

CHAPTER 97-38

House Bill No. 359

An act relating to plant control; amending s. 369.252, F.S.; revising provisions relating to the Department of Environmental Protection program to achieve eradication or maintenance control of invasive exotic plants on public lands; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 369.252, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, is amended to read:

369.252 Invasive exotic plant control on public lands.—The department shall establish a program to:

(1) Achieve eradication or maintenance control of invasive exotic plants on public lands when the scientific data indicate that they are detrimental to the state's natural environment or when the Commissioner of Agriculture finds that such plants or specific populations thereof are a threat to the agricultural productivity of the state;

(2) Assist state and local government agencies in the development and implementation of coordinated management plans for the eradication or maintenance control of invasive exotic plant species on public lands;

(3) Contract, or enter into agreements, with entities in the State University System or other governmental or private sector entities for research concerning ~~biological~~ control agents; production and growth of biological control agents; and development of workable methods for the eradication or maintenance control ~~management~~ of invasive exotic plants on public lands; and

(4) Use funds in the Aquatic Plant Control Trust Fund as authorized by the Legislature for carrying out activities under this section on public lands.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Became a law without the Governor's approval May 1, 1997.

Filed in Office Secretary of State April 30, 1997.