

By Senator Massullo

11-00759C-26

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Department of Environmental Protection; amending s. 20.255, F.S.; deleting provisions creating the Environmental Regulation Commission; amending s. 259.035, F.S.; expanding the membership of the Acquisition and Restoration Council; providing requirements for membership; defining the term "metropolitan"; requiring the council to administer the Florida Communities Trust; requiring the council to coordinate with the department for rulemaking and grant cycle administration of the trust; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; amending s. 259.105, F.S.; conforming a provision to changes made by the act; amending s. 373.469, F.S.; requiring that residential properties of a specified size located in a certain area connect to a central sewer system or upgrade to a specified type of nutrient-reducing wastewater treatment system; requiring a permitting agency to notify a property owner of such requirement if the agency, before a certain date, receives an application to repair, modify, or replace a conventional onsite sewage treatment and disposal system on certain property; amending s. 373.807, F.S.; providing that remediation plans for certain properties may not prohibit or require certain actions relating to onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; repealing s. 373.811, F.S., relating to prohibited activities within a basin management action plan; amending s. 380.093, F.S.;

11-00759C-26

20261510__

revising the definition of the term "community eligible for a reduced cost share"; providing for a type 2 transfer of powers and functions of the Florida Communities Trust from the department to the Acquisition and Restoration Council; amending s. 380.502, F.S.; revising legislative findings and intent for the Florida Communities Trust; providing for the transfer of the administration and oversight of the trust from the department to the Acquisition and Restoration Council for a specified purpose; amending s. 380.504, F.S.; deleting provisions relating to the membership, appointments, and organizational structure of the governing board of the trust; providing the purpose of the trust; amending s. 380.507, F.S.; deleting provisions authorizing the trust to make certain loans; revising the powers of the trust; repealing ss. 380.512, 380.513, and 380.514, F.S., relating to an annual report, corporate existence, and inconsistent provisions of other laws superseded, respectively; reenacting and amending s. 381.0065, F.S.; authorizing the department to annually review and audit certain inspection and maintenance reports for certain systems; authorizing the department to adopt rules that establish certain procedures; requiring the department to concurrently process operating permits and construction permits under certain circumstances; requiring that an operating permit be obtained before the use of an engineer-designed performance-based system; providing

11-00759C-26

20261510__

a timeframe for the validity of certain operating permits; requiring an operating permit modification upon certain changes or modifications; providing requirements for subsequent property owners when a property with an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system that requires an operating permit is sold or transferred; requiring certain subsequent property owners to provide notice and proof of ownership to the department within a certain timeframe; providing an exception to certain fees under certain circumstances; requiring a maintenance entity permitted by the department to submit a report to the department on a specified basis; providing requirements for fees submitted with an engineer-designed performance-based system inspection report; deleting a requirement for a property owner to obtain a certain permit from the department for certain onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; revising the approval criteria for certain onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; requiring an aerobic treatment unit maintenance entity to submit an inspection report to the department under certain circumstances; subjecting real estate transactions for the transfer of title to properties with a certain onsite sewage treatment and disposal system to certain requirements; deleting a requirement that the department contract with or delegate its powers and duties to a county only; amending s. 403.067, F.S.; conforming a provision to changes made by the act; providing a timeframe within which a basin

11-00759C-26

20261510__

management action plan or plan amendment becomes effective; prohibiting certain activities within a basin management action plan, a reasonable assurance plan, or a pollution reduction plan; making a technical change; amending s. 403.0671, F.S.; conforming a provision to changes made by the act; amending s. 403.0872, F.S.; revising the date by which major permitted sources of air pollution operating in this state must pay an annual operation license fee; authorizing the department to impose penalties if it does not receive such fee by the specified date; deleting provisions relating to costs for administering air pollution construction permits; amending s. 403.1838, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; repealing s. 403.804, F.S., relating to the powers and duties of the Environmental Regulation Commission; amending s. 403.9301, F.S.; revising the definition of the term "wastewater services"; revising requirements for certain needs analyses; amending s. 576.041, F.S.; revising the requirements for inspection fees for fertilizers; providing requirements for the calculation of inspection fees paid for Class AA biosolids; amending s. 576.045, F.S.; requiring licensees to pay a certain fee for Class AA biosolids; amending ss. 120.81, 373.421, 403.031, 403.061, 403.704, 403.707, 403.7222, 403.7234, 403.803, 403.805, 403.8055, and 403.814, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; amending ss. 376.302 and 380.5105, F.S.;

11-00759C-26

20261510__

conforming cross-references; reenacting s.
381.0066(2)(k), F.S., relating to onsite sewage
treatment and disposal system fees, to incorporate the
amendment made to s. 381.0065, F.S., in a reference
thereto; reenacting s. 373.4595, F.S., relating to the
Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program,
to incorporate the amendment made to s. 403.067, F.S.,
in a reference thereto; reenacting s. 403.0873, F.S.,
relating to the Florida Air-Operation License Fee
Account, to incorporate the amendment made to s.
403.0872, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting s.
403.1835(3)(d), F.S., relating to water pollution
control financial assistance, to incorporate the
amendment made to s. 403.1838, F.S., in a reference
thereto; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (6) of section 20.255, Florida
Statutes, is amended to read:

20.255 Department of Environmental Protection.—There is
created a Department of Environmental Protection.

~~(6) There is created as a part of the Department of
Environmental Protection an Environmental Regulation Commission.
The commission shall be composed of seven residents of this
state appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the
Senate. In making appointments, the Governor shall provide
reasonable representation from all sections of the state.
Membership shall be representative of agriculture, the~~

11-00759C-26

20261510__

development industry, local government, the environmental community, lay citizens, and members of the scientific and technical community who have substantial expertise in the areas of the fate and transport of water pollutants, toxicology, epidemiology, geology, biology, environmental sciences, or engineering. The Governor shall appoint the chair, and the vice chair shall be elected from among the membership. All appointments shall be for 4-year terms. The Governor may at any time fill a vacancy for the unexpired term. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be paid travel and per diem as provided in s. 112.061 while in the performance of their official duties. Administrative, personnel, and other support services necessary for the commission shall be furnished by the department. The commission may employ independent counsel and contract for the services of outside technical consultants.

Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and subsections (2), (3), and (5) of section 259.035, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

259.035 Acquisition and Restoration Council.—

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

(a) The council shall be composed of 12 ~~10~~ voting members, 6 ~~4~~ of whom shall be appointed by the Governor. Of these 6 ~~four~~ appointees, 3 must ~~three shall~~ be from scientific disciplines related to land, water, or environmental sciences, 1 must ~~and the fourth shall~~ have at least 5 years of experience in managing lands for both active and passive types of recreation, 1 must be a former elected official of a county, and 1 must be a former

11-00759C-26

20261510__

175 elected official of a metropolitan municipality. As used in this
176 paragraph, the term "metropolitan" has the same meaning as in s.
177 380.503. They shall serve 4-year terms, except that, initially,
178 to provide for staggered terms, 2 ~~two~~ of the appointees shall
179 serve 2-year terms. All subsequent appointments shall be for 4-
180 year terms. An appointee may not serve more than 6 years. The
181 Governor may at any time fill a vacancy for the unexpired term
182 of a member appointed under this paragraph.

183 (2) The 6 ~~four~~ members of the council appointed pursuant to
184 paragraph (1)(a) and the 2 ~~two~~ members of the council appointed
185 pursuant to paragraph (1)(c) shall receive reimbursement for
186 expenses and per diem for travel, to attend council meetings, as
187 allowed state officers and employees while in the performance of
188 their duties, pursuant to s. 112.061.

189 (3) The council shall:

190 (a) Provide assistance to the board in reviewing the
191 recommendations and plans for state-owned conservation lands
192 required under s. 253.034 and this chapter. The council shall,
193 in reviewing such plans, consider the optimization of multiple-
194 use and conservation strategies to accomplish the provisions
195 funded pursuant to former s. 259.101(3)(a), Florida Statutes
196 2014, and to s. 259.105(3)(b).

197 (b) Effective July 1, 2026, administer the Florida
198 Communities Trust established in ss. 380.501-380.515, including
199 reviewing, approving, and overseeing project applications and
200 disbursements, and implementation measures consistent with the
201 trust's purposes. The council shall coordinate with the
202 department for rulemaking and grant cycle administration for the
203 trust, ensuring alignment with the Florida Forever Act and the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

204 state's conservation priorities.

205 (5) An affirmative vote of 6 ~~five~~ members of the council is
206 required in order to change a project boundary or to place a
207 proposed project on a list developed pursuant to subsection (4).
208 Any member of the council, who by family or a business
209 relationship has a connection with all or a portion of any
210 proposed project, shall declare the interest before voting on
211 its inclusion on a list.

212 Section 3. Paragraph (i) of subsection (4) of section
213 259.105, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

214 259.105 The Florida Forever Act.—

215 (4) It is the intent of the Legislature that projects or
216 acquisitions funded pursuant to paragraphs (3)(a) and (b)
217 contribute to the achievement of the following goals, which
218 shall be evaluated in accordance with specific criteria and
219 numeric performance measures developed pursuant to s.
220 259.035(4):

221 (i) Mitigate the effects of natural disasters and floods in
222 developed areas, as measured by:

223 1. The number of acres acquired within a 100-year
224 floodplain or a coastal high hazard area;

225 2. The number of acres acquired or developed to serve dual
226 functions as:

227 a. Flow ways or temporary water storage areas during
228 flooding or high water events, not including permanent
229 reservoirs; and

230 b. Greenways or open spaces available to the public for
231 recreation;

232 3. The number of acres that protect existing open spaces

11-00759C-26

20261510__

and natural buffer areas within a floodplain that also serve as natural flow ways or natural temporary water storage areas; and

4. The percentage of the land acquired within the project boundary that creates additional open spaces, natural buffer areas, and greenways within a floodplain, while precluding rebuilding in areas that repeatedly flood.

Florida Forever projects and acquisitions funded pursuant to paragraph (3)(c) shall be measured by goals developed by rule by the Florida Communities Trust ~~Governing Board created in s. 380.504.~~

Section 4. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section 373.469, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

373.469 Indian River Lagoon Protection Program.—

(3) THE INDIAN RIVER LAGOON PROTECTION PROGRAM.—The Indian River Lagoon Protection Program consists of the Banana River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, Central Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, North Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, and Mosquito Lagoon Reasonable Assurance Plan, and such plans are the components of the Indian River Lagoon Protection Program which achieve phosphorous and nitrogen load reductions for the Indian River Lagoon.

(d) *Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems.*—

1. Beginning on January 1, 2024, unless previously permitted, the installation of new onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems is prohibited within the Banana River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, Central Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, North Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, and Mosquito Lagoon Reasonable Assurance

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Plan areas where a publicly owned or investor-owned sewerage system is available as defined in s. 381.0065(2)(a). Where central sewerage is not available, only enhanced nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems or other wastewater treatment systems that achieve at least 65 percent nitrogen reduction are authorized.

2. By July 1, 2030, any commercial property or any residential property of 10 acres or less with an existing onsite sewage treatment and disposal system located within the Banana River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, Central Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, North Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan, and Mosquito Lagoon Reasonable Assurance Plan areas must connect to central sewer if available or upgrade to an enhanced nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal system or other wastewater treatment system that achieves at least 65 percent nitrogen reduction. For all applications submitted before July 1, 2030, to a permitting agency to repair, modify, or replace a conventional onsite sewage treatment and disposal system on a commercial property or a residential property of 10 acres or less, the permitting agency shall notify the property owner of the requirement provided in this subparagraph.

Section 5. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section 373.807, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

373.807 Protection of water quality in Outstanding Florida Springs.—By July 1, 2016, the department shall initiate assessment, pursuant to s. 403.067(3), of Outstanding Florida Springs or spring systems for which an impairment determination has not been made under the numeric nutrient standards in effect

11-00759C-26

20261510__

for spring vents. Assessments must be completed by July 1, 2018.

(1)(a) Concurrent with the adoption of a nutrient total maximum daily load for an Outstanding Florida Spring, the department, or the department in conjunction with a water management district, shall initiate development of a basin management action plan, as specified in s. 403.067. For an Outstanding Florida Spring with a nutrient total maximum daily load adopted before July 1, 2016, the department, or the department in conjunction with a water management district, shall initiate development of a basin management action plan by July 1, 2016. During the development of a basin management action plan, if the department identifies onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems as contributors of at least 20 percent of nonpoint source nitrogen pollution or if the department determines remediation is necessary to achieve the total maximum daily load, the basin management action plan must ~~shall~~ include an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system remediation plan pursuant to subsection (3) for those systems identified as requiring remediation. For residential properties greater than 10 acres located outside the boundary of an established priority focus area of an Outstanding Florida Spring, such remediation plans may not prohibit the construction and installation of new conventional onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, unless central sewer is available, or require existing conventional onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to upgrade to a nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal system.

Section 6. Section 373.811, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

Section 7. Paragraph (e) of subsection (5) of section

11-00759C-26

20261510__

380.093, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

380.093 Resilient Florida Grant Program; comprehensive statewide flood vulnerability and sea level rise data set and assessment; Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan; regional resilience entities.—

(5) STATEWIDE FLOODING AND SEA LEVEL RISE RESILIENCE PLAN.—

(e) Each project included in the plan must have a minimum 50 percent cost share unless the project assists or is within a community eligible for a reduced cost share. For purposes of this section, the term "community eligible for a reduced cost share" means:

1. A municipality that has a population of less than 10,000 ~~or fewer~~, according to the most recent April 1 population estimates posted on the Office of Economic and Demographic Research's website, and a per capita annual income that is less than the state's per capita annual income as shown in the most recent release from the Bureau of the Census of the United States Department of Commerce that includes both measurements;

2. A county that has a population of less than 50,000 ~~or fewer~~, according to the most recent April 1 population estimates posted on the Office of Economic and Demographic Research's website, and a per capita annual income ~~that is~~ less than the state's per capita annual income as shown in the most recent release from the Bureau of the Census of the United States Department of Commerce that includes both measurements; ~~or~~

3. A municipality or county that has a per capita annual income ~~that is~~ equal to or less than 75 percent of the state's per capita annual income as shown in the most recent release from the Bureau of the Census of the United States Department of

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Commerce; or

4. A municipality or county that is a rural community as defined in s. 288.0656(2).

Section 8. Subsection (3) of section 380.502, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

380.502 Legislative findings and intent.—

(3) The Legislature further finds that the goals of land conservation and community development are best served through coordinated decisionmaking and streamlined oversight. It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to transfer the administration and oversight of the Florida Communities Trust from the Department of Environmental Protection to the Acquisition and Restoration Council to improve consistency and effectiveness in conservation land acquisition and resource stewardship ~~It is the intent of the Legislature to establish a nonregulatory agency that will assist local governments in bringing local comprehensive plans into compliance and implementing the goals, objectives, and policies of the conservation, recreation and open space, and coastal elements of local comprehensive plans, or in conserving natural resources and resolving land use conflicts by:~~

(a) Responding promptly and creatively to opportunities to correct undesirable development patterns, restore degraded natural areas, enhance resource values, restore deteriorated or deteriorating urban waterfronts, preserve working waterfronts, reserve lands for later purchase, participate in and promote the use of innovative land acquisition methods, and provide public access to surface waters.

(b) Providing financial and technical assistance to local

11-00759C-26

20261510__

governments, state agencies, and nonprofit organizations to carry out projects and activities and to develop programs authorized by this part.

~~(c) Involving local governments and private interests in voluntarily resolving land use conflicts and issues.~~

Section 9. Section 380.504, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

380.504 Florida Communities Trust; creation; ~~membership;~~ expenses.—

(1) There is created ~~within the Department of Environmental Protection a nonregulatory state agency and instrumentality,~~ which shall be a public body corporate and politic, known as the "Florida Communities Trust,—" administered by the Acquisition and Restoration Council ~~The governing body of the trust shall consist of:~~

~~(a) The Secretary of Environmental Protection; and~~

~~(b) Four public members whom the Governor shall appoint subject to Senate confirmation.~~

~~The Governor shall appoint a former elected official of a county government, a former elected official of a metropolitan municipal government, a representative of a nonprofit organization as defined in this part, and a representative of the development industry. The Secretary of Environmental Protection may appoint his or her deputy secretary, the director of the Division of State Lands, or the director of the Division of Recreation and Parks to serve in his or her absence. The Secretary of Environmental Protection shall be the chair of the governing body of the trust. The Governor shall make his or her~~

11-00759C-26

20261510__

407 ~~appointments upon the expiration of any current terms or within~~
408 ~~60 days after the effective date of the resignation of any~~
409 ~~member.~~

410 (2) The purpose of the trust is to assist local governments
411 in bringing into compliance and implementing the conservation,
412 recreation and open space, and coastal elements of their
413 comprehensive plans or in conserving natural resources and
414 resolving land use conflicts by providing financial assistance
415 to local governments and nonprofit environmental organizations
416 to carry out projects and activities authorized by this part ~~Of~~
417 ~~the initial governing body members, two of the Governor's~~
418 ~~appointees shall serve for a term of 2 years and the remaining~~
419 ~~one shall serve for a term of 4 years from the date of~~
420 ~~appointment. Thereafter, governing body members whom the~~
421 ~~Governor appoints shall serve for terms of 4 years. The Governor~~
422 ~~may fill any vacancy for an unexpired term.~~

423 ~~(3) Governing body members shall receive no compensation~~
424 ~~for their services, but shall be entitled to the necessary~~
425 ~~expenses, including per diem and travel expenses, incurred in~~
426 ~~the discharge of their duties pursuant to this part, as provided~~
427 ~~by law.~~

428 Section 10. Subsections (6), (7), (9) through (12), and
429 (14) of section 380.507, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

430 380.507 Powers of the trust.—The trust shall have all the
431 powers necessary or convenient to carry out the purposes and
432 provisions of this part, including:

433 (6) To award grants ~~and make loans~~ to local governments and
434 nonprofit organizations for the purposes listed in subsection
435 (2) and for acquiring fee title and less than fee title, such as

11-00759C-26

20261510__

conservation easements or other interests in land, for the purposes of this part.

(7) To provide by grant ~~or loan~~ up to the total cost of any project approved according to this part, including the local share of federally supported projects. The trust may require local funding participation in projects. The trust shall determine the funding it will provide by considering the total amount of funding available for the project, the fiscal resources of other project participants, the urgency of the project relative to other eligible projects, and other factors which the trust shall have prescribed by rule. The trust may fund up to 100 percent of any local government land acquisition costs, if part of an approved project.

(9) To review project recommendations and funding priorities and provide acquisition decisions ~~To invest any funds held in reserves or sinking funds, or any funds not required for immediate disbursement, in such investments as may be authorized for trust funds under s. 215.47, and in any other authorized investments, if such investments are made on behalf of the trust by the State Board of Administration.~~

(10) To contract for and to accept donations ~~gifts~~, grants, loans, or other aid from the United States Government or any person or corporation, including donations ~~gifts~~ of real property or any interest in real property.

