals, major roadways, etc.), critical infrastructure (wastewater and stormwater treatment facilities, drinking water facilities, solid and hazardous waste facilities, etc.), critical community and emergency facilities (schools, correctional facilities, fire stations, hospitals, etc.), and natural, cultural, and historical resources (conservation lands, parks, shorelines, wetlands, etc.). Section 380.093(2)(a), F.S.

³⁵ Section 380.093(3)(c), F.S. Regionally significant assets are critical assets that support the needs of communities spanning multiple geopolitical jurisdictions. Section 380.093(2)(d), F.S.

³⁶ Section 380.093(4), F.S.; DEP, *Resilient Florida Program – Statewide Assessment*, <https://floridadep.gov/rcp/resilient-florida-program/content/resilient-florida-program-statewide-assessment> (last visited Mar. 30, 2024).

³⁷ Section 380.093(5), F.S.

³⁸ Section 380.093(5)(e), F.S. A financially disadvantaged small community is a municipality with a population of 10,000 or fewer, or a county with a population of 50,000 or fewer, where the per capita annual income is less than the state's per capita annual income. *Id.*

³⁹ Section 380.093(5)(h), F.S.

⁴⁰ Fla. Admin. Code Chapter 62S-8, available at https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/Final%20Rule%20Language_0.pdf.

⁴¹ DEP and Florida Statewide Office of Resilience, *2024-2025 Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan*, available at https://protectingfloridatogether.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-2025%20Statewide%20Flooding%20and%20Sea%20Level%20Rise%20Resilience%20Plan_PFT%20formatted%20State%20Plan%20List%20FY24_25_08202024.pdf

⁴² DEP and Florida Statewide Office of Resilience, *2022 Flood Resilience and Mitigation Efforts Across Florida*, 2, available at https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/2022%20Flood%20Resilience%20and%20Mitigation%20Efforts%20Report%20Only_0.pdf.

Water Quality Improvement Grant Program

The 2023 Legislature revised the Water Quality Improvement Grant Program⁴³ which provides funding to address wastewater (including septic to sewer), stormwater and agricultural sources of nutrients in waterbodies that are not attaining nutrient or nutrient-related standards, have an established total maximum daily load or are located within a basin management action plan area, a reasonable assurance plan area, an accepted alternative restoration plan area, or a rural area of opportunity under s. 288.0656, F.S.

Financial assistance is available to Florida's governmental entities for projects that have an established total maximum daily load or are located within a basin management action plan area, a reasonable assurance plan area, an accepted alternative restoration plan area, or a rural area of opportunity under s. 288.0656, F.S., which will individually or collectively reduce excess nutrient pollution. Grants may be provided to all of the following types of projects:

- Connecting onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to central sewer facilities.
- Upgrading domestic wastewater treatment facilities to advanced waste treatment or greater.
- Repairing, upgrading, expanding, or constructing stormwater treatment facilities that result in improvements to surface water or groundwater quality.
- Repairing, upgrading, expanding, or constructing domestic wastewater treatment facilities that result in improvements to surface water or groundwater quality, including domestic wastewater reuse and collection systems.
- Projects identified pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(a) or (e), relating to basin management action plans and cooperative regional water quality improvements, respectively.
- Projects identified in a domestic wastewater treatment plan or an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system remediation plan developed pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(a)9.a. and b.
- Projects listed in a city or county capital improvement element pursuant to s. 163.3177(3)(a)4.b.
- Retrofitting onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to upgrade such systems to enhanced nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems where central sewerage is unavailable.

The department is required to give priority to projects that:

- Have the maximum estimated reduction in nutrient load per project.
- Demonstrate project readiness.
- Are cost-effective.
- Have a cost-share identified by the applicant, except for rural areas of opportunity.
- Have multiyear project implementation schedules with previous state commitment and involvement in the project, considering previously funded phases, the total amount of previous state funding, and previous partial appropriations for the proposed project;
- Are in a location where reductions are needed most to attain the water quality standards of a waterbody not attaining nutrient or nutrient-related standards; or
- Were determined eligible in a previous application cycle and were able to demonstrate project readiness but were not awarded a grant.

⁴³ FDEP, *Water Quality Improvement Grant Program*, available at <https://floridadep.gov/wra/wra/content/water-quality-improvement-grant-program> (last visited Mar. 30, 2025).

Funding for Environmental Resource Management

Chapter 2024-58, Laws of Florida, provided that 96 percent of the revenues from the 2021 gaming compact between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the State of Florida for the acquisition and management of conservation lands and the identification and prioritization of critical clean water infrastructure investments be deposited into the Indian Gaming Revenue Trust Fund within the Department of Financial Services.

