

House Bill No. 1279

An act relating to the re-creation of the National Forest Trust Fund; re-creating and renaming the National Forest Trust Fund; carrying forward current balances and continuing current sources and uses thereof; amending s. 215.551, F.S., to conform; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, the Legislature wishes to extend the life of the National Forest Trust Fund, which is otherwise scheduled to be terminated pursuant to constitutional mandate, and

WHEREAS, the Legislature has reviewed the National Forest Trust Fund before its scheduled termination date and has found that it continues to meet an important public purpose, and

WHEREAS, the Legislature has found that existing public policy concerning the National Forest Trust Fund sets adequate parameters for its use, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. (1) The National Forest Trust Fund, FLAIR number 44-2-307, which was created within the Department of Banking and Finance and which is to be terminated pursuant to Section 19(f), Article III of the State Constitution on November 4, 2000, is re-created and renamed the Federal Use of State Lands Trust Fund.

(2) All current balances of the trust fund are carried forward, and all current sources and uses of the trust fund are continued.

Section 2. Section 215.551, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

215.551 Federal Use of State Lands ~~National Forest Trust Fund~~; county distribution.—

(1) The Comptroller may make distribution of the Federal Use of State Lands ~~National Forest Trust Fund~~, when so requested by the counties in interest, of such amounts as may be accumulated in that fund.

(2) The Comptroller shall ascertain, from the records of the General Land Office or other departments in Washington, D.C., the number of acres of land situated in the several counties in which the Apalachicola, Choctawhatchee, Ocala, and Osceola Forest Reserves are located, the number of acres of land of such forest reserve embraced in each of the counties in each of the reserves, and, also, the amount of money received by the United States Government from each of the reserves, respectively. The Comptroller shall apportion the money on hand to each county in each reserve, respectively and separately; such distribution shall be based upon the number of acres of land embraced in the Apalachicola Forest, Choctawhatchee Forest, Ocala Forest, and Osceola Forest, respectively, in each county and shall be further

based upon the amount collected by the United States from each of such forests, so that such distribution, when made, will include for each county the amount due each county, based upon the receipts for the particular forest and the acreage in the particular county in which such forest is located. The Comptroller shall issue two warrants on the Treasurer in each case, the sum of which shall be the amount due each of such counties from the fund. One warrant shall be payable to the county for the county general road fund, and one warrant, of equal amount, shall be payable to such county's district school board for the district school fund.

(3) In the event that actual figures of receipts from different reserves cannot be obtained by counties, so as to fully comply with subsections (1) and (2), the Comptroller may adjust the matter according to the United States statutes, or as may appear to him or her to be just and fair, and with the approval of all counties in interest.

(4) The moneys that may be received and credited to the Federal Use of State Lands ~~National Forest~~ Trust Fund are appropriated for the payment of the warrants of the Comptroller drawn on the Treasurer in pursuance of this section.

Section 3. This act shall take effect November 4, 2000.

Approved by the Governor June 8, 1999.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 8, 1999.