(11) To submit project recommendations, funding priorities, and acquisition decisions to the Acquisition and Restoration Council, which shall have final approval authority over trust expenditures and acquisitions ~~to make rules necessary to carry out the purposes of this part and to exercise any power granted~~

11-00759C-26

20261510__

~~in this part, pursuant to chapter 120. The trust shall adopt rules governing the acquisition of lands with proceeds from the Florida Forever Trust Fund, consistent with the intent expressed in the Florida Forever Act. Such rules for land acquisition must include, but are not limited to, procedures for appraisals and confidentiality consistent with ss. 125.355(1)(a) and (b) and 166.045(1)(a) and (b), a method of determining a maximum purchase price, and procedures to assure that the land is acquired in a voluntarily negotiated transaction, surveyed, conveyed with marketable title, and examined for hazardous materials contamination. Land acquisition procedures of a local land authority created pursuant to s. 380.0663 may be used for the land acquisition programs described in former s. 259.101(3)(c), Florida Statutes 2014, and in s. 259.105 if within areas of critical state concern designated pursuant to s. 380.05, subject to approval of the trust.~~

(12) To develop, in conjunction with the council, rules, policies, and guidelines for the administration of the trust consistent with this part and ss. 259.035 and 259.105 to
~~contract with private consultants and nonprofit organizations for professional and technical assistance and advice.~~

~~(14) To conduct promotional campaigns, including advertising, for the sale of communities trust license plates authorized in s. 320.08058.~~

Section 11. Section 380.512, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

Section 12. Section 380.513, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

Section 13. Section 380.514, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

Section 14. Paragraph (n) of subsection (3), and subsections (4) and (9) of section 381.0065, Florida Statutes,

11-00759C-26

20261510__

are amended, and subsection (7) of that section is reenacted, to read:

381.0065 Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; regulation.—

(3) DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.—The department shall:

(n) Regulate and permit maintenance entities for performance-based treatment systems and aerobic treatment unit systems. To ensure systems are maintained and operated according to manufacturer's specifications and designs, the department shall establish by rule minimum qualifying criteria for maintenance entities. The criteria shall include training, access to approved spare parts and components, access to manufacturer's maintenance and operation manuals, and service response time. The maintenance entity shall employ a contractor licensed under s. 489.105(3)(m), or part III of chapter 489, or a state-licensed wastewater plant operator, who is responsible for maintenance and repair of all systems under contract. The department may annually review and audit up to 25 percent of all inspection and maintenance reports submitted by such maintenance entities for performance-based treatment systems and aerobic treatment unit systems. The department may adopt rules to establish procedures for such audits.

(4) PERMITS; INSTALLATION; CONDITIONS.—A person may not construct, repair, modify, abandon, or operate an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system without first obtaining a permit approved by the department. The department may issue permits to carry out this section, except that the issuance of a permit for work seaward of the coastal construction control line

11-00759C-26

20261510__

established under s. 161.053 shall be contingent upon receipt of any required coastal construction control line permit from the department. A construction permit is valid for 18 months after the date of issuance and may be extended by the department for one 90-day period under rules adopted by the department. A repair permit is valid for 90 days after the date of issuance. When a person jointly applies for a construction permit and an operating permit for the same onsite sewage treatment and disposal system, the department shall concurrently process the operating permit with the construction permit. An operating permit must be obtained before the use of any aerobic treatment unit or engineer-designed performance-based system, or if the establishment generates commercial waste. Buildings or establishments that use an aerobic treatment unit or generate commercial waste shall be inspected by the department at least annually to ensure ~~assure~~ compliance with the terms of the operating permit. The operating permit for a residential or other non-commercial onsite sewage treatment and disposal system or aerobic treatment unit is valid for the lifetime of the installation; however, any subsequent change in occupancy of the property or any modification of the wastewater system requires an operating permit modification upon such change. When an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system that requires an operating permit is sold or transferred, the subsequent owner with a controlling interest shall provide written notice and proof of ownership to the department to amend the operating permit information within 60 days of such property sale or transfer ~~commercial wastewater system is valid for 1 year after the date of issuance and must be renewed annually. The operating~~

11-00759C-26

20261510__

~~permit for an aerobic treatment unit is valid for 2 years after~~
~~the date of issuance and must be renewed every 2 years.~~ If all
information pertaining to the siting, location, and installation
conditions or repair of an onsite sewage treatment and disposal
system remains the same, a construction or repair permit for the
onsite sewage treatment and disposal system may be transferred
to another person, if the transferee files, within 60 days after
the transfer of ownership, an amended application providing all
corrected information and proof of ownership of the property. A
fee is not associated with the processing of this supplemental
information if only ownership information is updated to reflect
a permit transfer for a construction, repair, or an operating
permit. A person may not contract to construct, modify, alter,
repair, service, abandon, or maintain any portion of an onsite
sewage treatment and disposal system without being registered
under part III of chapter 489. A property owner who personally
performs construction, maintenance, or repairs to a system
serving his or her own owner-occupied single-family residence is
exempt from registration requirements for performing such
construction, maintenance, or repairs on that residence, but is
subject to all permitting requirements. A municipality or
political subdivision of the state may not issue a building or
plumbing permit for any building that requires the use of an
onsite sewage treatment and disposal system unless the owner or
builder has received a construction permit for such system from
the department. A building or structure may not be occupied and
a municipality, political subdivision, or any state or federal
agency may not authorize occupancy until the department approves
the final installation of the onsite sewage treatment and

11-00759C-26

20261510__

disposal system. A municipality or political subdivision of the state may not approve any change in occupancy or tenancy of a building that uses an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system until the department has reviewed the use of the system with the proposed change, approved the change, and amended the operating permit.

(a) Subdivisions and lots in which each lot has a minimum area of at least one-half acre and either a minimum dimension of 100 feet or a mean of at least 100 feet of the side bordering the street and the distance formed by a line parallel to the side bordering the street drawn between the two most distant points of the remainder of the lot may be developed with a water system regulated under s. 381.0062 and onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, provided the projected daily sewage flow does not exceed an average of 1,500 gallons per acre per day, and provided satisfactory drinking water can be obtained and all distance and setback, soil condition, water table elevation, and other related requirements of this section and rules adopted under this section can be met.

(b) Subdivisions and lots using a public water system as defined in s. 403.852 may use onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, provided there are no more than four lots per acre, provided the projected daily sewage flow does not exceed an average of 2,500 gallons per acre per day, and provided that all distance and setback, soil condition, water table elevation, and other related requirements that are generally applicable to the use of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems are met.

(c) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (b), for subdivisions platted of record on or before October 1, 1991,

11-00759C-26

20261510__

610 when a developer or other appropriate entity has previously made
611 or makes provisions, including financial assurances or other
612 commitments, acceptable to the department, that a central water
613 system will be installed by a regulated public utility based on
614 a density formula, private potable wells may be used with onsite
615 sewage treatment and disposal systems until the agreed-upon
616 densities are reached. In a subdivision regulated by this
617 paragraph, the average daily sewage flow may not exceed 2,500
618 gallons per acre per day. This section does not affect the
619 validity of existing prior agreements. After October 1, 1991,
620 the exception provided under this paragraph is not available to
621 a developer or other appropriate entity.

622 (d) Paragraphs (a) and (b) do not apply to any proposed
623 residential subdivision with more than 50 lots or to any
624 proposed commercial subdivision with more than 5 lots where a
625 publicly owned or investor-owned sewage treatment system is
626 available. This paragraph does not allow development of
627 additional proposed subdivisions in order to evade the
628 requirements of this paragraph.

629 (e) The department shall adopt rules relating to the
630 location of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems,
631 including establishing setback distances, to prevent groundwater
632 contamination and surface water contamination and to preserve
633 the public health. The rules must consider conventional and
634 enhanced nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal
635 system designs, impaired or degraded water bodies, domestic
636 wastewater and drinking water infrastructure, potable water
637 sources, nonpotable wells, stormwater infrastructure, the onsite
638 sewage treatment and disposal system remediation plans developed

11-00759C-26

20261510__

pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(a)9.b., nutrient pollution, and the recommendations of the onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems technical advisory committee established pursuant to former s. 381.00652. The rules must also allow a person to apply for and receive a variance from a rule requirement upon demonstration that the requirement would cause an undue hardship and granting the variance would not cause or contribute to the exceedance of a total maximum daily load.

(f) Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems that are permitted before June 21, 2022, may not be placed closer than:

1. Seventy-five feet from a private potable well.
2. Two hundred feet from a public potable well serving a residential or nonresidential establishment having a total sewage flow of greater than 2,000 gallons per day.
3. One hundred feet from a public potable well serving a residential or nonresidential establishment having a total sewage flow of less than or equal to 2,000 gallons per day.
4. Fifty feet from any nonpotable well.
5. Ten feet from any storm sewer pipe, to the maximum extent possible, but in no instance shall the setback be less than 5 feet.
6. Seventy-five feet from the mean high-water line of a tidally influenced surface water body.
7. Seventy-five feet from the mean annual flood line of a permanent nontidal surface water body.
8. Fifteen feet from the design high-water line of retention areas, detention areas, or swales designed to contain standing or flowing water for less than 72 hours after a rainfall or the design high-water level of normally dry drainage

11-00759C-26

20261510__

ditches or normally dry individual lot stormwater retention areas.

(g) This section and rules adopted under this section relating to soil condition, water table elevation, distance, and other setback requirements must be equally applied to all lots, with the following exceptions:

1. Any residential lot that was platted and recorded on or after January 1, 1972, or that is part of a residential subdivision that was approved by the appropriate permitting agency on or after January 1, 1972, and that was eligible for an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system construction permit on the date of such platting and recording or approval shall be eligible for an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system construction permit, regardless of when the application for a permit is made. If rules in effect at the time the permit application is filed cannot be met, residential lots platted and recorded or approved on or after January 1, 1972, shall, to the maximum extent possible, comply with the rules in effect at the time the permit application is filed. At a minimum, however, those residential lots platted and recorded or approved on or after January 1, 1972, but before January 1, 1983, shall comply with those rules in effect on January 1, 1983, and those residential lots platted and recorded or approved on or after January 1, 1983, shall comply with those rules in effect at the time of such platting and recording or approval. In determining the maximum extent of compliance with current rules that is possible, the department shall allow structures and appurtenances thereto which were authorized at the time such lots were platted and recorded or approved.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

2. Lots platted before 1972 are subject to a 50-foot minimum surface water setback and are not subject to lot size requirements. The projected daily flow for onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems for lots platted before 1972 may not exceed:

a. Two thousand five hundred gallons per acre per day for lots served by public water systems as defined in s. 403.852.

b. One thousand five hundred gallons per acre per day for lots served by water systems regulated under s. 381.0062.

(h)1. The department may grant variances in hardship cases which may be less restrictive than the provisions specified in this section. If a variance is granted and the onsite sewage treatment and disposal system construction permit has been issued, the variance may be transferred with the system construction permit, if the transferee files, within 60 days after the transfer of ownership, an amended construction permit application providing all corrected information and proof of ownership of the property and if the same variance would have been required for the new owner of the property as was originally granted to the original applicant for the variance. A fee is not associated with the processing of this supplemental information. A variance may not be granted under this section until the department is satisfied that:

a. The hardship was not caused intentionally by the action of the applicant;

b. A reasonable alternative, taking into consideration factors such as cost, does not exist for the treatment of the sewage; and

c. The discharge from the onsite sewage treatment and

11-00759C-26

20261510__

disposal system will not adversely affect the health of the applicant or the public or significantly degrade the groundwater or surface waters.

Where soil conditions, water table elevation, and setback provisions are determined by the department to be satisfactory, special consideration must be given to those lots platted before 1972.

2. The department shall appoint and staff a variance review and advisory committee, which shall meet monthly to recommend agency action on variance requests. The committee shall make its recommendations on variance requests at the meeting in which the application is scheduled for consideration, except for an extraordinary change in circumstances, the receipt of new information that raises new issues, or when the applicant requests an extension. The committee shall consider the criteria in subparagraph 1. in its recommended agency action on variance requests and shall also strive to allow property owners the full use of their land where possible.

a. The committee is composed of the following:

(I) The Secretary of Environmental Protection or his or her designee.

(II) A representative from the county health departments.

(III) A representative from the home building industry recommended by the Florida Home Builders Association.

(IV) A representative from the septic tank industry recommended by the Florida Onsite Wastewater Association.

(V) A representative from the Department of Health.

(VI) A representative from the real estate industry who is

11-00759C-26

20261510__

also a developer in this state who develops lots using onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, recommended by the Florida Association of Realtors.

(VII) A representative from the engineering profession recommended by the Florida Engineering Society.

b. Members shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, with such appointments being staggered so that the terms of no more than two members expire in any one year. Members shall serve without remuneration, but if requested, shall be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061.

3. The variance review and advisory committee is not responsible for reviewing water well permitting. However, the committee shall consider all requirements of law related to onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems when making recommendations on variance requests for onsite sewage treatment and disposal system permits.

(i) A construction permit may not be issued for an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system in any area zoned or used for industrial or manufacturing purposes, or its equivalent, where a publicly owned or investor-owned sewage treatment system is available, or where a likelihood exists that the system will receive toxic, hazardous, or industrial waste. An existing onsite sewage treatment and disposal system may be repaired if a publicly owned or investor-owned sewage treatment system is not available within 500 feet of the building sewer stub-out and if system construction and operation standards can be met. This paragraph does not require publicly owned or investor-owned sewage treatment systems to accept anything other than domestic wastewater.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

1. A building located in an area zoned or used for industrial or manufacturing purposes, or its equivalent, when such building is served by an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system, must not be occupied until the owner or tenant has obtained written approval from the department. The department may not grant approval when the proposed use of the system is to dispose of toxic, hazardous, or industrial wastewater or toxic or hazardous chemicals.

2. Each person who owns or operates a business or facility in an area zoned or used for industrial or manufacturing purposes, or its equivalent, or who owns or operates a business that has the potential to generate toxic, hazardous, or industrial wastewater or toxic or hazardous chemicals, and uses an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system that is installed on or after July 5, 1989, must obtain an annual system operating permit from the department. A person who owns or operates a business that uses an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system that was installed and approved before July 5, 1989, does not need to obtain a system operating permit. However, upon change of ownership or tenancy, the new owner or operator must notify the department of the change, and the new owner or operator must obtain an annual system operating permit, regardless of the date that the system was installed or approved.

3. The department shall periodically review and evaluate the continued use of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems in areas zoned or used for industrial or manufacturing purposes, or its equivalent, and may require the collection and analyses of samples from within and around such systems. If the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

department finds that toxic or hazardous chemicals or toxic, hazardous, or industrial wastewater have been or are being disposed of through an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system, the department shall initiate enforcement actions against the owner or tenant to ensure adequate cleanup, treatment, and disposal.

(j) An onsite sewage treatment and disposal system designed by a professional engineer registered in the state and certified by such engineer as complying with performance criteria adopted by the department must be approved by the department subject to the following:

1. The performance criteria applicable to engineer-designed systems must be limited to those necessary to ensure that such systems do not adversely affect the public health or significantly degrade the groundwater or surface water. Such performance criteria shall include consideration of the quality of system effluent, the proposed total sewage flow per acre, wastewater treatment capabilities of the natural or replaced soil, water quality classification of the potential surface-water-receiving body, and the structural and maintenance viability of the system for the treatment of domestic wastewater. However, performance criteria shall address only the performance of a system and not a system's design.

2. A person electing to use an engineer-designed system shall, upon completion of the system design, submit such design, certified by a registered professional engineer, to the county health department. The county health department may use an outside consultant to review the engineer-designed system, with the actual cost of such review to be borne by the applicant.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Within 5 working days after receiving an engineer-designed system permit application, the county health department shall request additional information if the application is not complete. Within 15 working days after receiving a complete application for an engineer-designed system, the county health department shall issue the permit or, if it determines that the system does not comply with the performance criteria, shall notify the applicant of that determination and refer the application to the department for a determination as to whether the system should be approved, disapproved, or approved with modification. The department engineer's determination shall prevail over the action of the county health department. The applicant shall be notified in writing of the department's determination and of the applicant's rights to pursue a variance or seek review under the provisions of chapter 120.

3. The owner of an engineer-designed performance-based system must maintain a current maintenance service agreement with a maintenance entity permitted by the department. The maintenance entity shall inspect each system at least twice each year and shall submit an inspection report to the department each time the system is inspected which states ~~report quarterly to the department on~~ the number of systems inspected and serviced. The reports may be submitted electronically, and the fee for such submittals may not exceed an inflation-adjusted cost that would have otherwise been required for biennial operating permit renewals prior to July 1, 2026.

4. The property owner of an owner-occupied, single-family residence may be approved and permitted by the department as a maintenance entity for his or her own performance-based

11-00759C-26

20261510__

871 treatment system upon written certification from the system
872 manufacturer's approved representative that the property owner
873 has received training on the proper installation and service of
874 the system. The maintenance service agreement must conspicuously
875 disclose that the property owner has the right to maintain his
876 or her own system and is exempt from contractor registration
877 requirements for performing construction, maintenance, or
878 repairs on the system but is subject to all permitting
879 requirements.

880 5. ~~The property owner shall obtain a biennial system~~
881 ~~operating permit from the department for each system.~~ The
882 department may ~~shall~~ inspect the system at least annually, or on
883 such periodic basis as the fee collected permits, and may
884 collect system-effluent samples if appropriate to determine
885 compliance with the performance criteria. The fee for the
886 biennial operating permit must ~~shall~~ be collected beginning with
887 the second year of system operation.

888 6. If an engineer-designed system fails to properly
889 function or fails to meet performance standards, the system must
890 ~~shall~~ be re-engineered, if necessary, to bring the system into
891 compliance with the provisions of this section.

892 (k) An innovative system may be approved in conjunction
893 with an engineer-designed site-specific system that is certified
894 by the engineer to meet the performance-based criteria adopted
895 by the department.

896 (l) For the Florida Keys, the department shall adopt a
897 special rule for the construction, installation, modification,
898 operation, repair, maintenance, and performance of onsite sewage
899 treatment and disposal systems which considers the unique soil

11-00759C-26

20261510__

conditions and water table elevations, densities, and setback requirements. On lots where a setback distance of 75 feet from surface waters, saltmarsh, and buttonwood association habitat areas cannot be met, an injection well, approved and permitted by the department, may be used for disposal of effluent from onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems. The following additional requirements apply to onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems in Monroe County:

1. The county, each municipality, and those special districts established for the purpose of the collection, transmission, treatment, or disposal of sewage shall ensure, in accordance with the specific schedules adopted by the Administration Commission under s. 380.0552, the completion of onsite sewage treatment and disposal system upgrades to meet the requirements of this paragraph.

2. Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems must cease discharge by December 31, 2015, or must comply with department rules and provide the level of treatment which, on a permitted annual average basis, produces an effluent that contains no more than the following concentrations:

- a. Biochemical Oxygen Demand (CBOD5) of 10 mg/l.
- b. Suspended Solids of 10 mg/l.
- c. Total Nitrogen, expressed as N, of 10 mg/l or a reduction in nitrogen of at least 70 percent. A system that has been tested and certified to reduce nitrogen concentrations by at least 70 percent shall be deemed to be in compliance with this standard.
- d. Total Phosphorus, expressed as P, of 1 mg/l.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

929 In addition, onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems
930 discharging to an injection well must provide basic disinfection
931 as defined by department rule.

932 3. In areas not scheduled to be served by a central
933 sewerage system, onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems
934 must, by December 31, 2015, comply with department rules and
935 provide the level of treatment described in subparagraph 2.

936 4. In areas scheduled to be served by a central sewerage
937 system by December 31, 2015, if the property owner has paid a
938 connection fee or assessment for connection to the central
939 sewerage system, the property owner may install a holding tank
940 with a high water alarm or an onsite sewage treatment and
941 disposal system that meets the following minimum standards:

942 a. The existing tanks must be pumped and inspected and
943 certified as being watertight and free of defects in accordance
944 with department rule; and

945 b. A sand-lined drainfield or injection well in accordance
946 with department rule must be installed.

947 5. Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems must be
948 monitored for total nitrogen and total phosphorus concentrations
949 as required by department rule.

950 6. The department shall enforce proper installation,
951 operation, and maintenance of onsite sewage treatment and
952 disposal systems pursuant to this chapter, including ensuring
953 that the appropriate level of treatment described in
954 subparagraph 2. is met.

955 7. The authority of a local government, including a special
956 district, to mandate connection of an onsite sewage treatment
957 and disposal system is governed by s. 4, chapter 99-395, Laws of

11-00759C-26

20261510__

958 Florida.

959 8. Notwithstanding any other law, an onsite sewage
960 treatment and disposal system installed after July 1, 2010, in
961 unincorporated Monroe County, excluding special wastewater
962 districts, that complies with the standards in subparagraph 2.
963 is not required to connect to a central sewerage system until
964 December 31, 2020.

965 (m) A product sold in the state for use in onsite sewage
966 treatment and disposal systems may not contain any substance in
967 concentrations or amounts that would interfere with or prevent
968 the successful operation of such system, or that would cause
969 discharges from such systems to violate applicable water quality
970 standards. The department shall publish criteria for products
971 known or expected to meet the conditions of this paragraph. If a
972 product does not meet such criteria, such product may be sold if
973 the manufacturer satisfactorily demonstrates to the department
974 that the conditions of this paragraph are met.

975 (n) Evaluations for determining the seasonal high-water
976 table elevations or the suitability of soils for the use of a
977 new onsite sewage treatment and disposal system shall be
978 performed by department personnel, professional engineers
979 registered in the state, or such other persons with expertise,
980 as defined by rule, in making such evaluations. Evaluations for
981 determining mean annual flood lines shall be performed by those
982 persons identified in paragraph (2)(1). The department shall
983 accept evaluations submitted by professional engineers and such
984 other persons as meet the expertise established by this section
985 or by rule unless the department has a reasonable scientific
986 basis for questioning the accuracy or completeness of the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

987 evaluation.

988 (o) An application for an onsite sewage treatment and
989 disposal system permit shall be completed in full, signed by the
990 owner or the owner's authorized representative, or by a
991 contractor licensed under chapter 489, and shall be accompanied
992 by all required exhibits and fees. Specific documentation of
993 property ownership is not required as a prerequisite to the
994 review of an application or the issuance of a permit. The
995 issuance of a permit does not constitute determination by the
996 department of property ownership.

997 (p) The department may not require any form of subdivision
998 analysis of property by an owner, developer, or subdivider
999 before submission of an application for an onsite sewage
1000 treatment and disposal system.

1001 (q) This section does not limit the power of a municipality
1002 or county to enforce other laws for the protection of the public
1003 health and safety.

1004 (r) In the siting of onsite sewage treatment and disposal
1005 systems, including drainfields, shoulders, and slopes, guttering
1006 may not be required on single-family residential dwelling units
1007 for systems located greater than 5 feet from the roof drip line
1008 of the house. If guttering is used on residential dwelling
1009 units, the downspouts shall be directed away from the
1010 drainfield.

1011 (s) Notwithstanding subparagraph (g)1., onsite sewage
1012 treatment and disposal systems located in floodways of the
1013 Suwannee and Aucilla Rivers must adhere to the following
1014 requirements:

1015 1. The absorption surface of the drainfield may not be

11-00759C-26

20261510__

subject to flooding based on 10-year flood elevations. Provided, however, for lots or parcels created by the subdivision of land in accordance with applicable local government regulations before January 17, 1990, if an applicant cannot construct a drainfield system with the absorption surface of the drainfield at an elevation equal to or above 10-year flood elevation, the department shall issue a permit for an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system within the 10-year floodplain of rivers, streams, and other bodies of flowing water if all of the following criteria are met:

- a. The lot is at least one-half acre in size;
- b. The bottom of the drainfield is at least 36 inches above the 2-year flood elevation; and
- c. The applicant installs a waterless, incinerating, or organic waste composting toilet and a graywater system and drainfield in accordance with department rules; an aerobic treatment unit and drainfield in accordance with department rules; a system that is capable of reducing effluent nitrate by at least 50 percent in accordance with department rules; or a system other than a system using alternative drainfield materials in accordance with department rules. The United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service soil maps, State of Florida Water Management District data, and Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance maps are resources that shall be used to identify flood-prone areas.

2. The use of fill or mounding to elevate a drainfield system out of the 10-year floodplain of rivers, streams, or other bodies of flowing water may not be permitted if such a system lies within a regulatory floodway of the Suwannee and

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Aucilla Rivers. In cases where the 10-year flood elevation does not coincide with the boundaries of the regulatory floodway, the regulatory floodway will be considered for the purposes of this subsection to extend at a minimum to the 10-year flood elevation.

(t)1. The owner of an aerobic treatment unit system shall maintain a current maintenance service agreement with an aerobic treatment unit maintenance entity permitted by the department. The maintenance entity shall inspect each aerobic treatment unit system at least twice each year and shall submit an inspection report to the department each time the system is inspected ~~stating report quarterly to the department on~~ the number of aerobic treatment unit systems inspected and serviced. The reports may be submitted electronically, and the fee for such submittals may not exceed an inflation-adjusted cost that would have otherwise been required for biennial operating permit renewals prior to July 1, 2026.

2. The property owner of an owner-occupied, single-family residence may be approved and permitted by the department as a maintenance entity for his or her own aerobic treatment unit system upon written certification from the system manufacturer's approved representative that the property owner has received training on the proper installation and service of the system. The maintenance entity service agreement must conspicuously disclose that the property owner has the right to maintain his or her own system and is exempt from contractor registration requirements for performing construction, maintenance, or repairs on the system but is subject to all permitting requirements.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

1074 3. A septic tank contractor licensed under part III of
1075 chapter 489, if approved by the manufacturer, may not be denied
1076 access by the manufacturer to aerobic treatment unit system
1077 training or spare parts for maintenance entities. After the
1078 original warranty period, component parts for an aerobic
1079 treatment unit system may be replaced with parts that meet
1080 manufacturer's specifications but are manufactured by others.
1081 The maintenance entity shall maintain documentation of the
1082 substitute part's equivalency for 2 years and shall provide such
1083 documentation to the department upon request.

1084 4. The owner of an aerobic treatment unit system shall
1085 obtain a system operating permit from the department and allow
1086 the department to inspect during reasonable hours each aerobic
1087 treatment unit system at least annually, and such inspection may
1088 include collection and analysis of system-effluent samples for
1089 performance criteria established by rule of the department.

1090 (u) The department may require the submission of detailed
1091 system construction plans that are prepared by a professional
1092 engineer registered in this state. The department shall
1093 establish by rule criteria for determining when such a
1094 submission is required.

1095 (v) Any permit issued and approved by the department for
1096 the installation, modification, or repair of an onsite sewage
1097 treatment and disposal system transfers ~~shall transfer~~ with the
1098 title to the property in a real estate transaction. For any such
1099 transfer of title to a property that has an onsite sewage
1100 treatment and disposal system that has not been abandoned in
1101 accordance with the section, or which is subject to a permit for
1102 the installation, modification, repair, or operation of such a

11-00759C-26

20261510__

1103 system, the real estate transaction is subject to the following
1104 requirements:

1105 1. A title may not be encumbered at the time of transfer by
1106 new permit requirements by a governmental entity for an onsite
1107 sewage treatment and disposal system which differ from the
1108 permitting requirements in effect at the time the system was
1109 permitted, modified, or repaired.

1110 2. An inspection of a system may not be mandated by a
1111 governmental entity at the point of sale in a real estate
1112 transaction.

1113 3. At or before the time of such real estate transaction,
1114 the following notifications must be provided to the persons
1115 receiving ownership of the property:

1116 a. A disclosure statement clearly identifying that the
1117 property is subject to regulations for an onsite sewage
1118 treatment and disposal system;

1119 b. Information indicating the nature and location of any
1120 existing onsite sewage treatment and disposal system components;

1121 c. If applicable, a statement that the property is subject
1122 to an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system operating
1123 permit and that one or more of the persons receiving a
1124 controlling interest in the property are required pursuant to
1125 this subsection to provide written notice and proof of ownership
1126 to update the operating permit information within 60 days of
1127 such real estate transaction; and

1128 d. A copy of any valid permit for the installation,
1129 modification, repair, or operation of an onsite sewage treatment
1130 and disposal system which will transfer pursuant to this
1131 paragraph.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

This paragraph does not affect a septic tank phase-out deferral program implemented by a consolidated government as defined in s. 9, Art. VIII of the State Constitution of 1885.

(w) A governmental entity, including a municipality, county, or statutorily created commission, may not require an engineer-designed performance-based treatment system, excluding a passive engineer-designed performance-based treatment system, before the completion of the Florida Onsite Sewage Nitrogen Reduction Strategies Project. This paragraph does not apply to a governmental entity, including a municipality, county, or statutorily created commission, which adopted a local law, ordinance, or regulation on or before January 31, 2012. Notwithstanding this paragraph, an engineer-designed performance-based treatment system may be used to meet the requirements of the variance review and advisory committee recommendations.

(x)1. An onsite sewage treatment and disposal system is not considered abandoned if the system is disconnected from a structure that was made unusable or destroyed following a disaster and if the system was properly functioning at the time of disconnection and was not adversely affected by the disaster. The onsite sewage treatment and disposal system may be reconnected to a rebuilt structure if:

a. The reconnection of the system is to the same type of structure which contains the same number of bedrooms or fewer, if the square footage of the structure is less than or equal to 110 percent of the original square footage of the structure that existed before the disaster;

11-00759C-26

20261510__

b. The system is not a sanitary nuisance; and

c. The system has not been altered without prior authorization.

2. An onsite sewage treatment and disposal system that serves a property that is foreclosed upon is not considered abandoned.

(y) If an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system permittee receives, relies upon, and undertakes construction of a system based upon a validly issued construction permit under rules applicable at the time of construction but a change to a rule occurs within 5 years after the approval of the system for construction but before the final approval of the system, the rules applicable and in effect at the time of construction approval apply at the time of final approval if fundamental site conditions have not changed between the time of construction approval and final approval.

(z) An existing-system inspection or evaluation and assessment, or a modification, replacement, or upgrade of an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system is not required for a remodeling addition or modification to a single-family home if a bedroom is not added. However, a remodeling addition or modification to a single-family home may not cover any part of the existing system or encroach upon a required setback or the unobstructed area. To determine if a setback or the unobstructed area is impacted, the local health department shall review and verify a floor plan and site plan of the proposed remodeling addition or modification to the home submitted by a remodeler which shows the location of the system, including the distance of the remodeling addition or modification to the home from the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

onsite sewage treatment and disposal system. The local health department may visit the site or otherwise determine the best means of verifying the information submitted. A verification of the location of a system is not an inspection or evaluation and assessment of the system. The review and verification must be completed within 7 business days after receipt by the local health department of a floor plan and site plan. If the review and verification is not completed within such time, the remodeling addition or modification to the single-family home, for the purposes of this paragraph, is approved.

(7) USE OF ENHANCED NUTRIENT-REDUCING ONSITE SEWAGE TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL SYSTEMS.—To meet the requirements of a total maximum daily load, the department shall implement a fast-track approval process of no longer than 6 months for the determination of the use of American National Standards Institute 245 systems approved by NSF International before July 1, 2020. The department shall also establish an enhanced nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal system approval program that will expeditiously evaluate and approve such systems for use in this state to comply with ss. 403.067(7)(a)10. and 373.469(3)(d).

(9) CONTRACT OR DELEGATION AUTHORITY.—The department may contract with or delegate its powers and duties under this section ~~to a county~~ as provided in s. 403.061 or s. 403.182.

Section 15. Paragraph (c) of subsection (6) and paragraph (a) of subsection (7) of section 403.067, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

403.067 Establishment and implementation of total maximum daily loads.—

11-00759C-26

20261510__

(6) CALCULATION AND ALLOCATION.—

(c) Adoption of rules. The total maximum daily load calculations and allocations established under this subsection for each water body or water body segment shall be adopted by rule by the secretary pursuant to ss. 120.536(1), 120.54, and 403.805. Where additional data collection and analysis are needed to increase the scientific precision and accuracy of the total maximum daily load, the department is authorized to adopt phased total maximum daily loads that are subject to change as additional data becomes available. Where phased total maximum daily loads are proposed, the department shall, in the detailed statement of facts and circumstances justifying the rule, explain why the data are inadequate so as to justify a phased total maximum daily load. The rules adopted pursuant to this paragraph are not ~~subject to approval by the Environmental Regulation Commission and are not subject to the provisions of~~ s. 120.541(3). As part of the rule development process, the department shall hold at least one public workshop in the vicinity of the water body or water body segment for which the total maximum daily load is being developed. Notice of the public workshop shall be published not less than 5 days nor more than 15 days before the public workshop in a newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties containing the water bodies or water body segments for which the total maximum daily load calculation and allocation are being developed.

(7) DEVELOPMENT OF BASIN MANAGEMENT PLANS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS.—

(a) *Basin management action plans.*—

1. In developing and implementing the total maximum daily

11-00759C-26

20261510__

load for a waterbody, the department, or the department in conjunction with a water management district, may develop a basin management action plan that addresses some or all of the watersheds and basins tributary to the waterbody. Such plan must integrate the appropriate management strategies available to the state through existing water quality protection programs to achieve the total maximum daily loads and may provide for phased implementation of these management strategies to promote timely, cost-effective actions as provided for in s. 403.151. The plan must establish a schedule implementing the management strategies, establish a basis for evaluating the plan's effectiveness, and identify feasible funding strategies for implementing the plan's management strategies. The management strategies may include regional treatment systems or other public works, when appropriate, and voluntary trading of water quality credits to achieve the needed pollutant load reductions.

2. A basin management action plan must equitably allocate, pursuant to paragraph (6) (b), pollutant reductions to individual basins, as a whole to all basins, or to each identified point source or category of nonpoint sources, as appropriate. For nonpoint sources for which best management practices have been adopted, the initial requirement specified by the plan must be those practices developed pursuant to paragraph (c). When appropriate, the plan may take into account the benefits of pollutant load reduction achieved by point or nonpoint sources that have implemented management strategies to reduce pollutant loads, including best management practices, before the development of the basin management action plan. The plan must also identify the mechanisms that will address potential future

11-00759C-26

20261510__

1277 increases in pollutant loading.

1278 3. The basin management action planning process is intended
1279 to involve the broadest possible range of interested parties,
1280 with the objective of encouraging the greatest amount of
1281 cooperation and consensus possible. In developing a basin
1282 management action plan, the department shall assure that key
1283 stakeholders, including, but not limited to, applicable local
1284 governments, water management districts, the Department of
1285 Agriculture and Consumer Services, other appropriate state
1286 agencies, local soil and water conservation districts,
1287 environmental groups, regulated interests, and affected
1288 pollution sources, are invited to participate in the process.
1289 The department shall hold at least one public meeting in the
1290 vicinity of the watershed or basin to discuss and receive
1291 comments during the planning process and shall otherwise
1292 encourage public participation to the greatest practicable
1293 extent. Notice of the public meeting must be published in a
1294 newspaper of general circulation in each county in which the
1295 watershed or basin lies at least 5 days, but not more than 15
1296 days, before the public meeting. A basin management action plan
1297 does not supplant or otherwise alter any assessment made under
1298 subsection (3) or subsection (4) or any calculation or initial
1299 allocation.

1300 4. Each new or revised basin management action plan must
1301 include all of the following:

1302 a. The appropriate management strategies available through
1303 existing water quality protection programs to achieve total
1304 maximum daily loads, which may provide for phased implementation
1305 to promote timely, cost-effective actions as provided for in s.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

403.151.

b. A description of best management practices adopted by rule.

c. For the applicable 5-year implementation milestone, a list of projects that will achieve the pollutant load reductions needed to meet the total maximum daily load or the load allocations established pursuant to subsection (6). Each project must include a planning-level cost estimate and an estimated date of completion.

d. A list of projects developed pursuant to paragraph (e), if applicable.

e. The source and amount of financial assistance to be made available by the department, a water management district, or other entity for each listed project, if applicable.

f. A planning-level estimate of each listed project's expected load reduction, if applicable.

5. The department shall adopt all or any part of a basin management action plan and any amendment to such plan by secretarial order pursuant to chapter 120 to implement this section. A basin management action plan and any amendment to such plan become effective 60 days after the date the secretarial order is filed.

6. The basin management action plan must include 5-year milestones for implementation and water quality improvement, and an associated water quality monitoring component sufficient to evaluate whether reasonable progress in pollutant load reductions is being achieved over time. An assessment of progress toward these milestones shall be conducted every 5 years, and revisions to the plan shall be made as appropriate.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Any entity with a specific pollutant load reduction requirement established in a basin management action plan shall identify the projects or strategies that such entity will undertake to meet current 5-year pollution reduction milestones, beginning with the first 5-year milestone for new basin management action plans, and submit such projects to the department for inclusion in the appropriate basin management action plan. Each project identified must include an estimated amount of nutrient reduction that is reasonably expected to be achieved based on the best scientific information available. Revisions to the basin management action plan shall be made by the department in cooperation with basin stakeholders. Revisions to the management strategies required for nonpoint sources must follow the procedures in subparagraph (c)4. Revised basin management action plans must be adopted pursuant to subparagraph 5.

