

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1524

An act relating to the comprehensive Everglades restoration plan; amending s. 373.026, F.S.; requiring the South Florida Water Management District to submit certain information to the Joint Legislative Committee on Everglades Oversight; requiring the committee to provide certain review of appropriation requests and make recommendations to the Legislature; providing that state funds for land purchases are authorized if contained within the district's Florida Forever 5-year work plan; creating s. 373.1502, F.S.; creating the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Regulation Act; providing for regulation of comprehensive plan project components; providing findings and intent; providing an expedited permit process; providing a fee; providing for renewal; amending s. 373.4149, F.S.; providing for acceptance of the Phase II Lake Belt Plan; clarifying boundaries of the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Area; eliminating the Miami-Dade Lake Belt Plan Implementation Committee; providing for certain lands to be made available to the Department of Environmental Protection to be used for land exchanges; amending s. 373.4415, F.S.; deleting an obsolete reference; amending s. 378.4115, F.S.; deleting an obsolete reference; amending s. 373.4595, F.S.; revising Lake Okeechobee protection permit requirements and related exemptions; amending s. 373.470, F.S.; revising due date of the annual report on implementation of the comprehensive plan; amending s. 403.088, F.S.; providing application of water pollution operation permitting procedures to facilities constructed, operated, or maintained in the South Florida ecosystem, including the components of the comprehensive Everglades restoration plan; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of subsection (8) of section 373.026, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

373.026 General powers and duties of the department.—The department, or its successor agency, shall be responsible for the administration of this chapter at the state level. However, it is the policy of the state that, to the greatest extent possible, the department may enter into interagency or interlocal agreements with any other state agency, any water management district, or any local government conducting programs related to or materially affecting the water resources of the state. All such agreements shall be subject to the provisions of s. 373.046. In addition to its other powers and duties, the department shall, to the greatest extent possible:

(8)

(b) To ensure to the greatest extent possible that project components will go forward as planned, the department shall collaborate with the South Florida Water Management District in implementing the comprehensive

plan as defined in s. 373.470(2)(a) ~~restudy~~. Before any project component is submitted to Congress for authorization or receives an additional appropriation of state funds, the department must approve, or approve with amendments, each project component within 60 days following formal submittal of the project component to the department. Department approval shall be based upon a determination of the South Florida Water Management District's compliance with s. 373.1501(5). Once a project component is approved, the South Florida Water Management District shall provide to the Joint Legislative Committee on Everglades Oversight a schedule for implementing the project component, the estimated total cost of the project component, any existing federal or nonfederal credits, the estimated remaining federal and nonfederal share of costs, and an estimate of the amount of state funds that will be needed to implement the project component. All requests for an ~~additional~~ appropriation of state funds needed to implement the project component shall be submitted to the department and such requests shall be included in the department's annual request to the Governor.

(c) Notwithstanding paragraph (b), the use of state funds for land purchases from willing sellers is authorized for projects within the South Florida Water Management District's approved 5-year plan of acquisition pursuant to s. 373.59 or within the South Florida Water Management District's approved Florida Forever water management district work plan pursuant to s. 373.199.

Section 2. Section 373.1502, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

373.1502 Regulation of comprehensive plan project components.—

(1) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Regulation Act.”

(2) FINDINGS; INTENT.—

(a) The Legislature finds that implementation of the comprehensive plan, as defined in s. 373.470(2)(a), is in the public interest and is necessary for restoring, preserving, and protecting the South Florida ecosystem, providing for the protection of water quality in and the reduction of the loss of fresh water from the Everglades, and providing such features as are necessary to meet the other water-related needs of the region, including flood control, the enhancement of water supplies, and other objectives served by the project.

(b) The Legislature intends to provide efficient and effective permitting of project components, taking into account all other statutory responsibilities the department and the South Florida Water Management District are required to consider.

(3) REGULATION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STRUCTURES AND FACILITIES.—

(a) This subsection applies to all project components, as defined in s. 373.1501, identified in the comprehensive plan unless the project component is otherwise subject to s. 373.4592, s. 373.4595, or the department's rules on

reuse of reclaimed water. Permits issued under this subsection are in lieu of all other permits required under this chapter or chapter 403, except for permits issued under any delegated or approved federal program.

(b) The department shall issue a permit for a term of 5 years for the construction, operation, modification, or maintenance of a project component based on the criteria set forth in this section. If the department is the entity responsible for the construction, operation, modification, or maintenance of any individual project component, the district shall issue a permit for a term of 5 years based on the criteria set forth in this section. The permit application must provide reasonable assurances that:

1. The project component will achieve the design objectives set forth in the detailed design documents submitted as part of the application.

