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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/12/2026	.	
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The Committee on Appropriations (Brodeur) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment

Delete lines 69 - 186
and insert:
Ocklawaha River's natural flow, hydrology, and floodplain
function to the approximate conditions that existed before the
construction of the Cross Florida Barge Canal project and its
associated project works by implementing measures that include
breaching the Kirkpatrick Dam and decommissioning the Buckman
Lock. The project plan must incorporate the best available



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11 science and include engineering and design updates, including
12 topographic and bathymetric surveys, and precise estimates of
13 material to be dredged or excavated. In addition, the project
14 plan must provide recommendations for road and bridge
15 construction which are compatible with the partial restoration
16 plan and ensure continued access for the communities west of the
17 project. The project plan must include estimates by fiscal year
18 of the cost of implementing the project plan and potential
19 sources of funding for such costs.

20 (b) Notwithstanding any law or rule, the project plan for
21 the restoration of the Ocklawaha River is an environmental
22 restoration or enhancement project subject to a general permit
23 from the department and water management districts for
24 environmental restoration or enhancement pursuant to rule 62-
25 330.405, Florida Administrative Code, and rule 62-330.485,
26 Florida Administrative Code.

27 (c) Subject to the provision of state, federal, or other
28 funds, the department shall complete the restoration project
29 plan by December 31, 2032.

30 (3) NORTHEAST FLORIDA RIVER AND SPRINGS RECREATION AND
31 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL.-

32 (a) Establishment of the council.-

33 1. By October 31, 2026, the Northeast Florida River and
34 Springs Recreation and Economic Development Advisory Council, an
35 advisory council as defined in s. 20.03(7), shall be established
36 and assigned to the department. The council shall be
37 administratively housed within the department. The project lead
38 shall serve as the council chair, and the members shall meet at
39 the call of the project lead. Members shall serve without



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compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses pursuant to s. 112.061. Council members shall serve 4-year terms, except that the initial terms shall be staggered.

2. The council shall be composed of the following 16 members:

a. Nine members of the council shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor and shall include:

(I) Two representatives of river recreation-related businesses local to Marion or Putnam County.

(II) Two representatives of outdoor recreation user groups, one of whom represents fishing interests local to Marion or Putnam County.

(III) One representative of the department's Office of Greenways and Trails.

(IV) One representative of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management.

(V) One representative of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Imperiled Species Management Section.

(VI) One representative of the Department of Commerce.

(VII) One representative of an environmental community support organization who has subject matter expertise in springs or rivers.

b. Six members of the council shall be appointed by the boards of county commissioners for the following counties:

(I) Putnam County shall appoint two members, one of whom oversees parks and recreation for the county.

(II) Marion County shall appoint two members, one of whom



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oversees parks and recreation for the county.

(III) Clay County shall appoint one member.

(IV) St. Johns County shall appoint one member.

c. One member shall be the commanding officer of Naval Air Station Jacksonville or his or her designee.

(b) Report.—The council shall submit an advisory report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the department by February 1, 2027. The report must include all of the following:

1. Recommendations for projects to be included in the outdoor recreation plan created in subsection (4), including priorities for state-funded land projects.

2. Recommendations to the department for the creation of guidelines to govern the grant program created in subsection (5).

3. Recommendations to the Department of Commerce for the creation of guidelines to administer the economic development program created in subsection (6).

4. Recommendations for measures to minimize the impact of the restoration plan on property owners or businesses directly affected by the restoration project.

(c) Repeal.—In accordance with s. 20.052(8), this subsection is repealed October 2, 2029, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

(4) OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN.—

(a) The department, in collaboration with the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Northeast Florida River and Springs Recreation and Economic Development Advisory Council, and the local governments of river communities in Clay,



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98 Marion, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties, shall develop an outdoor
99 recreation plan.

100 (b) The outdoor recreation plan must identify and implement
101 projects for enhanced and expanded river and springs access for
102 recreational activities, such as fishing, hunting, swimming,
103 wildlife viewing, paddling, and hiking. Such projects must be
104 compatible with the project plan and applicable statutes. The
105 outdoor recreation plan must be made available for public
106 comment before its implementation.

107 (c) The department shall implement the outdoor recreation
108 plan by January 1, 2028.

109 (d) Subject to the provision of state, federal, or other
110 funds, the department shall complete projects on state-owned
111 lands identified in the outdoor recreation plan by December 31,
112 2035.

113 (5) GRANT PROGRAM.—

114 (a) By January 1, 2028, the department shall develop a
115 grant program for river communities in Clay, Marion, Putnam, and
116 St. Johns Counties to implement the outdoor recreation plan.

117 (b) The grant program must be compatible with the project
118 plan and outdoor recreation plan.

119 (c) The department shall implement the grant program by
120 February 1, 2028.