7. In accordance with procedures adopted by rule under paragraph (9)(c), basin management action plans, and other pollution control programs under local, state, or federal authority as provided in subsection (4), may allow point or nonpoint sources that will achieve greater pollutant reductions than required by an adopted total maximum daily load or wasteload allocation to generate, register, and trade water quality credits for the excess reductions to enable other sources to achieve their allocation; however, the generation of water quality credits does not remove the obligation of a source or activity to meet applicable technology requirements or adopted best management practices. Such plans must allow trading between NPDES permittees, and trading that may or may not involve NPDES permittees, where the generation or use of the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

credits involve an entity or activity not subject to department water discharge permits whose owner voluntarily elects to obtain department authorization for the generation and sale of credits.

8. The department's rule relating to the equitable abatement of pollutants into surface waters do not apply to water bodies or waterbody segments for which a basin management plan that takes into account future new or expanded activities or discharges has been adopted under this section.

9. In order to promote resilient wastewater utilities, if the department identifies domestic wastewater treatment facilities or onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems as contributors of at least 20 percent of point source or nonpoint source nutrient pollution or if the department determines remediation is necessary to achieve the total maximum daily load, a basin management action plan for a nutrient total maximum daily load must include the following:

a. A domestic wastewater treatment plan developed by each local government, in cooperation with the department, the water management district, and the public and private domestic wastewater treatment facilities providing services or located within the jurisdiction of the local government, which addresses domestic wastewater. Private domestic wastewater facilities and special districts providing domestic wastewater services must provide the required wastewater facility information to the applicable local governments. The domestic wastewater treatment plan must:

(I) Provide for construction, expansion, or upgrades necessary to achieve the total maximum daily load requirements applicable to the domestic wastewater treatment facility.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

(II) Include the permitted capacity in average annual gallons per day for the domestic wastewater treatment facility; the average nutrient concentration and the estimated average nutrient load of the domestic wastewater; a projected timeline of the dates by which the construction of any facility improvements will begin and be completed and the date by which operations of the improved facility will begin; the estimated cost of the improvements; and the identity of responsible parties.

The domestic wastewater treatment plan must be adopted as part of the basin management action plan no later than July 1, 2025. A local government that does not have a domestic wastewater treatment facility in its jurisdiction is not required to develop a domestic wastewater treatment plan unless there is a demonstrated need to establish a domestic wastewater treatment facility within its jurisdiction to improve water quality necessary to achieve a total maximum daily load. A local government is not responsible for a private domestic wastewater facility's compliance with a basin management action plan unless such facility is operated through a public-private partnership to which the local government is a party.

b. An onsite sewage treatment and disposal system remediation plan developed by each local government in cooperation with the department, the Department of Health, water management districts, and public and private domestic wastewater treatment facilities.

(I) The onsite sewage treatment and disposal system remediation plan must identify cost-effective and financially

11-00759C-26

20261510__

feasible projects necessary to achieve the nutrient load reductions required for onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems. To identify cost-effective and financially feasible projects for remediation of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, the local government shall:

(A) Include an inventory of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems based on the best information available;

(B) Identify onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems that would be eliminated through connection to existing or future central domestic wastewater infrastructure in the jurisdiction or domestic wastewater service area of the local government, that would be replaced with or upgraded to enhanced nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, or that would remain on conventional onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems;

(C) Estimate the costs of potential onsite sewage treatment and disposal system connections, upgrades, or replacements; and

(D) Identify deadlines and interim milestones for the planning, design, and construction of projects.

(II) The department shall adopt the onsite sewage treatment and disposal system remediation plan as part of the basin management action plan no later than July 1, 2025, or as required for Outstanding Florida Springs under s. 373.807.

10. The following activities are prohibited within a basin management action plan adopted under this section, a reasonable assurance plan, or a pollution reduction plan:

a. The installation of new onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems ~~constructed within a basin management action plan area adopted under this section, a reasonable assurance~~

11-00759C-26

20261510__

1451 ~~plan, or a pollution reduction plan is prohibited~~ where
1452 connection to a publicly owned or investor-owned sewerage system
1453 is available as defined in s. 381.0065(2)(a). On lots of 1 acre
1454 or less ~~within a basin management action plan adopted under this~~
1455 ~~section, a reasonable assurance plan, or a pollution reduction~~
1456 ~~plan~~ where a publicly owned or investor-owned sewerage system is
1457 not available, the installation of enhanced nutrient-reducing
1458 onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, distributed
1459 wastewater treatment systems as defined in s. 403.814(13), or
1460 other wastewater treatment systems that achieve at least 65
1461 percent nitrogen reduction is required.

1462 b. The construction or installation of new domestic
1463 wastewater disposal facilities, including rapid infiltration
1464 basins, with permitted capacities of 100,000 or more gallons per
1465 day, except for those facilities that meet an advanced
1466 wastewater treatment standard of no more than 3 mg/l total
1467 nitrogen and 1 mg/l total phosphorus on an annual permitted
1468 basis, or a more stringent treatment standard if the department
1469 determines the more stringent standard is necessary to attain a
1470 total maximum daily load.

1471 c. The construction or installation of new facilities for
1472 the disposal of hazardous waste.

1473 11. When identifying wastewater projects in a basin
1474 management action plan, the department may not require the
1475 higher cost option if it achieves the same nutrient load
1476 reduction as a lower cost option. A regulated entity may choose
1477 a different cost option if it complies with the pollutant
1478 reduction requirements of an adopted total maximum daily load
1479 and meets or exceeds the pollution reduction requirement of the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

original project.

12. Annually, local governments subject to a basin management action plan or located within the basin of a waterbody not attaining nutrient or nutrient-related standards must provide to the department an update on the status of construction of sanitary sewers to serve such areas, in a manner prescribed by the department.

Section 16. Paragraph (e) of subsection (1) of section 403.0671, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.0671 Basin management action plan wastewater reports.—

(1) By July 1, 2021, the department, in coordination with the county health departments, wastewater treatment facilities, and other governmental entities, shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives evaluating the costs of wastewater projects identified in the basin management action plans developed pursuant to ss. 373.807 and 403.067(7) and the onsite sewage treatment and disposal system remediation plans and other restoration plans developed to meet the total maximum daily loads required under s. 403.067. The report must include all of the following:

(e) The projected costs of installing enhanced nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems on buildable lots in priority focus areas ~~to comply with s. 373.811.~~

Section 17. Subsection (11) of section 403.0872, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.0872 Operation permits for major sources of air pollution; annual operation license fee.—Provided that program

11-00759C-26

20261510__

approval pursuant to 42 U.S.C. s. 7661a has been received from the United States Environmental Protection Agency, beginning January 2, 1995, each major source of air pollution, including electrical power plants certified under s. 403.511, must obtain from the department an operation permit for a major source of air pollution under this section. This operation permit is the only department operation permit for a major source of air pollution required for such source; provided, at the applicant's request, the department shall issue a separate acid rain permit for a major source of air pollution that is an affected source within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. s. 7651a(1). Operation permits for major sources of air pollution, except general permits issued pursuant to s. 403.814, must be issued in accordance with the procedures contained in this section and in accordance with chapter 120; however, to the extent that chapter 120 is inconsistent with this section, the procedures contained in this section prevail.

(11) Each major source of air pollution permitted to operate in this state must pay by June 30 ~~between January 15 and April 1~~ of each year, upon written notice from the department, an annual operation license fee in an amount determined by department rule. The annual operation license fee shall be terminated immediately in the event the United States Environmental Protection Agency imposes annual fees solely to implement and administer the major source air-operation permit program in Florida under 40 C.F.R. s. 70.10(d).

(a) The annual fee must be assessed based upon the source's previous year's emissions and must be calculated by multiplying the applicable annual operation license fee factor times the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

tons of each regulated air pollutant actually emitted, as calculated in accordance with the department's emissions computation and reporting rules. The annual fee shall only apply to those regulated pollutants, except carbon monoxide and greenhouse gases, for which an allowable numeric emission limiting standard is specified in the source's most recent construction or operation permit; provided, however, that:

1. The license fee factor is \$25 or another amount determined by department rule which ensures that the revenue provided by each year's operation license fees is sufficient to cover all reasonable direct and indirect costs of the major stationary source air-operation permit program established by this section. The license fee factor may be increased beyond \$25 only if the secretary of the department affirmatively finds that a shortage of revenue for support of the major stationary source air-operation permit program will occur in the absence of a fee factor adjustment. The annual license fee factor may never exceed \$35.

2. The amount of each regulated air pollutant in excess of 4,000 tons per year emitted by any source, or group of sources belonging to the same Major Group as described in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual, 1987, may not be included in the calculation of the fee. Any source, or group of sources, which does not emit any regulated air pollutant in excess of 4,000 tons per year, is allowed a one-time credit not to exceed 25 percent of the first annual licensing fee for the prorated portion of existing air-operation permit application fees remaining upon commencement of the annual licensing fees.

3. If the department has not received the fee ~~by March 1 of~~

11-00759C-26

20261510__

~~the calendar year, the permittee must be sent a written warning of the consequences for failing to pay the fee by April 1. If the fee is not postmarked by June 30 April 1 of the calendar~~
year, the department shall impose, in addition to the fee, a penalty of 50 percent of the amount of the fee, plus interest on such amount computed in accordance with s. 220.807. The department may not impose such penalty or interest on any amount underpaid, provided that the permittee has timely remitted payment of at least 90 percent of the amount determined to be due and remits full payment within 60 days after receipt of notice of the amount underpaid. The department may waive the collection of underpayment and may not be required to refund overpayment of the fee, if the amount due is less than 1 percent of the fee, up to \$50. The department may revoke any major air pollution source operation permit if it finds that the permitholder has failed to timely pay any required annual operation license fee, penalty, or interest.

4. Notwithstanding the computational provisions of this subsection, the annual operation license fee for any source subject to this section may not be less than \$250, except that the annual operation license fee for sources permitted solely through general permits issued under s. 403.814 may not exceed \$50 per year.

5. Notwithstanding s. 403.087(7)(a)5.a., which authorizes air pollution construction permit fees, the department may not require such fees for changes or additions to a major source of air pollution permitted pursuant to this section, unless the activity triggers permitting requirements under Title I, Part C or Part D, of the federal Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. ss. 7470-

11-00759C-26

20261510__

1596 ~~7514a. Costs to issue and administer such permits shall be~~
1597 ~~considered direct and indirect costs of the major stationary~~
1598 ~~source air-operation permit program under s. 403.0873.~~ The
1599 department shall, however, require fees pursuant to s.
1600 403.087(7)(a)5.a. for the construction of a new major source of
1601 air pollution that will be subject to the permitting
1602 requirements of this section once constructed and for activities
1603 triggering permitting requirements under Title I, Part C or Part
1604 D, of the federal Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. ss. 7470-7514a.

1605 (b) Annual operation license fees collected by the
1606 department must be sufficient to cover all reasonable direct and
1607 indirect costs required to develop and administer the major
1608 stationary source air-operation permit program, which shall
1609 consist of the following elements to the extent that they are
1610 reasonably related to the regulation of major stationary air
1611 pollution sources, in accordance with United States
1612 Environmental Protection Agency regulations and guidelines:

1613 1. Reviewing and acting upon any application for such a
1614 permit.

1615 2. Implementing and enforcing the terms and conditions of
1616 any such permit, excluding court costs or other costs associated
1617 with any enforcement action.

1618 3. Emissions and ambient monitoring.

1619 4. Preparing generally applicable regulations or guidance.

1620 5. Modeling, analyses, and demonstrations.

1621 6. Preparing inventories and tracking emissions.

1622 7. Implementing the Small Business Stationary Source
1623 Technical and Environmental Compliance Assistance Program.

1624 8. Any audits conducted under paragraph (c).

11-00759C-26

20261510__

(c) An audit of the major stationary source air-operation permit program must be conducted 2 years after the United States Environmental Protection Agency has given full approval of the program to ascertain whether the annual operation license fees collected by the department are used solely to support any reasonable direct and indirect costs as listed in paragraph (b). A program audit must be performed biennially after the first audit.

Section 18. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (3) of section 403.1838, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

403.1838 Small Community Sewer Construction Assistance Act.—

(3)(a) In accordance with rules adopted by the department ~~Environmental Regulation Commission~~ under this section, the department may provide grants, from funds specifically appropriated for this purpose, to financially disadvantaged small communities for up to 100 percent of the costs of planning, designing, constructing, upgrading, or replacing wastewater collection, transmission, treatment, disposal, and reuse facilities, including necessary legal and administrative expenses.

(b) The rules of the department ~~Environmental Regulation Commission~~ must:

1. Require that projects to plan, design, construct, upgrade, or replace wastewater collection, transmission, treatment, disposal, and reuse facilities be cost-effective, environmentally sound, permittable, and implementable.

2. Require appropriate user charges, connection fees, and other charges sufficient to ensure the long-term operation,

11-00759C-26

20261510__

1654 maintenance, and replacement of the facilities constructed under
1655 each grant.

1656 3. Require grant applications to be submitted on
1657 appropriate forms with appropriate supporting documentation, and
1658 require records to be maintained.

1659 4. Establish a system to determine eligibility of grant
1660 applications.

1661 5. Establish a system to determine the relative priority of
1662 grant applications. The system must consider public health
1663 protection and water pollution prevention or abatement and must
1664 prioritize projects that plan for the installation of wastewater
1665 transmission facilities to be constructed concurrently with
1666 other construction projects occurring within or along a
1667 transportation facility right-of-way.

1668 6. Establish requirements for competitive procurement of
1669 engineering and construction services, materials, and equipment.

1670 7. Provide for termination of grants when program
1671 requirements are not met.

1672 Section 19. Section 403.804, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

1673 Section 20. Paragraph (d) of subsection (2) and paragraph
1674 (a) of subsection (3) of section 403.9301, Florida Statutes, are
1675 amended to read:

1676 403.9301 Wastewater services projections.—

1677 (2) As used in this section, the term:

1678 (d) "Wastewater services" means service to a sewerage
1679 system, as defined in s. 403.031, or service to domestic
1680 wastewater treatment works, including services to manage
1681 domestic septage from residences and establishments served by
1682 onsite treatment and disposal systems.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

(3) By June 30, 2022, and every 5 years thereafter, each county, municipality, or special district providing wastewater services shall develop a needs analysis for its jurisdiction over the subsequent 20 years. In projecting such needs, each local government shall include the following:

(a) A detailed description of the facilities used to provide wastewater services, including analysis of domestic biosolids and septage generation, treatment, management, use, and disposal in the corresponding service area.

Section 21. Subsection (1) of section 576.041, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

576.041 Inspection fees; records.—

(1) Every licensee must ~~shall~~ pay to the department an inspection fee in the amount of \$1 per ton for fertilizer sold in this the state, except fertilizer products containing or composed of Class AA biosolids produced by a domestic wastewater or biosolids treatment facility in this state, raw ground phosphate rock, soft phosphate, colloidal phosphate, phosphatic clays and all other untreated phosphatic materials, gypsum, hydrated lime, limestone, and dolomite when sold or used for agricultural purposes, for ~~on~~ which the inspection fee is ~~shall~~ ~~be~~ 30 cents per ton. The inspection fees paid for Class AA biosolids-composed fertilizers must be based on the equivalent dry tons of material sold. All fees paid to the department under this section shall be deposited into the State Treasury to be placed in the General Inspection Trust Fund to be used for the sole purpose of funding the fertilizer inspection program.

Section 22. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section 576.045, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

11-00759C-26

20261510__

576.045 Nitrogen and phosphorus; findings and intent; fees; purpose; best management practices; waiver of liability; compliance; rules; exclusions; expiration.—

(2) FEES.—

(a) In addition to the fees imposed under ss. 576.021 and 576.041, the following supplemental fees shall be collected and paid by licensees for the sole purpose of implementing this section:

1. One hundred dollars for each license to distribute fertilizer.

2. One hundred dollars for each specialty fertilizer registration.

3. Fifty cents per ton for all fertilizer that contains nitrogen or phosphorus and that is sold in this state.

4. Twenty-five cents per ton for Class AA biosolids produced by a domestic wastewater facility, calculated based on equivalent dry tons of the Class AA biosolids-derived product.

Section 23. Subsection (6) of section 120.81, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.81 Exceptions and special requirements; general areas.—

(6) RISK IMPACT STATEMENT.—The Department of Environmental Protection shall prepare a risk impact statement for any rule that is proposed for adoption which ~~approval by the Environmental Regulation Commission and that~~ establishes or changes standards or criteria based on impacts to or effects upon human health. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall prepare a risk impact statement for any rule that is proposed for adoption that establishes standards or criteria based on impacts to or effects upon human health.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

(a) This subsection does not apply to rules adopted pursuant to federally delegated or mandated programs where such rules are identical or substantially identical to the federal regulations or laws being adopted or implemented by the Department of Environmental Protection or Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, as applicable. However, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall identify any risk analysis information available to them from the Federal Government that has formed the basis of such a rule.

(b) This subsection does not apply to emergency rules adopted pursuant to this chapter.

(c) The Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall prepare and publish notice of the availability of a clear and concise risk impact statement for all applicable rules. The risk impact statement must explain the risk to the public health addressed by the rule and shall identify and summarize the source of the scientific information used in evaluating that risk.

(d) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to create a new cause of action or basis for challenging a rule nor diminish any existing cause of action or basis for challenging a rule.

Section 24. Subsection (1) of section 373.421, Florida Statutes, is amended, and paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of that section is reenacted, to read:

373.421 Delineation methods; formal determinations.—

(1) The department's ~~Environmental Regulation Commission~~ shall adopt a unified statewide methodology for the delineation

11-00759C-26

20261510__

of the extent of wetlands as defined in s. 373.019(27). ~~This methodology~~ shall consider regional differences in the types of soils and vegetation that may serve as indicators of the extent of wetlands. This methodology shall also include provisions for determining the extent of surface waters other than wetlands for the purposes of regulation under s. 373.414. This methodology shall not become effective until ratified by the Legislature. Subsequent to legislative ratification, the wetland definition in s. 373.019(27) and the adopted wetland methodology shall be binding on the department, the water management districts, local governments, and any other governmental entities. Upon ratification of such wetland methodology, the Legislature preempts the authority of any water management district, state or regional agency, or local government to define wetlands or develop a delineation methodology to implement the definition and determines that the exclusive definition and delineation methodology for wetlands shall be that established pursuant to s. 373.019(27) and this section. Upon such legislative ratification, any existing wetlands definition or wetland delineation methodology shall be superseded by the wetland definition and delineation methodology established pursuant to this chapter. Subsequent to legislative ratification, a delineation of the extent of a surface water or wetland by the department or a water management district, pursuant to a formal determination under subsection (2), or pursuant to a permit issued under this part in which the delineation was field-verified by the permitting agency and specifically approved in the permit, shall be binding on all other governmental entities for the duration of the formal determination or permit. All

11-00759C-26

20261510__

existing rules and methodologies of the department, the water management districts, and local governments, regarding surface water or wetland definition and delineation shall remain in full force and effect until the common methodology rule becomes effective. However, this shall not be construed to limit any power of the department, the water management districts, and local governments to amend or adopt a surface water or wetland definition or delineation methodology until the common methodology rule becomes effective.

