



544988

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/12/2026	.	
	.	
	.	
	.	

The Committee on Appropriations (Brodeur) recommended the following:

1 **Senate Amendment**

2

3 Delete lines 69 - 186

4 and insert:

5 Ocklawaha River's natural flow, hydrology, and floodplain
6 function to the approximate conditions that existed before the
7 construction of the Cross Florida Barge Canal project and its
8 associated project works by implementing measures that include
9 breaching the Kirkpatrick Dam and decommissioning the Buckman
10 Lock. The project plan must incorporate the best available



544988

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



544988

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

60 (VI) One representative of the Department of Commerce.

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

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

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

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



544988

69 oversees parks and recreation for the county.

70 (III) Clay County shall appoint one member.

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

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

74 (b) Report.—The council shall submit an advisory report to
75 the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the
76 House of Representatives, and the department by February 1,
77 2027. The report must include all of the following:

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

81 2. Recommendations to the department for the creation of
82 guidelines to govern the grant program created in subsection
83 (5).

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

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

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

93 (4) OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN.—

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



544988

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.