

COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE AMENDMENT

Bill No. CS/HB 981 (2026)

Amendment No.

COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION

ADOPTED _____ (Y/N)

ADOPTED AS AMENDED _____ (Y/N)

ADOPTED W/O OBJECTION _____ (Y/N)

FAILED TO ADOPT _____ (Y/N)

WITHDRAWN _____ (Y/N)

OTHER

Committee/Subcommittee hearing bill: State Affairs Committee
Representative Duggan offered the following:

Amendment (with title amendment)

Remove lines 67-181 and insert:

Johns Rivers and Silver Springs. The project plan shall be
designed to restore the Ocklawaha River hydrology and floodplain
function to the approximate conditions that existed prior to the
construction of the Cross-Florida Barge Canal project and its
associated project works including but not limited to the
Kirkpatrick Dam and Buckman Lock. The project plan shall be
based on the restoration design and steps set forth in the
Department's pending Joint Application for Environmental
Resource and Federal Dredge and Fill Permit. The project plan
must incorporate best available science and include engineering
and design updates, including topographic and bathymetric

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17 surveys, and precise estimates of material to be dredged or
18 excavated. In addition, the project plan must provide
19 recommendations for road and bridge construction that is
20 compatible with the restoration plan and ensures continued
21 access for the communities west of the project. The project plan
22 must include estimates by fiscal year of the cost of
23 implementing the project plan and potential sources of funding
24 for such costs.

25 (b) Notwithstanding any law or rule, the project plan for
26 the restoration of the Ocklawaha River is an environmental
27 restoration or enhancement project subject to a general permit
28 from the department and water management districts for
29 environmental restoration or enhancement pursuant to rule 62-
30 330.405, F.A.C., and rule 62-330.485, F.A.C.

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

34 (3) NORTHEAST FLORIDA RIVER AND SPRINGS RECREATION AND
35 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

36 (a) Establishment of the council.—

37 1. The Northeast Florida River and Springs Recreation and
38 Economic Development Advisory Council, an advisory council as
39 defined in s. 20.03(7), is established by October 31, 2026, and
40 assigned to the department. The council shall be
41 administratively housed within the department. The project lead

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shall serve as the council chair, and the members shall meet at the call of the project lead. Members shall serve without compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses pursuant to s. 112.061. Council members shall serve 4-year terms, except that the initial terms shall be staggered.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(VI) One representative of the Department of Commerce.

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

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

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

72 (II) Marion County shall appoint two members, one of whom
73 must oversee parks and recreation for the county.

74 (III) Clay County shall appoint one member.

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

76 c. The commanding officer of Naval Air Station
77 Jacksonville or his or her designee.

78 (b) Report.—The council shall submit an advisory report to
79 the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the
80 House of Representatives, and the department by February 1,
81 2027. The report must include all of the following:

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

85 2. Recommendations to the department for the creation of
86 guidelines to govern the grant program created in subsection
87 (5).

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

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

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

97 (4) OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN.—

98 (a) The department, in collaboration with the Fish and
99 Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Northeast Florida River
100 and Springs Recreation and Economic Development Advisory
101 Council, and the local governments of river communities in Clay,
102 Marion, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties, shall develop an outdoor
103 recreation plan.

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

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

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

(5) GRANT PROGRAM.—

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

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

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

T I T L E A M E N D M E N T

Remove line 18 and insert:

Development Advisory Council by a specified date;
assigning the council to