(7)

(b) Wetlands contiguous to surface waters of the state as defined in s. 403.031(13), Florida Statutes (1991), shall be delineated pursuant to the department's rules as such rules existed prior to January 24, 1984, while wetlands not contiguous to surface waters of the state as defined in s. 403.031(13), Florida Statutes (1991), shall be delineated pursuant to the applicable methodology ratified by s. 373.4211 for any development which obtains an individual permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers under 33 U.S.C. s. 1344:

1. Where a jurisdictional determination validated by the department pursuant to rule 17-301.400(8), Florida Administrative Code, as it existed in rule 17-4.022, Florida Administrative Code, on April 1, 1985, is revalidated pursuant to s. 373.414(13) and the affected lands are part of a project for which a vested rights determination has been issued pursuant to s. 380.06, or

2. Where the lands affected were grandfathered pursuant to s. 403.913(6), Florida Statutes (1991), and proof of prior notification pursuant to s. 403.913(6), Florida Statutes (1991),

11-00759C-26

20261510__

is submitted to the department within 180 days of the publication of a notice by the department of the existence of this provision. Failure to timely submit the proof of prior notification to the department serves as a waiver of the benefits conferred by this subsection.

3. This subsection shall not be applicable to lands:

a. Within the geographical area to which an individual or general permit issued prior to June 1, 1994, under rules adopted pursuant to this part applies; or

b. Within the geographical area to which a conceptual permit issued prior to June 1, 1994, under rules adopted pursuant to this part applies if wetland delineations were identified and approved by the conceptual permit as set forth in s. 373.414(12)(b)1. or 2.; or

c. Where no development activity as defined in s. 380.01(1) or (2)(a)-(d) and (f) has occurred within the project boundaries since October 1, 1986; or

d. Of a project which is not in compliance with this part or the rules adopted pursuant to ss. 403.91-403.929, 1984 Supplement to the Florida Statutes 1983, as amended.

4. The wetland delineation methodology required in this subsection shall only apply within the geographical area of an individual permit issued by the United States Army Corps of Engineers under 33 U.S.C. s. 1344. The requirement to obtain such individual permit to secure the benefit of this subsection shall not apply to any activities exempt or not subject to regulation under 33 U.S.C. s. 1344.

5. Notwithstanding subsection (1), the wetland delineation methodology required in this subsection and any wetland

11-00759C-26

20261510__

delineation pursuant thereto, shall only apply to agency action under this part and shall not be binding on local governments except in their implementation of this part.

Section 25. Paragraph (b) of subsection (23) of section 403.031, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.031 Definitions.—In construing this chapter, or rules and regulations adopted pursuant hereto, the following words, phrases, or terms, unless the context otherwise indicates, have the following meanings:

(23) "Waters" include, but are not limited to, rivers, lakes, streams, springs, impoundments, wetlands, and all other waters or bodies of water, including fresh, brackish, saline, tidal, surface, or underground waters. Waters owned entirely by one person other than the state are included only in regard to possible discharge on other property or water. Underground waters include, but are not limited to, all underground waters passing through pores of rock or soils or flowing through in channels, whether manmade or natural. Solely for purposes of s. 403.0885, waters of the state also include navigable waters or waters of the contiguous zone as used in s. 502 of the Clean Water Act, as amended, 33 U.S.C. ss. 1251 et seq., as in existence on January 1, 1993, except for those navigable waters seaward of the boundaries of the state set forth in s. 1, Art. II of the State Constitution. Solely for purposes of this chapter, waters of the state also include the area bounded by the following:

(b) The area bounded by the line described in paragraph (a) generally includes those waters to be known as waters of the state. The landward extent of these waters shall be determined

11-00759C-26

20261510__

by the delineation methodology ratified in s. 373.4211. Any waters which are outside the general boundary line described in paragraph (a) but which are contiguous thereto by virtue of the presence of a wetland, watercourse, or other surface water, as determined by the delineation methodology ratified in s.

373.4211, shall be a part of this waterbody. Any areas within the line described in paragraph (a) which are neither a wetland nor surface water, as determined by the delineation methodology ratified in s. 373.4211, shall be excluded therefrom. ~~If the Florida Environmental Regulation Commission designates the waters within the boundaries an Outstanding Florida Water, waters outside the boundaries may not be included as part of such designation unless a hearing is held pursuant to notice in each appropriate county and the boundaries of such lands are specifically considered and described for such designation.~~

Section 26. Subsections (7) and (32) of section 403.061, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

403.061 Department; powers and duties.—The department shall have the power and the duty to control and prohibit pollution of air and water in accordance with the law and rules adopted and promulgated by it and, for this purpose, to:

(7) Adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement this act. Any rule adopted pursuant to this act must be consistent with the provisions of federal law, if any, relating to control of emissions from motor vehicles, effluent limitations, pretreatment requirements, or standards of performance. A county, municipality, or political subdivision may not adopt or enforce any local ordinance, special law, or local regulation requiring the installation of Stage II vapor

11-00759C-26

20261510__

1915 recovery systems, as currently defined by department rule,
1916 unless such county, municipality, or political subdivision is or
1917 has been in the past designated by federal regulation as a
1918 moderate, serious, or severe ozone nonattainment area. Rules
1919 adopted pursuant to this act may not require dischargers of
1920 waste into waters of the state to improve natural background
1921 conditions. The department shall adopt rules to reasonably
1922 limit, reduce, and eliminate domestic wastewater collection and
1923 transmission system pipe leakages and inflow and infiltration.
1924 Discharges from steam electric generating plants existing or
1925 licensed under this chapter on July 1, 1984, may not be required
1926 to be treated to a greater extent than may be necessary to
1927 assure that the quality of nonthermal components of discharges
1928 from nonrecirculated cooling water systems is as high as the
1929 quality of the makeup waters; that the quality of nonthermal
1930 components of discharges from recirculated cooling water systems
1931 is no lower than is allowed for blowdown from such systems; or
1932 that the quality of noncooling system discharges which receive
1933 makeup water from a receiving body of water which does not meet
1934 applicable department water quality standards is as high as the
1935 quality of the receiving body of water. ~~The department may not~~
1936 ~~adopt standards more stringent than federal regulations, except~~
1937 ~~as provided in s. 403.804.~~

1938 (32) Adopt rules necessary to obtain approval from the
1939 United States Environmental Protection Agency to administer the
1940 Federal National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
1941 permitting program in Florida under ss. 318, 402, and 405 of the
1942 federal Clean Water Act, Pub. L. No. 92-500, as amended. This
1943 authority shall be implemented consistent with the provisions of

11-00759C-26

20261510__

part II, which shall be applicable to facilities certified thereunder. The department shall establish all rules, standards, and requirements that regulate the discharge of pollutants into waters of the United States as defined by and in a manner consistent with federal regulations; provided, however, that the department may adopt a standard that is stricter or more stringent than one set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency ~~if approved by the Governor and Cabinet in accordance with the procedures of s. 403.804(2).~~

The department shall implement such programs in conjunction with its other powers and duties and shall place special emphasis on reducing and eliminating contamination that presents a threat to humans, animals or plants, or to the environment.

Section 27. Subsection (9) of section 403.704, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.704 Powers and duties of the department.—The department shall have responsibility for the implementation and enforcement of this act. In addition to other powers and duties, the department shall:

(9) Adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement and enforce this act, including requirements for the classification, construction, operation, maintenance, and closure of solid waste management facilities and requirements for, and conditions on, solid waste disposal in this state, whether such solid waste is generated within this state or outside this state as long as such requirements and conditions are not based on the out-of-state origin of the waste and are consistent with applicable law. When classifying solid waste

11-00759C-26

20261510__

management facilities, the department shall consider the hydrogeology of the site for the facility, the types of wastes to be handled by the facility, and methods used to control the types of waste to be handled by the facility and shall seek to minimize the adverse effects of solid waste management on the environment. ~~Whenever the department adopts any rule stricter or more stringent than one that has been set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the procedures set forth in s. 403.804(2) shall be followed.~~ The department may ~~shall~~ not, ~~however,~~ adopt hazardous waste rules for solid waste for which special studies were required before ~~prior to~~ October 1, 1988, under s. 8002 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, 42 U.S.C. s. 6982, as amended, until the studies are completed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the information is available to the department for consideration in adopting its own rule.

Section 28. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) and paragraph (h) of subsection (9) of section 403.707, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

403.707 Permits.—

(3)

(d) The department may adopt rules to administer this subsection. ~~However, the department is not required to submit such rules to the Environmental Regulation Commission for approval.~~ Notwithstanding the limitations of s. 403.087(7)(a), permit fee caps for solid waste management facilities must ~~shall~~ be prorated to reflect the extended permit term authorized by this subsection.

(9) The department shall establish a separate category for

11-00759C-26

20261510__

solid waste management facilities that accept only construction and demolition debris for disposal or recycling. The department shall establish a reasonable schedule for existing facilities to comply with this section to avoid undue hardship to such facilities. However, a permitted solid waste disposal unit that receives a significant amount of waste prior to the compliance deadline established in this schedule shall not be required to be retrofitted with liners or leachate control systems.

(h) The department shall ensure that the requirements of this section are applied and interpreted consistently throughout this the state. ~~In accordance with s. 20.255,~~ The Division of Waste Management shall direct the district offices and bureaus on matters relating to the interpretation and applicability of this section.

Section 29. Subsection (3) of section 403.7222, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.7222 Prohibition of hazardous waste landfills.—

(3) This section does not prohibit the department from banning the disposal of hazardous waste in other types of waste management units in a manner consistent with federal requirements, ~~except as provided under s. 403.804(2).~~

Section 30. Subsection (4) of section 403.7234, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.7234 Small quantity generator notification and verification program.—

(4) Within 30 days of receipt of a notification, which includes a survey form, a small quantity generator shall disclose its management practices and the types and quantities of waste to the county government. Annually, each county shall

11-00759C-26

20261510__

verify the management practices of at least 20 percent of its small quantity generators. The procedure for verification used by the county must ~~shall~~ be developed as part of the guidance established by the department under s. 403.7226. The department may also regulate the waste management practices of small quantity generators in order to ensure proper management of hazardous waste in a manner consistent with federal requirements, ~~except as provided under s. 403.804(2).~~

Section 31. Section 403.803, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.803 Definitions.—When used in this part ~~act~~, the term, phrase, or word:

(1) "Branch office" means a geographical area, the boundaries of which may be established as a part of a district.

(2) "Canal" is a manmade trench, the bottom of which is normally covered by water with the upper edges of its sides normally above water.

(3) "Channel" is a trench, the bottom of which is normally covered entirely by water, with the upper edges of its sides normally below water.

(4) ~~"Commission" means the Environmental Regulation Commission.~~

~~(5)~~ "Department" means the Department of Environmental Protection.

(5) ~~(6)~~ "District" or "environmental district" means one of the geographical areas, the boundaries of which are established pursuant to this act.

(6) ~~(7)~~ "Drainage ditch" or "irrigation ditch" is a manmade trench dug for the purpose of draining water from the land or

11-00759C-26

20261510__

for transporting water for use on the land and is not built for navigational purposes.

(7)~~(8)~~ "Environmental district center" means the facilities and personnel which are centralized in each district for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of this act.

(8)~~(9)~~ "Headquarters" means the physical location of the offices of the secretary and the division directors of the department.

(9)~~(10)~~ "Insect control impoundment dikes" means artificial structures, including earthen berms, constructed and used to impound waters for the purpose of insect control.

(10)~~(11)~~ "Manager" means the head of an environmental district or branch office who shall supervise all environmental functions of the department within such environmental district or branch office.

(11)~~(12)~~ "Secretary" means the Secretary of Environmental Protection.

(12)~~(13)~~ "Standard" means any rule of the Department of Environmental Protection relating to air and water quality, noise, solid-waste management, and electric and magnetic fields associated with electrical transmission and distribution lines and substation facilities. The term "standard" does not include rules of the department which relate exclusively to the internal management of the department, the procedural processing of applications, the administration of rulemaking or adjudicatory proceedings, the publication of notices, the conduct of hearings, or other procedural matters.

(13)~~(14)~~ "Swale" means a manmade trench which:

(a) Has a top width-to-depth ratio of the cross-section

11-00759C-26

20261510__

equal to or greater than 6:1, or side slopes equal to or greater than 3 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical;

(b) Contains contiguous areas of standing or flowing water only following a rainfall event;

(c) Is planted with or has stabilized vegetation suitable for soil stabilization, stormwater treatment, and nutrient uptake; and

(d) Is designed to take into account the soil erodibility, soil percolation, slope, slope length, and drainage area so as to prevent erosion and reduce pollutant concentration of any discharge.

Section 32. Subsections (1) and (3) of section 403.805, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

403.805 Secretary; powers and duties; review of specified rules.—

(1) The secretary shall have the powers and duties of heads of departments set forth in chapter 20, including the authority to adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement this chapter and the provisions of chapters 161, 253, 258, 260, 369, 373, 376, 377, 378, and 380 ~~253, 373, and 376 and this chapter. The secretary shall have rulemaking responsibility under chapter 120, but shall submit any proposed rule containing standards to the Environmental Regulation Commission for approval, modification, or disapproval pursuant to s. 403.804, except for total maximum daily load calculations and allocations developed pursuant to s. 403.067(6).~~ The secretary shall have responsibility for final agency action regarding total maximum daily load calculations and allocations developed pursuant to s. 403.067(6). The secretary shall employ legal counsel to

11-00759C-26

20261510__

represent the department in matters affecting the department.
Except for appeals on permits specifically assigned by this act
to the Governor and Cabinet, and unless otherwise prohibited by
law, the secretary may delegate the authority assigned to the
department by this act to the assistant secretary, division
directors, and district and branch office managers and to the
water management districts.

(3) After adoption of proposed rule 62-302.531(9), Florida
Administrative Code, a nonseverability and effective date
provision approved by the commission on December 8, 2011, ~~in~~
~~accordance with the commission's legislative authority under s.~~
~~403.804~~, notice of which was published by the department on
December 22, 2011, in the Florida Administrative Register, Vol.
37, No. 51, page 4446, any subsequent rule or amendment altering
the effect of such rule must ~~shall~~ be submitted to the President
of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives no
later than 30 days before the next regular legislative session,
and such amendment may not take effect until it is ratified by
the Legislature.

Section 33. Section 403.8055, Florida Statutes, is amended
to read:

403.8055 Department adoption of federal standards.—
Notwithstanding s. 120.54 ~~ss. 120.54 and 403.804~~, the secretary
is empowered to adopt rules substantively identical to
regulations adopted in the Federal Register by the United States
Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to federal law, in
accordance with the following procedures:

(1) The secretary shall publish notice of intent to adopt a
rule pursuant to this section in the Florida Administrative

11-00759C-26

20261510__

2147 Register at least 21 days before ~~prior to~~ filing the rule with
2148 the Department of State. The secretary shall mail a copy of the
2149 notice of intent to adopt a rule to the Administrative
2150 Procedures Committee at least 21 days before ~~prior to~~ the date
2151 of filing with the Department of State. Before ~~Prior to~~ filing
2152 the rule with the Department of State, the secretary shall
2153 consider any written comments received within 21 days after the
2154 date of publication of the notice of intent to adopt a rule. The
2155 rule must ~~shall~~ be adopted upon filing with the Department of
2156 State. Substantive changes from the rules as noticed ~~shall~~
2157 require republishing of notice as required in this section.

2158 (2) Any rule adopted pursuant to this section becomes ~~shall~~
2159 ~~become~~ effective upon the date designated in the rule by the
2160 secretary; however, ~~no~~ such a rule may not ~~shall~~ become
2161 effective earlier than the effective date of the substantively
2162 identical United States Environmental Protection Agency
2163 regulation.

2164 (3) The secretary shall stay any terms or conditions of a
2165 permit implementing department rules adopted pursuant to this
2166 section if the substantively identical provisions of a United
2167 States Environmental Protection Agency regulation have been
2168 stayed under federal judicial review. A stay issued pursuant to
2169 this subsection shall terminate upon completion of federal
2170 judicial review.

2171 (4) Any domestic for-profit or nonprofit corporation or
2172 association formed, in whole or in part:

2173 (a) To promote conservation or natural beauty;

2174 (b) To protect the environment, personal health, or other
2175 biological values;

11-00759C-26

20261510__

(c) To preserve historical sites;

(d) To promote consumer interests;

(e) To represent labor, commercial, or industrial groups;

or

(f) To promote orderly development;

and any other substantially affected person may, within 14 days after the date of publication of the notice of intent to adopt a rule, file an objection to rulemaking with the department ~~Environmental Regulation Commission~~. The objection shall specify the portions of the proposed rule to which the person objects and the reasons for the objection. The secretary shall not have the authority under this section to adopt those portions of a proposed rule specified in such objection. Objections which are frivolous shall not be considered sufficient to prohibit the secretary from adopting rules under this section.

(5) Whenever all or part of any rule proposed for adoption by the department is substantively identical to a regulation adopted in the Federal Register by the United States Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to federal law, such rule shall be written in a manner so that the rule specifically references such regulation whenever possible.

Section 34. Subsection (1) of section 403.814, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.814 General permits; delegation.—

(1) The secretary is authorized to adopt rules establishing and providing for a program of general permits under this chapter and chapter 253 ~~and this chapter~~ for projects, or categories of projects, which have, either singly or

11-00759C-26

20261510__

2205 cumulatively, a minimal adverse environmental effect. Such rules
2206 must ~~shall~~ specify design or performance criteria that ~~which~~, if
2207 applied, would result in compliance with appropriate standards
2208 ~~adopted by the commission~~. Except as provided for in subsection
2209 (3), any person complying with the requirements of a general
2210 permit may use the permit 30 days after giving notice to the
2211 department without any agency action by the department.

2212 Section 35. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section
2213 376.302, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

2214 376.302 Prohibited acts; penalties.—

2215 (1) It shall be a violation of this chapter and it shall be
2216 prohibited for any reason:

2217 (a) To discharge pollutants or hazardous substances into or
2218 upon the surface or ground waters of the state or lands, which
2219 discharge violates any departmental "standard" as defined in s.
2220 403.803 ~~s. 403.803(13)~~.

