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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

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Floor: WD

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03/05/2026 09:41 AM

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Senator Brodeur moved the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete lines 65 - 195

and insert:

plan for the restoration of the Ocklawaha River with the goal of restoring the 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. The project plan must provide for restoration and increased resiliency and recreation benefits of the Ocklawaha and St. Johns Rivers and Silver Springs. The



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

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

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

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

33 (a) Establishment of the council.-

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



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

45 2. In addition to the project lead, the council shall be  
46 composed of the following 19 members:

47 a. Six members of the council shall be appointed by and  
48 serve at the pleasure of the Governor and shall include  
49 representatives from the Department of Environmental Protection,  
50 the Fish and Wildlife Commission, and the Department of  
51 Commerce.

52 b. Six members of the council shall be appointed by the  
53 Legislature, with 3 members appointed by the Senate and 3  
54 members appointed by the House of Representatives. The  
55 appointees must include:

56 (I) A representative of river recreation-related businesses  
57 local to Marion or Putnam County.

58 (II) A representative of recreation-related businesses  
59 local to Marion County.

60 (III) A representative local to the Town of Welaka.

61 (IV) Two representatives local to Putnam County.

62 (V) One representative of an environmental community-  
63 supporting organization who has subject matter expertise in  
64 springs or rivers.

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

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

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



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70 oversees parks and recreation for the county.  
71 (III) Clay County shall appoint one member.  
72 (IV) St. Johns County shall appoint one member.  
73 d. One member shall be the commanding officer of Naval Air  
74 Station Jacksonville or his or her designee.  
75 (b) Report.—The council shall submit an advisory report to  
76 the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the  
77 House of Representatives, and the department by February 1,  
78 2027, and annual progress reports each February 1 thereafter.  
79 The report must include all of the following:  
80 1. Recommendations for projects to be included in the  
81 outdoor recreation plan created in subsection (4), including  
82 priorities for state-funded land projects.  
83 2. Recommendations to the department for the creation of  
84 guidelines to govern the grant program created in subsection  
85 (5).  
86 3. Recommendations to the Department of Commerce for the  
87 creation of guidelines to administer the economic development  
88 program created in subsection (6).  
89 4. Recommendations for measures to minimize the impact of  
90 the restoration plan on property owners or businesses directly  
91 affected by the restoration project.  
92 (c) Repeal.—In accordance with s. 20.052(8), this  
93 subsection is repealed October 2, 2032, unless reviewed and  
94 saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.  
95 (4) OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN.—  
96 (a) The department, in collaboration with the Fish and  
97 Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Northeast Florida River  
98 and Springs Recreation and Economic Development Advisory



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99 Council, and the local governments of river communities in Clay,  
100 Marion, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties, shall develop an outdoor  
101 recreation plan.

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

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

111 (d) Subject to the provision of state, federal, or other  
112 funds and the commencement of the project plan developed  
113 pursuant to subsection (2), the department shall complete  
114 projects on state-owned lands identified in the outdoor  
115 recreation plan by December 31, 2035.

116 (5) GRANT PROGRAM.—

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

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

122 (c) The department shall implement the grant program upon  
123 the commencement of the project plan developed pursuant to  
124 subsection (2).

125 (6) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.—

126 (a) The Department of Commerce shall develop guidelines and  
127 processes for an economic development program for Marion and



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128 Putnam Counties. The economic development program must support  
129 projects that encourage job creation, capital investment, and  
130 strengthening and diversification of each county's economy.

131 (b) The economic development program must be compatible  
132 with the project plan, the outdoor recreation plan, and the  
133 grant program.

134 (c) The Department of Commerce shall implement the economic  
135 development program upon the commencement of the project plan  
136 pursuant to subsection (2).

137  
138 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

139 And the title is amended as follows:

140 Delete lines 35 - 47

141 and insert:

142 to certain funding and the commencement of specified  
143 plans; requiring the department to develop a grant  
144 program for a specified purpose; requiring that the  
145 grant program be compatible with certain plans;  
146 requiring the department to implement the grant  
147 program contingent on the commencement of the project  
148 plan; requiring the Department of Commerce to develop  
149 guidelines and processes for and implement an economic  
150 development program for Marion and Putnam Counties for  
151 a specified purpose by a specified date; requiring  
152 that the economic development plan be compatible with  
153 certain plans and programs; requiring the Department  
154 of Commerce to implement the economic development  
155 program contingent on the commencement of the project  
156 plan