Section 380.095, F.S., requires the distribution of gaming compact revenues as follows:

- The lesser of 26.042 percent or \$100 million to support the wildlife corridor. Eligible state agencies may submit budget amendments on a first come-first serve basis with the release of funds contingent upon approval.
- The lesser of 26.042 percent or \$100 million for the management of uplands and the removal of invasive species, which is divided as follows:
 - The lesser of 36 percent or \$36 million to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), of which:
 - The lesser of 88.889 percent or \$32 million for state park land management activities;
 - The lesser of 11.111 percent or \$4 million for implementation of the Local Trail Management Grant Program;
 - The lesser of 32 percent or \$32 million to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for land management activities;
 - The lesser of 32 percent or \$32 million to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for land management activities;
- The lesser of 26.042 percent or \$100 million to the DEP to the Resilient Florida Trust Fund;
- The remainder to the DEP to the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 amends s. 253.0251, F.S., to require that all applications for full fee simple acquisition projects to identify, within their acquisition plans, why the project requires a full fee simple interest to achieve public policy goals, together with the reasons full title is determined to be necessary.

Section 2 amends s. 259.032, F.S., to include water control districts existing pursuant to ch. 298, F.S., to those governmental entities that may contract with state agencies for land management activities.

Section 3 amends 380.093, F.S., to add as Tier 1 criteria for the scoring system for the DEP to rank projects in the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan the degree to which the project reduces the flood risk and, thereby, increases credits awards to a community participating in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System. Tier 1 accounts for 40 percent to the total score of four tiers.

Section 4 amends s. 380.095, F.S., to require the annual distribution of the lesser of 26.042 percent or \$100 million for land acquisition to be directed to the Incidental Trust Fund within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) for less-than-fee simple acquisitions

for the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program within the Florida Wildlife Corridor. The bill also removes the provision that the funds be appropriated in Administered Funds and that eligible state agencies may submit budget amendments for release of these funds.

The bill amends the authorized land management activities to include the costs associated with land management contracts between a state agency, local governments, water control districts, and soil and water conservation districts.

The bill provides an additional distribution of the lesser of 13.021 percent or \$30 million to the General Inspection Trust Fund within the DACS for agricultural water conservation and agricultural water supply planning.

The bill amends the distribution to the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund to provide a limit of \$300 million, rather than all remaining undistributed funds, to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the Water Quality Improvement Grant Program.

The bill provides that any remaining funds be transferred to the General Revenue Fund.

Section 5 amends s. 403.0673, F.S., to require that the DEP include projects located within a rural area of opportunity when prioritizing projects within the Water Quality Improvement Grant Program. The bill also directs the DEP to dedicate at least \$50 million of the funds received annually from the distributions made pursuant to s. 380.095, F.S., for projects located in a rural area of opportunity.

Section 6 amends s. 403.891, F.S., to require that any funds in excess of a cumulative total of \$400 million distributed to the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund pursuant to ss. 201.15 and 380.095, F.S., per fiscal year be transferred to the General Revenue Fund by June 30 of each year.

Section 7 amends s. 570.93, F.S., to direct the DACS to establish an agricultural non-point source regional water program that includes implementation of works, technologies, or practices that improve water quality in impaired water bodies. Through efforts such as nutrient reduction, water conservation, and water retention, the program will help control and capture nutrient runoff necessary to achieve nutrient loading reductions. Projects may include, but are not limited to, dispersed water management of stormwater treatment areas.

Section 8 provides an effective date of July 1, 2025.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill has an overall positive, significant impact on state revenues. Additionally, the bill redistributes the gaming funds as follows:

- The bill requires the annual distribution of the lesser of 26.042 percent or \$100 million to the Incidental Trust Fund within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) for less-than-fee simple acquisitions.
- The bill provides an annual distribution of the lesser of 13.021 percent or \$30 million to the General Inspection Trust Fund within the DACS for agricultural water conservation and agricultural water supply planning.
- The bill provides up to \$300 million to be transferred to the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund within the Department of Environmental Protection. The bill requires all amounts over \$400 million per fiscal year transferred pursuant to ss. 201.15 and 380.095, F.S., be transferred the General Revenue Fund by June 30 of each year. Based on February Revenue Estimating Conferences, this will result in a transfer of an additional \$26.1 million to the General Revenue Fund in Fiscal Year 2025-2026.
- The bill provides that any funds remaining after the distributions have been made shall be transferred to the General Revenue Fund. Based on the February Revenue Estimating Conference, the increase in transfers to the General Revenue Fund will be \$204 million.

SB 2500, the Senate's General Appropriations Act, makes the following appropriations:

- \$100 million from the Incidental Trust Fund within DACS for less-than-fee purchases.

- \$30 million from the General Inspection Trust Fund within DACS for agricultural water projects.
- \$505 million from the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund within the DEP for water quality projects.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 253.0251, 259.032, 380.093, 380.095, 403.0673, and 570.93.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.