2221 Section 36. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section
2222 380.5105, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

2223 380.5105 The Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts; Florida
2224 Forever program.—

2225 (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, it
2226 is the intent of the Legislature that the trust shall administer
2227 the working waterfronts land acquisition program as set forth in
2228 this section.

2229 (b) For projects that will require more than the grant
2230 amount awarded for completion, the applicant must identify in
2231 their project application funding sources that will provide the
2232 difference between the grant award and the estimated project
2233 completion cost. Such rules may be incorporated into those

11-00759C-26

20261510__

developed pursuant to s. 380.507(12) ~~s. 380.507(11)~~.

Section 37. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment made by this act to section 381.0065, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto, paragraph (k) of subsection (2) of section 381.0066, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

381.0066 Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; fees.—

(2) The minimum fees in the following fee schedule apply until changed by rule by the department within the following limits:

(k) Research: An additional \$5 fee shall be added to each new system construction permit issued to be used to fund onsite sewage treatment and disposal system research, demonstration, and training projects. Five dollars from any repair permit fee collected under this section shall be used for funding the hands-on training centers described in s. 381.0065(3)(j).

The funds collected pursuant to this subsection for the implementation of onsite sewage treatment and disposal system regulation and for the purposes of ss. 381.00655 and 381.0067, subsequent to any phased transfer of implementation from the Department of Health to the department within any county pursuant to s. 381.0065, must be deposited in the Florida Permit Fee Trust Fund under s. 403.0871, to be administered by the department.

Section 38. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment made by this act to section 403.067, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto, section 373.4595, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

11-00759C-26

20261510__

2263 373.4595 Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection
2264 Program.—

2265 (1) FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

2266 (a) The Legislature finds that the Lake Okeechobee
2267 watershed, the Caloosahatchee River watershed, and the St. Lucie
2268 River watershed are critical water resources of the state,
2269 providing many economic, natural habitat, and biodiversity
2270 functions benefiting the public interest, including
2271 agricultural, public, and environmental water supply; flood
2272 control; fishing; navigation and recreation; and habitat to
2273 endangered and threatened species and other flora and fauna.

2274 (b) The Legislature finds that changes in land uses, the
2275 construction of the Central and Southern Florida Project, and
2276 the loss of surface water storage have resulted in adverse
2277 changes to the hydrology and water quality of Lake Okeechobee
2278 and the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Rivers and their estuaries.

2279 (c) The Legislature finds that improvement to the
2280 hydrology, water quality, and associated aquatic habitats within
2281 the Lake Okeechobee watershed, the Caloosahatchee River
2282 watershed, and the St. Lucie River watershed, is essential to
2283 the protection of the greater Everglades ecosystem.

2284 (d) The Legislature also finds that it is imperative for
2285 the state, local governments, and agricultural and environmental
2286 communities to commit to restoring and protecting the surface
2287 water resources of the Lake Okeechobee watershed, the
2288 Caloosahatchee River watershed, and the St. Lucie River
2289 watershed, and that a watershed-based approach to address these
2290 issues must be developed and implemented immediately.

2291 (e) The Legislature finds that phosphorus loads from the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Lake Okeechobee watershed have contributed to excessive phosphorus levels throughout the Lake Okeechobee watershed and downstream receiving waters and that a reduction in levels of phosphorus will benefit the ecology of these systems. The excessive levels of phosphorus have also resulted in an accumulation of phosphorus in the sediments of Lake Okeechobee. If not removed, internal phosphorus loads from the sediments are expected to delay responses of the lake to external phosphorus reductions.

(f) The Legislature finds that the Lake Okeechobee phosphorus loads set forth in the total maximum daily loads established in accordance with s. 403.067 represent an appropriate basis for restoration of the Lake Okeechobee watershed.

(g) The Legislature finds that, in addition to phosphorus, other pollutants are contributing to water quality problems in the Lake Okeechobee watershed, the Caloosahatchee River watershed, and the St. Lucie River watershed, and that the total maximum daily load requirements of s. 403.067 provide a means of identifying and addressing these problems.

(h) The Legislature finds that the expeditious implementation of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program, the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Program, and the St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Program is needed to improve the quality, quantity, timing, and distribution of water in the northern Everglades ecosystem and that this section, in conjunction with s. 403.067, including the implementation of the plans developed and approved pursuant to subsections (3) and (4), and any related basin management action

11-00759C-26

20261510__

plan developed and implemented pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(a), provide a reasonable means of achieving the total maximum daily load requirements and achieving and maintaining compliance with state water quality standards.

(i) The Legislature finds that the implementation of the programs contained in this section is for the benefit of the public health, safety, and welfare and is in the public interest.

(j) The Legislature finds that sufficient research has been conducted and sufficient plans developed to immediately expand and accelerate programs to address the hydrology and water quality in the Lake Okeechobee watershed, the Caloosahatchee River watershed, and the St. Lucie River watershed.

(k) The Legislature finds that a continuing source of funding is needed to effectively implement the programs developed and approved under this section which are needed to address the hydrology and water quality problems within the Lake Okeechobee watershed, the Caloosahatchee River watershed, and the St. Lucie River watershed.

(l) It is the intent of the Legislature to protect and restore surface water resources and achieve and maintain compliance with water quality standards in the Lake Okeechobee watershed, the Caloosahatchee River watershed, and the St. Lucie River watershed, and downstream receiving waters, through the phased, comprehensive, and innovative protection program set forth in this section which includes long-term solutions based upon the total maximum daily loads established in accordance with s. 403.067. This program shall be watershed-based, shall provide for consideration of all water quality issues needed to

11-00759C-26

20261510__

2350 meet the total maximum daily load, and shall include research
2351 and monitoring, development and implementation of best
2352 management practices, refinement of existing regulations, and
2353 structural and nonstructural projects, including public works.

2354 (m) It is the intent of the Legislature that this section
2355 be implemented in coordination with the Comprehensive Everglades
2356 Restoration Plan project components and other federal programs
2357 in order to maximize opportunities for the most efficient and
2358 timely expenditures of public funds.

2359 (n) It is the intent of the Legislature that the
2360 coordinating agencies encourage and support the development of
2361 creative public-private partnerships and programs, including
2362 opportunities for water storage and quality improvement on
2363 private lands and water quality credit trading, to facilitate or
2364 further the restoration of the surface water resources of the
2365 Lake Okeechobee watershed, the Caloosahatchee River watershed,
2366 and the St. Lucie River watershed, consistent with s. 403.067.

2367 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

2368 (a) "Best management practice" means a practice or
2369 combination of practices determined by the coordinating
2370 agencies, based on research, field-testing, and expert review,
2371 to be the most effective and practicable on-location means,
2372 including economic and technological considerations, for
2373 improving water quality in agricultural and urban discharges.
2374 Best management practices for agricultural discharges shall
2375 reflect a balance between water quality improvements and
2376 agricultural productivity.

2377 (b) "Biosolids" means the solid, semisolid, or liquid
2378 residue generated during the treatment of domestic wastewater in

11-00759C-26

20261510__

a domestic wastewater treatment facility, formerly known as "domestic wastewater residuals" or "residuals," and includes products and treated material from biosolids treatment facilities and septage management facilities regulated by the department. The term does not include the treated effluent or reclaimed water from a domestic wastewater treatment facility, solids removed from pump stations and lift stations, screenings and grit removed from the preliminary treatment components of domestic wastewater treatment facilities, or ash generated during the incineration of biosolids.

(c) "Caloosahatchee River watershed" means the Caloosahatchee River, its tributaries, its estuary, and the area within Charlotte, Glades, Hendry, and Lee Counties from which surface water flow is directed or drains, naturally or by constructed works, to the river, its tributaries, or its estuary.

(d) "Coordinating agencies" means the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the South Florida Water Management District.

(e) "Corps of Engineers" means the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

(f) "Department" means the Department of Environmental Protection.

(g) "District" means the South Florida Water Management District.

(h) "Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project" means the construction project developed pursuant to this section.

(i) "Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Plan" means the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project and the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program.

(j) "Lake Okeechobee watershed" means Lake Okeechobee, its tributaries, and the area within which surface water flow is directed or drains, naturally or by constructed works, to the lake or its tributaries.

(k) "Northern Everglades" means the Lake Okeechobee watershed, the Caloosahatchee River watershed, and the St. Lucie River watershed.

(l) "Project component" means any structural or operational change, resulting from the Restudy, to the Central and Southern Florida Project as it existed and was operated as of January 1, 1999.

(m) "Restudy" means the Comprehensive Review Study of the Central and Southern Florida Project, for which federal participation was authorized by the Federal Water Resources Development Acts of 1992 and 1996 together with related congressional resolutions and for which participation by the South Florida Water Management District is authorized by s. 373.1501. The term includes all actions undertaken pursuant to the aforementioned authorizations which will result in recommendations for modifications or additions to the Central and Southern Florida Project.

(n) "River Watershed Protection Plans" means the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Plan and the St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Plan developed pursuant to this section.

(o) "Soil amendment" means any substance or mixture of

11-00759C-26

20261510__

substances sold or offered for sale for soil enriching or corrective purposes, intended or claimed to be effective in promoting or stimulating plant growth, increasing soil or plant productivity, improving the quality of crops, or producing any chemical or physical change in the soil, except amendments, conditioners, additives, and related products that are derived solely from inorganic sources and that contain no recognized plant nutrients.

(p) "St. Lucie River watershed" means the St. Lucie River, its tributaries, its estuary, and the area within Martin, Okeechobee, and St. Lucie Counties from which surface water flow is directed or drains, naturally or by constructed works, to the river, its tributaries, or its estuary.

(q) "Total maximum daily load" means the sum of the individual wasteload allocations for point sources and the load allocations for nonpoint sources and natural background adopted pursuant to s. 403.067. Before determining individual wasteload allocations and load allocations, the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body or water segment can assimilate from all sources without exceeding water quality standards must first be calculated.

(3) LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM.—The Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program shall consist of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Plan, the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067, the Lake Okeechobee Exotic Species Control Program, and the Lake Okeechobee Internal Phosphorus Management Program. The Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067 shall be the component of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Protection Program that achieves phosphorus load reductions for Lake Okeechobee. The Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program shall address the reduction of phosphorus loading to the lake from both internal and external sources. Phosphorus load reductions shall be achieved through a phased program of implementation. In the development and administration of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program, the coordinating agencies shall maximize opportunities provided by federal cost-sharing programs and opportunities for partnerships with the private sector.

(a) *Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Plan.*—To protect and restore surface water resources, the district, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies, shall complete a Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Plan in accordance with this section and ss. 373.451-373.459. Beginning March 1, 2020, and every 5 years thereafter, the district shall update the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Plan to ensure that it is consistent with the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067. The Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Plan shall identify the geographic extent of the watershed, be coordinated with the plans developed pursuant to paragraphs (4)(a) and (c), and include the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project and the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program. The plan shall consider and build upon a review and analysis of the performance of projects constructed during Phase I and Phase II of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project, pursuant to subparagraph 1.; relevant information resulting from the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan, pursuant to paragraph

11-00759C-26

20261510__

(b); relevant information resulting from the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program, pursuant to subparagraph 2.; relevant information resulting from the Lake Okeechobee Exotic Species Control Program, pursuant to paragraph (c); and relevant information resulting from the Lake Okeechobee Internal Phosphorus Management Program, pursuant to paragraph (d).

1. Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project.—To improve the hydrology and water quality of Lake Okeechobee and downstream receiving waters, including the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Rivers and their estuaries, the district, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies, shall design and construct the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project. The project shall include:

a. Phase I.—Phase I of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project shall consist of a series of project features consistent with the recommendations of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group's Lake Okeechobee Action Plan. Priority basins for such projects include S-191, S-154, and Pools D and E in the Lower Kissimmee River. To obtain phosphorus load reductions to Lake Okeechobee as soon as possible, the following actions shall be implemented:

(I) The district shall serve as a full partner with the Corps of Engineers in the design and construction of the Grassy Island Ranch and New Palm Dairy stormwater treatment facilities as components of the Lake Okeechobee Water Retention/Phosphorus Removal Critical Project. The Corps of Engineers shall have the lead in design and construction of these facilities. Should delays be encountered in the implementation of either of these

11-00759C-26

20261510__

2524 facilities, the district shall notify the department and
2525 recommend corrective actions.

2526 (II) The district shall obtain permits and complete
2527 construction of two of the isolated wetland restoration projects
2528 that are part of the Lake Okeechobee Water Retention/Phosphorus
2529 Removal Critical Project. The additional isolated wetland
2530 projects included in this critical project shall further reduce
2531 phosphorus loading to Lake Okeechobee.

2532 (III) The district shall work with the Corps of Engineers
2533 to expedite initiation of the design process for the Taylor
2534 Creek/Nubbins Slough Reservoir Assisted Stormwater Treatment
2535 Area, a project component of the Comprehensive Everglades
2536 Restoration Plan. The district shall propose to the Corps of
2537 Engineers that the district take the lead in the design and
2538 construction of the Reservoir Assisted Stormwater Treatment Area
2539 and receive credit towards the local share of the total cost of
2540 the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

2541 b. Phase II technical plan and construction.—The district,
2542 in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies, shall
2543 develop a detailed technical plan for Phase II of the Lake
2544 Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project which provides the
2545 basis for the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan
2546 adopted by the department pursuant to s. 403.067. The detailed
2547 technical plan shall include measures for the improvement of the
2548 quality, quantity, timing, and distribution of water in the
2549 northern Everglades ecosystem, including the Lake Okeechobee
2550 watershed and the estuaries, and for facilitating the
2551 achievement of water quality standards. Use of cost-effective
2552 biologically based, hybrid wetland/chemical and other innovative

11-00759C-26

20261510__

2553 nutrient control technologies shall be incorporated in the plan
2554 where appropriate. The detailed technical plan shall also
2555 include a Process Development and Engineering component to
2556 finalize the detail and design of Phase II projects and identify
2557 additional measures needed to increase the certainty that the
2558 overall objectives for improving water quality and quantity can
2559 be met. Based on information and recommendations from the
2560 Process Development and Engineering component, the Phase II
2561 detailed technical plan shall be periodically updated. Phase II
2562 shall include construction of additional facilities in the
2563 priority basins identified in sub-subparagraph a., as well as
2564 facilities for other basins in the Lake Okeechobee watershed.
2565 The technical plan shall:

2566 (I) Identify Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project
2567 facilities designed to contribute to achieving all applicable
2568 total maximum daily loads established pursuant to s. 403.067
2569 within the Lake Okeechobee watershed.

2570 (II) Identify the size and location of all such Lake
2571 Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project facilities.

2572 (III) Provide a construction schedule for all such Lake
2573 Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project facilities, including
2574 the sequencing and specific timeframe for construction of each
2575 Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project facility.

2576 (IV) Provide a schedule for the acquisition of lands or
2577 sufficient interests necessary to achieve the construction
2578 schedule.

2579 (V) Provide a detailed schedule of costs associated with
2580 the construction schedule.

2581 (VI) Identify, to the maximum extent practicable, impacts

11-00759C-26

20261510__

on wetlands and state-listed species expected to be associated with construction of such facilities, including potential alternatives to minimize and mitigate such impacts, as appropriate.

(VII) Provide for additional measures, including voluntary water storage and quality improvements on private land, to increase water storage and reduce excess water levels in Lake Okeechobee and to reduce excess discharges to the estuaries.

(VIII) Develop the appropriate water quantity storage goal to achieve the desired Lake Okeechobee range of lake levels and inflow volumes to the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries while meeting the other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection.

(IX) Provide for additional source controls needed to enhance performance of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project facilities. Such additional source controls shall be incorporated into the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan pursuant to paragraph (b).

c. Evaluation.—Within 5 years after the adoption of the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan pursuant to s. 403.067 and every 5 years thereafter, the department, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies, shall conduct an evaluation of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project and identify any further load reductions necessary to achieve compliance with the Lake Okeechobee total maximum daily loads established pursuant to s. 403.067. The district shall identify modifications to facilities of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project as appropriate to meet the total maximum daily loads. Modifications to the Lake Okeechobee

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Watershed Construction Project resulting from this evaluation shall be incorporated into the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan and included in the applicable annual progress report submitted pursuant to subsection (6).

d. Coordination and review.—To ensure the timely implementation of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project, the design of project facilities shall be coordinated with the department and other interested parties, including affected local governments, to the maximum extent practicable. Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project facilities shall be reviewed and commented upon by the department before the execution of a construction contract by the district for that facility.

2. Lake Okeechobee Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program.—The coordinating agencies shall implement a Lake Okeechobee Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program. Results from the program shall be used by the department, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies, to make modifications to the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067, as appropriate. The program shall:

a. Evaluate all available existing water quality data concerning total phosphorus in the Lake Okeechobee watershed, develop a water quality baseline to represent existing conditions for total phosphorus, monitor long-term ecological changes, including water quality for total phosphorus, and measure compliance with water quality standards for total phosphorus, including any applicable total maximum daily load for the Lake Okeechobee watershed as established pursuant to s.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

403.067. Beginning March 1, 2020, and every 5 years thereafter, the department shall reevaluate water quality and quantity data to ensure that the appropriate projects are being designated and incorporated into the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067. The district shall implement a total phosphorus monitoring program at appropriate structures owned or operated by the district and within the Lake Okeechobee watershed.

b. Develop a Lake Okeechobee water quality model that reasonably represents the phosphorus dynamics of Lake Okeechobee and incorporates an uncertainty analysis associated with model predictions.

c. Determine the relative contribution of phosphorus from all identifiable sources and all primary and secondary land uses.

d. Conduct an assessment of the sources of phosphorus from the Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and Lake Istokpoga and their relative contribution to the water quality of Lake Okeechobee. The results of this assessment shall be used by the coordinating agencies as part of the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067 to develop interim measures, best management practices, or regulations, as applicable.

e. Assess current water management practices within the Lake Okeechobee watershed and develop recommendations for structural and operational improvements. Such recommendations shall balance water supply, flood control, estuarine salinity, maintenance of a healthy lake littoral zone, and water quality considerations.

f. Evaluate the feasibility of alternative nutrient

11-00759C-26

20261510__

reduction technologies, including sediment traps, canal and ditch maintenance, fish production or other aquaculture, bioenergy conversion processes, and algal or other biological treatment technologies and include any alternative nutrient reduction technologies determined to be feasible in the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067.

g. Conduct an assessment of the water volumes and timing from the Lake Okeechobee watershed and their relative contribution to the water level changes in Lake Okeechobee and to the timing and volume of water delivered to the estuaries.

(b) *Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan.*—The Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067 shall be the watershed phosphorus control component for Lake Okeechobee. The Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan shall be a multifaceted approach designed to achieve the total maximum daily load by improving the management of phosphorus sources within the Lake Okeechobee watershed through implementation of regulations and best management practices, continued development and continued implementation of improved best management practices, improvement and restoration of the hydrologic function of natural and managed systems, and use of alternative technologies for nutrient reduction. As provided in s. 403.067(7)(a)6., the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan must include milestones for implementation and water quality improvement, and an associated water quality monitoring component sufficient to evaluate whether reasonable progress in pollutant load reductions is being achieved over time. An assessment of progress toward these milestones shall be

11-00759C-26

20261510__

conducted every 5 years and shall be provided to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Revisions to the plan shall be made, as appropriate, as a result of each 5-year review. Revisions to the basin management action plan shall be made by the department in cooperation with the basin stakeholders. Revisions to best management practices or other measures must follow the procedures set forth in s. 403.067(7)(c)4. Revised basin management action plans must be adopted pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(a)5. The department shall develop an implementation schedule establishing 5-year, 10-year, and 15-year measurable milestones and targets to achieve the total maximum daily load no more than 20 years after adoption of the plan. The initial implementation schedule shall be used to provide guidance for planning and funding purposes and is exempt from chapter 120. Upon the first 5-year review, the implementation schedule shall be adopted as part of the plan. If achieving the total maximum daily load within 20 years is not practicable, the implementation schedule must contain an explanation of the constraints that prevent achievement of the total maximum daily load within 20 years, an estimate of the time needed to achieve the total maximum daily load, and additional 5-year measurable milestones, as necessary. The coordinating agencies shall develop an interagency agreement pursuant to ss. 373.046 and 373.406(5) which is consistent with the department taking the lead on water quality protection measures through the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067; the district taking the lead on hydrologic improvements pursuant to paragraph (a); and the Department of Agriculture and

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Consumer Services taking the lead on agricultural interim measures, best management practices, and other measures adopted pursuant to s. 403.067. The interagency agreement must specify how best management practices for nonagricultural nonpoint sources are developed and how all best management practices are implemented and verified consistent with s. 403.067 and this section and must address measures to be taken by the coordinating agencies during any best management practice reevaluation performed pursuant to subparagraphs 5. and 10. The department shall use best professional judgment in making the initial determination of best management practice effectiveness. The coordinating agencies may develop an intergovernmental agreement with local governments to implement nonagricultural nonpoint source best management practices within their respective geographic boundaries. The coordinating agencies shall facilitate the application of federal programs that offer opportunities for water quality treatment, including preservation, restoration, or creation of wetlands on agricultural lands.

1. Agricultural nonpoint source best management practices, developed in accordance with s. 403.067 and designed to achieve the objectives of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program as part of a phased approach of management strategies within the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan, shall be implemented on an expedited basis.

2. As provided in s. 403.067, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in consultation with the department, the district, and affected parties, shall initiate rule development for interim measures, best management practices, conservation

11-00759C-26

20261510__

plans, nutrient management plans, or other measures necessary for Lake Okeechobee watershed total maximum daily load reduction. The rule shall include thresholds for requiring conservation and nutrient management plans and criteria for the contents of such plans. Development of agricultural nonpoint source best management practices shall initially focus on those priority basins listed in sub-subparagraph (a)1.a. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in consultation with the department, the district, and affected parties, shall conduct an ongoing program for improvement of existing and development of new agricultural nonpoint source interim measures and best management practices. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall adopt such practices by rule. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall work with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences to review and, where appropriate, develop revised nutrient application rates for all agricultural soil amendments in the watershed.

3. As provided in s. 403.067, where agricultural nonpoint source best management practices or interim measures have been adopted by rule of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the owner or operator of an agricultural nonpoint source addressed by such rule shall either implement interim measures or best management practices or demonstrate compliance with state water quality standards addressed by the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067 by conducting monitoring prescribed by the department or the district. Owners or operators of agricultural nonpoint sources who implement interim measures or best management

11-00759C-26

20261510__

practices adopted by rule of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall be subject to s. 403.067.

4. The district or department shall conduct monitoring at representative sites to verify the effectiveness of agricultural nonpoint source best management practices.

5. Where water quality problems are detected for agricultural nonpoint sources despite the appropriate implementation of adopted best management practices, a reevaluation of the best management practices shall be conducted pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(c)4. If the reevaluation determines that the best management practices or other measures require modification, the rule shall be revised to require implementation of the modified practice within a reasonable period as specified in the rule.

6. As provided in s. 403.067, nonagricultural nonpoint source best management practices, developed in accordance with s. 403.067 and designed to achieve the objectives of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program as part of a phased approach of management strategies within the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan, shall be implemented on an expedited basis.

7. The department and the district are directed to work with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences to develop appropriate nutrient application rates for all nonagricultural soil amendments in the watershed. As provided in s. 403.067, the department, in consultation with the district and affected parties, shall develop nonagricultural nonpoint source interim measures, best management practices, or other measures necessary for Lake

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Okeechobee watershed total maximum daily load reduction. Development of nonagricultural nonpoint source best management practices shall initially focus on those priority basins listed in sub-subparagraph (a)1.a. The department, the district, and affected parties shall conduct an ongoing program for improvement of existing and development of new interim measures and best management practices. The department or the district shall adopt such practices by rule.

8. Where nonagricultural nonpoint source best management practices or interim measures have been developed by the department and adopted by the district, the owner or operator of a nonagricultural nonpoint source shall implement interim measures or best management practices and be subject to s. 403.067.

9. As provided in s. 403.067, the district or the department shall conduct monitoring at representative sites to verify the effectiveness of nonagricultural nonpoint source best management practices.

10. Where water quality problems are detected for nonagricultural nonpoint sources despite the appropriate implementation of adopted best management practices, a reevaluation of the best management practices shall be conducted pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(c)4. If the reevaluation determines that the best management practices or other measures require modification, the rule shall be revised to require implementation of the modified practice within a reasonable time period as specified in the rule.

11. Subparagraphs 2. and 7. do not preclude the department or the district from requiring compliance with water quality

11-00759C-26

20261510__

standards or with current best management practices requirements set forth in any applicable regulatory program authorized by law for the purpose of protecting water quality. Subparagraphs 2. and 7. are applicable only to the extent that they do not conflict with any rules adopted by the department that are necessary to maintain a federally delegated or approved program.

12. The program of agricultural best management practices set forth in the Everglades Program of the district meets the requirements of this paragraph and s. 403.067(7) for the Lake Okeechobee watershed. An entity in compliance with the best management practices set forth in the Everglades Program of the district may elect to use that permit in lieu of the requirements of this paragraph. The provisions of subparagraph 5. apply to this subparagraph. This subparagraph does not alter any requirement of s. 373.4592.

13. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in cooperation with the department and the district, shall provide technical and financial assistance for implementation of agricultural best management practices, subject to the availability of funds. The department and district shall provide technical and financial assistance for implementation of nonagricultural nonpoint source best management practices, subject to the availability of funds.

14. Projects that reduce the phosphorus load originating from domestic wastewater systems within the Lake Okeechobee watershed shall be given funding priority in the department's revolving loan program under s. 403.1835. The department shall coordinate and provide assistance to those local governments seeking financial assistance for such priority projects.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

15. Projects that make use of private lands, or lands held in trust for Indian tribes, to reduce nutrient loadings or concentrations within a basin by one or more of the following methods: restoring the natural hydrology of the basin, restoring wildlife habitat or impacted wetlands, reducing peak flows after storm events, increasing aquifer recharge, or protecting range and timberland from conversion to development, are eligible for grants available under this section from the coordinating agencies. For projects of otherwise equal priority, special funding priority will be given to those projects that make best use of the methods outlined above that involve public-private partnerships or that obtain federal match money. Preference ranking above the special funding priority will be given to projects located in a rural area of opportunity designated by the Governor. Grant applications may be submitted by any person or tribal entity, and eligible projects may include, but are not limited to, the purchase of conservation and flowage easements, hydrologic restoration of wetlands, creating treatment wetlands, development of a management plan for natural resources, and financial support to implement a management plan.

16. The department shall require all entities disposing of domestic wastewater biosolids within the Lake Okeechobee watershed and the remaining areas of Okeechobee, Glades, and Hendry Counties to develop and submit to the department an agricultural use plan that limits applications based upon phosphorus loading consistent with the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067. The department may not authorize the disposal of domestic wastewater biosolids within the Lake Okeechobee watershed unless the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

applicant can affirmatively demonstrate that the phosphorus in the biosolids will not add to phosphorus loadings in Lake Okeechobee or its tributaries. This demonstration shall be based on achieving a net balance between phosphorus imports relative to exports on the permitted application site. Exports shall include only phosphorus removed from the Lake Okeechobee watershed through products generated on the permitted application site. This prohibition does not apply to Class AA biosolids that are marketed and distributed as fertilizer products in accordance with department rule.

17. Private and government-owned utilities within Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, Okeechobee, Highlands, Hendry, and Glades Counties that dispose of wastewater biosolids sludge from utility operations and septic removal by land spreading in the Lake Okeechobee watershed may use a line item on local sewer rates to cover wastewater biosolids treatment and disposal if such disposal and treatment is done by approved alternative treatment methodology at a facility located within the areas designated by the Governor as rural areas of opportunity pursuant to s. 288.0656. This additional line item is an environmental protection disposal fee above the present sewer rate and may not be considered a part of the present sewer rate to customers, notwithstanding provisions to the contrary in chapter 367. The fee shall be established by the county commission or its designated assignee in the county in which the alternative method treatment facility is located. The fee shall be calculated to be no higher than that necessary to recover the facility's prudent cost of providing the service. Upon request

11-00759C-26

20261510__

by an affected county commission, the Florida Public Service Commission will provide assistance in establishing the fee. Further, for utilities and utility authorities that use the additional line item environmental protection disposal fee, such fee may not be considered a rate increase under the rules of the Public Service Commission and shall be exempt from such rules. Utilities using this section may immediately include in their sewer invoicing the new environmental protection disposal fee. Proceeds from this environmental protection disposal fee shall be used for treatment and disposal of wastewater biosolids, including any treatment technology that helps reduce the volume of biosolids that require final disposal, but such proceeds may not be used for transportation or shipment costs for disposal or any costs relating to the land application of biosolids in the Lake Okeechobee watershed.

18. No less frequently than once every 3 years, the Florida Public Service Commission or the county commission through the services of an independent auditor shall perform a financial audit of all facilities receiving compensation from an environmental protection disposal fee. The Florida Public Service Commission or the county commission through the services of an independent auditor shall also perform an audit of the methodology used in establishing the environmental protection disposal fee. The Florida Public Service Commission or the county commission shall, within 120 days after completion of an audit, file the audit report with the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives and shall provide copies to the county commissions of the counties set forth in subparagraph 17. The books and records of any

11-00759C-26

20261510__

facilities receiving compensation from an environmental protection disposal fee shall be open to the Florida Public Service Commission and the Auditor General for review upon request.

19. The Department of Health shall require all entities disposing of septage within the Lake Okeechobee watershed to develop and submit to that agency an agricultural use plan that limits applications based upon phosphorus loading consistent with the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067.

20. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall initiate rulemaking requiring entities within the Lake Okeechobee watershed which land-apply animal manure to develop resource management system level conservation plans, according to United States Department of Agriculture criteria, which limit such application. Such rules must include criteria and thresholds for the requirement to develop a conservation or nutrient management plan, requirements for plan approval, site inspection requirements, and recordkeeping requirements.

21. The district shall revise chapter 40E-61, Florida Administrative Code, to be consistent with this section and s. 403.067; provide for a monitoring program for nonpoint source dischargers required to monitor water quality by s. 403.067; and provide for the results of such monitoring to be reported to the coordinating agencies.

(c) *Lake Okeechobee Exotic Species Control Program.*—The coordinating agencies shall identify the exotic species that threaten the native flora and fauna within the Lake Okeechobee watershed and develop and implement measures to protect the

11-00759C-26

20261510__

native flora and fauna.

(d) *Lake Okeechobee Internal Phosphorus Management Program.*—The district, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies and interested parties, shall evaluate the feasibility of Lake Okeechobee internal phosphorus load removal projects. The evaluation shall be based on technical feasibility, as well as economic considerations, and shall consider all reasonable methods of phosphorus removal. If projects are found to be feasible, the district shall immediately pursue the design, funding, and permitting for implementing such projects.

(e) *Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program implementation.*—The coordinating agencies shall be jointly responsible for implementing the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program, consistent with the statutory authority and responsibility of each agency. Annual funding priorities shall be jointly established, and the highest priority shall be assigned to programs and projects that address sources that have the highest relative contribution to loading and the greatest potential for reductions needed to meet the total maximum daily loads. In determining funding priorities, the coordinating agencies shall also consider the need for regulatory compliance, the extent to which the program or project is ready to proceed, and the availability of federal matching funds or other nonstate funding, including public-private partnerships. Federal and other nonstate funding shall be maximized to the greatest extent practicable.

(f) *Priorities and implementation schedules.*—The coordinating agencies are authorized and directed to establish

11-00759C-26

20261510__

priorities and implementation schedules for the achievement of total maximum daily loads, compliance with the requirements of s. 403.067, and compliance with applicable water quality standards within the waters and watersheds subject to this section.

(4) CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM AND ST. LUCIE RIVER WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM.—A protection program shall be developed and implemented as specified in this subsection. To protect and restore surface water resources, the program shall address the reduction of pollutant loadings, restoration of natural hydrology, and compliance with applicable state water quality standards. The program shall be achieved through a phased program of implementation. In addition, pollutant load reductions based upon adopted total maximum daily loads established in accordance with s. 403.067 shall serve as a program objective. In the development and administration of the program, the coordinating agencies shall maximize opportunities provided by federal and local government cost-sharing programs and opportunities for partnerships with the private sector and local government. The program shall include a goal for salinity envelopes and freshwater inflow targets for the estuaries based upon existing research and documentation. The goal may be revised as new information is available. This goal shall seek to reduce the frequency and duration of undesirable salinity ranges while meeting the other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection, while recognizing the extent to which water inflows are within the control and jurisdiction of the district.

(a) *Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Plan.*—The

11-00759C-26

20261510__

3046 district, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies,
3047 Lee County, and affected counties and municipalities, shall
3048 complete a River Watershed Protection Plan in accordance with
3049 this subsection. The Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection
3050 Plan shall identify the geographic extent of the watershed, be
3051 coordinated as needed with the plans developed pursuant to
3052 paragraph (3)(a) and paragraph (c) of this subsection, and
3053 include the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Construction Project
3054 and the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Research and Water
3055 Quality Monitoring Program.

3056 1. Caloosahatchee River Watershed Construction Project.—To
3057 improve the hydrology, water quality, and aquatic habitats
3058 within the watershed, the district shall, no later than January
3059 1, 2012, plan, design, and construct the initial phase of the
3060 Watershed Construction Project. In doing so, the district shall:

3061 a. Develop and designate the facilities to be constructed
3062 to achieve stated goals and objectives of the Caloosahatchee
3063 River Watershed Protection Plan.

3064 b. Conduct scientific studies that are necessary to support
3065 the design of the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Construction
3066 Project facilities.

3067 c. Identify the size and location of all such facilities.

3068 d. Provide a construction schedule for all such facilities,
3069 including the sequencing and specific timeframe for construction
3070 of each facility.

3071 e. Provide a schedule for the acquisition of lands or
3072 sufficient interests necessary to achieve the construction
3073 schedule.

3074 f. Provide a schedule of costs and benefits associated with

11-00759C-26

20261510__

each construction project and identify funding sources.

g. To ensure timely implementation, coordinate the design, scheduling, and sequencing of project facilities with the coordinating agencies, Lee County, other affected counties and municipalities, and other affected parties.

2. Caloosahatchee River Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program.—The district, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies and local governments, shall implement a Caloosahatchee River Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program that builds upon the district's existing research program and that is sufficient to carry out, comply with, or assess the plans, programs, and other responsibilities created by this subsection. The program shall also conduct an assessment of the water volumes and timing from Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee River watershed and their relative contributions to the timing and volume of water delivered to the estuary.

(b) *Caloosahatchee River Watershed Basin Management Action Plans*.—The basin management action plans adopted pursuant to s. 403.067 for the Caloosahatchee River watershed shall be the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Pollutant Control Program. The plans shall be designed to be a multifaceted approach to reducing pollutant loads by improving the management of pollutant sources within the Caloosahatchee River watershed through implementation of regulations and best management practices, development and implementation of improved best management practices, improvement and restoration of the hydrologic function of natural and managed systems, and utilization of alternative technologies for pollutant reduction,

11-00759C-26

20261510__

3104 such as cost-effective biologically based, hybrid
3105 wetland/chemical and other innovative nutrient control
3106 technologies. As provided in s. 403.067(7)(a)6., the
3107 Caloosahatchee River Watershed Basin Management Action Plans
3108 must include milestones for implementation and water quality
3109 improvement, and an associated water quality monitoring
3110 component sufficient to evaluate whether reasonable progress in
3111 pollutant load reductions is being achieved over time. An
3112 assessment of progress toward these milestones shall be
3113 conducted every 5 years and shall be provided to the Governor,
3114 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
3115 Representatives. Revisions to the plans shall be made, as
3116 appropriate, as a result of each 5-year review. Revisions to the
3117 basin management action plans shall be made by the department in
3118 cooperation with the basin stakeholders. Revisions to best
3119 management practices or other measures must follow the
3120 procedures set forth in s. 403.067(7)(c)4. Revised basin
3121 management action plans must be adopted pursuant to s.
3122 403.067(7)(a)5. The department shall develop an implementation
3123 schedule establishing 5-year, 10-year, and 15-year measurable
3124 milestones and targets to achieve the total maximum daily load
3125 no more than 20 years after adoption of the plan. The initial
3126 implementation schedule shall be used to provide guidance for
3127 planning and funding purposes and is exempt from chapter 120.
3128 Upon the first 5-year review, the implementation schedule shall
3129 be adopted as part of the plans. If achieving the total maximum
3130 daily load within 20 years is not practicable, the
3131 implementation schedule must contain an explanation of the
3132 constraints that prevent achievement of the total maximum daily

11-00759C-26

20261510__

load within 20 years, an estimate of the time needed to achieve the total maximum daily load, and additional 5-year measurable milestones, as necessary. The coordinating agencies shall facilitate the use of federal programs that offer opportunities for water quality treatment, including preservation, restoration, or creation of wetlands on agricultural lands.

1. Nonpoint source best management practices consistent with s. 403.067, designed to achieve the objectives of the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Program, shall be implemented on an expedited basis. The coordinating agencies may develop an intergovernmental agreement with local governments to implement the nonagricultural, nonpoint source best management practices within their respective geographic boundaries.

2. This subsection does not preclude the department or the district from requiring compliance with water quality standards, adopted total maximum daily loads, or current best management practices requirements set forth in any applicable regulatory program authorized by law for the purpose of protecting water quality. This subsection applies only to the extent that it does not conflict with any rules adopted by the department or district which are necessary to maintain a federally delegated or approved program.

3. Projects that make use of private lands, or lands held in trust for Indian tribes, to reduce pollutant loadings or concentrations within a basin, or that reduce the volume of harmful discharges by one or more of the following methods: restoring the natural hydrology of the basin, restoring wildlife habitat or impacted wetlands, reducing peak flows after storm events, or increasing aquifer recharge, are eligible for grants

11-00759C-26

20261510__

available under this section from the coordinating agencies.

4. The Caloosahatchee River Watershed Basin Management Action Plans shall require assessment of current water management practices within the watershed and shall require development of recommendations for structural, nonstructural, and operational improvements. Such recommendations shall consider and balance water supply, flood control, estuarine salinity, aquatic habitat, and water quality considerations.

5. The department may not authorize the disposal of domestic wastewater biosolids within the Caloosahatchee River watershed unless the applicant can affirmatively demonstrate that the nutrients in the biosolids will not add to nutrient loadings in the watershed. This demonstration shall be based on achieving a net balance between nutrient imports relative to exports on the permitted application site. Exports shall include only nutrients removed from the watershed through products generated on the permitted application site. This prohibition does not apply to Class AA biosolids that are marketed and distributed as fertilizer products in accordance with department rule.

6. The Department of Health shall require all entities disposing of septage within the Caloosahatchee River watershed to develop and submit to that agency an agricultural use plan that limits applications based upon nutrient loading consistent with any basin management action plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067.

7. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall require entities within the Caloosahatchee River watershed which land-apply animal manure to develop a resource management

11-00759C-26

20261510__

3191 system level conservation plan, according to United States
3192 Department of Agriculture criteria, which limit such
3193 application. Such rules shall include criteria and thresholds
3194 for the requirement to develop a conservation or nutrient
3195 management plan, requirements for plan approval, site inspection
3196 requirements, and recordkeeping requirements.

3197 8. The district shall initiate rulemaking to provide for a
3198 monitoring program for nonpoint source dischargers required to
3199 monitor water quality pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(b)2.g. or (c)3.
3200 The results of such monitoring must be reported to the
3201 coordinating agencies.

3202 (c) *St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Plan.*—The
3203 district, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies,
3204 Martin County, and affected counties and municipalities shall
3205 complete a plan in accordance with this subsection. The St.
3206 Lucie River Watershed Protection Plan shall identify the
3207 geographic extent of the watershed, be coordinated as needed
3208 with the plans developed pursuant to paragraph (3)(a) and
3209 paragraph (a) of this subsection, and include the St. Lucie
3210 River Watershed Construction Project and St. Lucie River
3211 Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program.

3212 1. *St. Lucie River Watershed Construction Project.*—To
3213 improve the hydrology, water quality, and aquatic habitats
3214 within the watershed, the district shall, no later than January
3215 1, 2012, plan, design, and construct the initial phase of the
3216 Watershed Construction Project. In doing so, the district shall:

3217 a. Develop and designate the facilities to be constructed
3218 to achieve stated goals and objectives of the St. Lucie River
3219 Watershed Protection Plan.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

b. Identify the size and location of all such facilities.

c. Provide a construction schedule for all such facilities, including the sequencing and specific timeframe for construction of each facility.

d. Provide a schedule for the acquisition of lands or sufficient interests necessary to achieve the construction schedule.

e. Provide a schedule of costs and benefits associated with each construction project and identify funding sources.

f. To ensure timely implementation, coordinate the design, scheduling, and sequencing of project facilities with the coordinating agencies, Martin County, St. Lucie County, other interested parties, and other affected local governments.

2. St. Lucie River Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program.—The district, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies and local governments, shall establish a St. Lucie River Watershed Research and Water Quality Monitoring Program that builds upon the district's existing research program and that is sufficient to carry out, comply with, or assess the plans, programs, and other responsibilities created by this subsection. The district shall also conduct an assessment of the water volumes and timing from Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie River watershed and their relative contributions to the timing and volume of water delivered to the estuary.

(d) *St. Lucie River Watershed Basin Management Action Plan.*—The basin management action plan for the St. Lucie River watershed adopted pursuant to s. 403.067 shall be the St. Lucie River Watershed Pollutant Control Program and shall be designed

11-00759C-26

20261510__

to be a multifaceted approach to reducing pollutant loads by improving the management of pollutant sources within the St. Lucie River watershed through implementation of regulations and best management practices, development and implementation of improved best management practices, improvement and restoration of the hydrologic function of natural and managed systems, and use of alternative technologies for pollutant reduction, such as cost-effective biologically based, hybrid wetland/chemical and other innovative nutrient control technologies. As provided in s. 403.067(7)(a)6., the St. Lucie River Watershed Basin Management Action Plan must include milestones for implementation and water quality improvement, and an associated water quality monitoring component sufficient to evaluate whether reasonable progress in pollutant load reductions is being achieved over time. An assessment of progress toward these milestones shall be conducted every 5 years and shall be provided to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Revisions to the plan shall be made, as appropriate, as a result of each 5-year review. Revisions to the basin management action plan shall be made by the department in cooperation with the basin stakeholders. Revisions to best management practices or other measures must follow the procedures set forth in s. 403.067(7)(c)4. Revised basin management action plans must be adopted pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(a)5. The department shall develop an implementation schedule establishing 5-year, 10-year, and 15-year measurable milestones and targets to achieve the total maximum daily load no more than 20 years after adoption of the plan. The initial implementation schedule shall be used to

11-00759C-26

20261510__

provide guidance for planning and funding purposes and is exempt from chapter 120. Upon the first 5-year review, the implementation schedule shall be adopted as part of the plan. If achieving the total maximum daily load within 20 years is not practicable, the implementation schedule must contain an explanation of the constraints that prevent achievement of the total maximum daily load within 20 years, an estimate of the time needed to achieve the total maximum daily load, and additional 5-year measurable milestones, as necessary. The coordinating agencies shall facilitate the use of federal programs that offer opportunities for water quality treatment, including preservation, restoration, or creation of wetlands on agricultural lands.

1. Nonpoint source best management practices consistent with s. 403.067, designed to achieve the objectives of the St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Program, shall be implemented on an expedited basis. The coordinating agencies may develop an intergovernmental agreement with local governments to implement the nonagricultural nonpoint source best management practices within their respective geographic boundaries.

2. This subsection does not preclude the department or the district from requiring compliance with water quality standards, adopted total maximum daily loads, or current best management practices requirements set forth in any applicable regulatory program authorized by law for the purpose of protecting water quality. This subsection applies only to the extent that it does not conflict with any rules adopted by the department or district which are necessary to maintain a federally delegated or approved program.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

3. Projects that make use of private lands, or lands held in trust for Indian tribes, to reduce pollutant loadings or concentrations within a basin, or that reduce the volume of harmful discharges by one or more of the following methods: restoring the natural hydrology of the basin, restoring wildlife habitat or impacted wetlands, reducing peak flows after storm events, or increasing aquifer recharge, are eligible for grants available under this section from the coordinating agencies.

4. The St. Lucie River Watershed Basin Management Action Plan shall require assessment of current water management practices within the watershed and shall require development of recommendations for structural, nonstructural, and operational improvements. Such recommendations shall consider and balance water supply, flood control, estuarine salinity, aquatic habitat, and water quality considerations.

5. The department may not authorize the disposal of domestic wastewater biosolids within the St. Lucie River watershed unless the applicant can affirmatively demonstrate that the nutrients in the biosolids will not add to nutrient loadings in the watershed. This demonstration shall be based on achieving a net balance between nutrient imports relative to exports on the permitted application site. Exports shall include only nutrients removed from the St. Lucie River watershed through products generated on the permitted application site. This prohibition does not apply to Class AA biosolids that are marketed and distributed as fertilizer products in accordance with department rule.

6. The Department of Health shall require all entities disposing of septage within the St. Lucie River watershed to

11-00759C-26

20261510__

develop and submit to that agency an agricultural use plan that limits applications based upon nutrient loading consistent with any basin management action plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067.

7. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall initiate rulemaking requiring entities within the St. Lucie River watershed which land-apply animal manure to develop a resource management system level conservation plan, according to United States Department of Agriculture criteria, which limit such application. Such rules shall include criteria and thresholds for the requirement to develop a conservation or nutrient management plan, requirements for plan approval, site inspection requirements, and recordkeeping requirements.

8. The district shall initiate rulemaking to provide for a monitoring program for nonpoint source dischargers required to monitor water quality pursuant to s. 403.067(7)(b)2.g. or (c)3. The results of such monitoring must be reported to the coordinating agencies.

(e) *River Watershed Protection Plan implementation.*—The coordinating agencies shall be jointly responsible for implementing the River Watershed Protection Plans, consistent with the statutory authority and responsibility of each agency. Annual funding priorities shall be jointly established, and the highest priority shall be assigned to programs and projects that have the greatest potential for achieving the goals and objectives of the plans. In determining funding priorities, the coordinating agencies shall also consider the need for regulatory compliance, the extent to which the program or project is ready to proceed, and the availability of federal or local government matching funds. Federal and other nonstate

11-00759C-26

20261510__

funding shall be maximized to the greatest extent practicable.

(f) *Evaluation.*—Beginning March 1, 2020, and every 5 years thereafter, concurrent with the updates of the basin management action plans adopted pursuant to s. 403.067, the department, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies, shall conduct an evaluation of any pollutant load reduction goals, as well as any other specific objectives and goals, as stated in the River Watershed Protection Programs. The district shall identify modifications to facilities of the River Watershed Construction Projects, as appropriate, or any other elements of the River Watershed Protection Programs. The evaluation shall be included in the annual progress report submitted pursuant to this section.

(g) *Priorities and implementation schedules.*—The coordinating agencies are authorized and directed to establish priorities and implementation schedules for the achievement of total maximum daily loads, the requirements of s. 403.067, and compliance with applicable water quality standards within the waters and watersheds subject to this section.

(5) *ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS AND DEVELOPMENT OF BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS.*—The department is directed to expedite development and adoption of total maximum daily loads for the Caloosahatchee River and estuary. The department is further directed to propose for final agency action total maximum daily loads for nutrients in the tidal portions of the Caloosahatchee River and estuary. The department shall initiate development of basin management action plans for Lake Okeechobee, the Caloosahatchee River watershed and estuary, and the St. Lucie River watershed and estuary as

11-00759C-26

20261510__

provided in s. 403.067 as follows:

(a) Basin management action plans shall be developed as soon as practicable as determined necessary by the department to achieve the total maximum daily loads established for the Lake Okeechobee watershed and the estuaries.

(b) The Phase II technical plan development pursuant to paragraph (3)(a), and the River Watershed Protection Plans developed pursuant to paragraphs (4)(a) and (c), shall provide the basis for basin management action plans developed by the department.

(c) As determined necessary by the department to achieve the total maximum daily loads, additional or modified projects or programs that complement those in the legislatively ratified plans may be included during the development of the basin management action plan.

(d) As provided in s. 403.067, management strategies and pollution reduction requirements set forth in a basin management action plan subject to permitting by the department under subsection (7) must be completed pursuant to the schedule set forth in the basin management action plan, as amended. The implementation schedule may extend beyond the 5-year permit term.

(e) As provided in s. 403.067, management strategies and pollution reduction requirements set forth in a basin management action plan for a specific pollutant of concern are not subject to challenge under chapter 120 at the time they are incorporated, in an identical form, into a department or district issued permit or a permit modification issued in accordance with subsection (7).

11-00759C-26

20261510__

(6) ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT.—Each March 1, the district, in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies, shall report on implementation of this section as part of the consolidated annual report required in s. 373.036(7). The annual report shall include a summary of the conditions of the hydrology, water quality, and aquatic habitat in the northern Everglades based on the results of the Research and Water Quality Monitoring Programs, the status of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project, the status of the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Construction Project, and the status of the St. Lucie River Watershed Construction Project. In addition, the report shall contain an annual accounting of the expenditure of funds from the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund. At a minimum, the annual report shall provide detail by program and plan, including specific information concerning the amount and use of funds from federal, state, or local government sources. In detailing the use of these funds, the district shall indicate those designated to meet requirements for matching funds. The district shall prepare the report in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies and affected local governments. The department shall report on the status of the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan, the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Basin Management Action Plan, and the St. Lucie River Watershed Basin Management Action Plan. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall report on the status of the implementation of the agricultural nonpoint source best management practices, including an implementation assurance report summarizing survey responses and response rates, site inspections, and other methods used to verify implementation of

11-00759C-26

20261510__

and compliance with best management practices in the Lake Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee River, and St. Lucie River watersheds.

(7) LAKE OKEECHOBEE PROTECTION PERMITS.—

(a) The Legislature finds that the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program will benefit Lake Okeechobee and downstream receiving waters and is in the public interest. The Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project and structures discharging into or from Lake Okeechobee shall be constructed, operated, and maintained in accordance with this section.

(b) Permits obtained pursuant to this section are in lieu of all other permits under this chapter or chapter 403, except those issued under s. 403.0885, if applicable. Additional permits are not required for the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project, or structures discharging into or from Lake Okeechobee, if such project or structures are permitted under this section. Construction activities related to implementation of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project may be initiated before final agency action, or notice of intended agency action, on any permit from the department under this section.

(c)1. Owners or operators of existing structures which discharge into or from Lake Okeechobee that were subject to Department Consent Orders 91-0694, 91-0705, 91-0706, 91-0707, and RT50-205564 and that are subject to s. 373.4592(4)(a) do not require a permit under this section and shall be governed by permits issued under ss. 373.413 and 373.416 and the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067.

11-00759C-26

20261510__

2. For the purposes of this paragraph, owners and operators of existing structures which are subject to s. 373.4592(4)(a) and which discharge into or from Lake Okeechobee shall be deemed in compliance with this paragraph if they are in full compliance with the conditions of permits under chapter 40E-63, Florida Administrative Code.

3. By January 1, 2017, the district shall submit to the department a complete application for a permit modification to the Lake Okeechobee structure permits to incorporate proposed changes necessary to ensure that discharges through the structures covered by this permit are consistent with the basin management action plan adopted pursuant to s. 403.067.

(d) The department shall require permits for district regional projects that are part of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project. However, projects that qualify as exempt pursuant to s. 373.406 do not require permits under this section. Such permits shall be issued for a term of 5 years upon the demonstration of reasonable assurances that:

1. District regional projects that are part of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project shall achieve the design objectives for phosphorus required in subparagraph (3)(a)1.;

2. For water quality standards other than phosphorus, the quality of water discharged from the facility is of equal or better quality than the inflows;

3. Discharges from the facility do not pose a serious danger to public health, safety, or welfare; and

4. Any impacts on wetlands or state-listed species resulting from implementation of that facility of the Lake

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Okeechobee Construction Project are minimized and mitigated, as appropriate.

(e) At least 60 days before the expiration of any permit issued under this section, the permittee may apply for a renewal thereof for a period of 5 years.

(f) Permits issued under this section may include any standard conditions provided by department rule which are appropriate and consistent with this section.

(g) Permits issued under this section may be modified, as appropriate, upon review and approval by the department.

(8) RESTRICTIONS ON WATER DIVERSIONS.—The South Florida Water Management District shall not divert waters to the St. Lucie River, the Indian River estuary, the Caloosahatchee River or its estuary, or the Everglades National Park, in such a way that the state water quality standards are violated, that the nutrients in such diverted waters adversely affect indigenous vegetation communities or wildlife, or that fresh waters diverted to the St. Lucie River or the Caloosahatchee or Indian River estuaries adversely affect the estuarine vegetation or wildlife, unless the receiving waters will biologically benefit by the diversion. However, diversion is permitted when an emergency is declared by the water management district, if the Secretary of Environmental Protection concurs.

(9) PRESERVATION OF PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE EVERGLADES.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to modify any provision of s. 373.4592.

(10) RIGHTS OF SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA.—Nothing in this section is intended to diminish or alter the governmental authority and powers of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, or

11-00759C-26

20261510__

diminish or alter the rights of that tribe, including, but not limited to, rights under the water rights compact among the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the state, and the South Florida Water Management District as enacted by Pub. L. No. 100-228, 101 Stat. 1556, and chapter 87-292, Laws of Florida, and codified in s. 285.165, and rights under any other agreement between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the state or its agencies. No land of the Seminole Tribe of Florida shall be used for water storage or stormwater treatment without the consent of the tribe.

(11) RELATIONSHIP TO STATE WATER QUALITY STANDARDS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to modify any existing state water quality standard or to modify the provisions of s. 403.067(6) and (7)(a).

(12) RULES.—The governing board of the district is authorized to adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement the provisions of this section.

(13) PRESERVATION OF AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to restrict the authority otherwise granted to agencies pursuant to this chapter and chapter 403, and provisions of this section shall be deemed supplemental to the authority granted to agencies pursuant to this chapter and chapter 403.

Section 39. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment made by this act to section 403.0872, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto, section 403.0873, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

403.0873 Florida Air-Operation License Fee Account.—The “Florida Air-Operation License Fee Account” is established as a nonlapsing account within the Department of Environmental

11-00759C-26

20261510__

Protection's Air Pollution Control Trust Fund. All license fees paid pursuant to s. 403.0872(11) shall be deposited in such account and must be used solely by the department and approved local programs under the advice and consent of the Legislature to pay the direct and indirect costs required to develop and administer the major stationary source air-operation permit program. Any approved local pollution control program that accepts funds from the department as reimbursement for services it performs in the implementation of the major source air-operation permit program, receives delegation from the department or the United States Environmental Protection Agency for implementation of the major source air-operation permit program, or performs functions, duties, or activities substantially similar to or duplicative of the services performed by the department or the United States Environmental Protection Agency in the implementation of the major source air-operation permit program is prohibited from collecting additional fees attributable to such services from any source permitted under s. 403.0872.

Section 40. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment made by this act to section 403.1838, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto, paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section 403.1835, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

403.1835 Water pollution control financial assistance.—

(3) The department may provide financial assistance through any program authorized under 33 U.S.C. s. 1383, as amended, including, but not limited to, making grants and loans, providing loan guarantees, purchasing loan insurance or other credit enhancements, and buying or refinancing local debt. This

11-00759C-26

20261510__

financial assistance must be administered in accordance with
this section and applicable federal authorities.

(d) The department may make grants to financially
disadvantaged small communities, as defined in s. 403.1838,
using funds made available from grant allocations on loans
authorized under subsection (4). The grants must be administered
in accordance with s. 403.1838.

Section 41. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.