2. State water quality standards will be met to the maximum extent practicable. Under no circumstances shall the project component cause or contribute to violation of state water quality standards.

3. Discharges from the project component will not pose a serious danger to public health, safety, or welfare.

4. Any impacts to wetlands or threatened or endangered species resulting from implementation of the project component will be avoided, minimized, and mitigated, as appropriate.

(c) Construction activities for comprehensive plan project components may be initiated upon submission of a permit application and completion of the department's approval under s. 373.1501, but before final agency action or notice of intended agency action. However, a permit must be obtained before the commencement or modification of operation.

(d) Permits issued under this subsection must contain reasonable conditions to ensure that water quality resulting from construction and operation of project components is adequately and accurately monitored.

(e) Permits issued under this subsection may:

1. Authorize construction, operation, modification, and maintenance of individual or multiple project components under a single permit;

2. Include any standard conditions provided by department rule which are appropriate and consistent with this subsection; or

3. Establish reporting requirements that are consolidated with other reports if all reporting requirements are met.

(f) The permitting entity shall require a processing fee in an amount sufficient to cover the costs of reviewing and acting upon any application for a permit under this section and to cover the costs of surveillance associated with any permit issued under this section.

(g) At least 60 days before the expiration of any permit issued under this subsection, the permittee may apply for a renewal for a term of 5 years. Such

submittals are considered timely and sufficient under s. 120.60(4). Permits issued under this subsection may be modified upon review and approval by the department or district, as appropriate.

Section 3. Section 373.4149, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

373.4149 Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Plan.—

(1) The Legislature hereby accepts and adopts the recommendations contained in the Phase I Lake Belt Report and Plan, known as the “Miami-Dade County Lake Plan,” dated February 1997 and hereby accepts the Phase II Plan, submitted on February 9, 2001 to the Legislature by the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Plan Implementation Committee. These plans shall collectively be known as the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Plan. This plan was developed to enhance the water supply for Miami-Dade County and the Everglades, including appropriate wellfield protection measures; to maximize efficient recovery of limestone while promoting the social and economic welfare of the community and protecting the environment; and to educate various groups and the general public of the benefits of the plan.

(2)(a) The Legislature recognizes that deposits of limestone and sand suitable for production of construction aggregates, cement, and road base materials are located in limited areas of the state.

(b) The Legislature recognizes that the deposit of limestone available in South Florida is limited due to urbanization to the east and the Everglades to the west.

(3) The Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Area is that area bounded by the Ronald Reagan Turnpike to the east, the Miami-Dade-Broward County line to the north, Krome Avenue to the west and Tamiami Trail to the south together with the land south of Tamiami Trail in sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, and 18, Township 54 South, Range 39 East, sections 24, 25, and 36, Township 54 South, Range 38 East less those portions of section 3, south of Krome Avenue and west of U.S. Highway 27, section 10, except the west one-half, section 11, except the northeast one-quarter and the east one-half of the northwest one-quarter, and tracts 38 through 41, and tracts 49 through 64 inclusive, section 13, except tracts 17 through 35 and tracts 46 through 48, of Florida Fruit Lands Company Subdivision No. 1 according to the plat thereof as recorded in plat book 2, page 17, public records of Miami-Dade County, and section 14, except the west three quarters, Township 52 South, Range 39 East, lying north of the Miami Canal, sections 35 and 36 and the east one-half of sections 24 and 25, Township 53 South, Range 39 East and Government Lots 1 and 2, lying between Townships 53 and 54 South, Range 39 East and those portions of sections 1 and 2, Township 54 South, Range 39 East, lying north of Tamiami Trail.

(4) The identification of the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Area shall not preempt local land use jurisdiction, planning, or regulatory authority in regard to the use of land by private land owners. When amending local comprehensive plans, or implementing zoning regulations, development regulations, or other local regulations, Miami-Dade County shall strongly consider limestone mining activities and ancillary operations, such as lake

excavation, including use of explosives, rock processing, cement, concrete and asphalt products manufacturing, and ancillary activities, within the rock mining supported and allowable areas of the Miami-Dade County Lake Plan adopted by subsection (1); provided, however, that limerock mining activities are consistent with wellfield protection. Rezoning or amendments to local comprehensive plans concerning properties that are located within 1 mile of the Miami-Dade Lake Belt Area shall be compatible with limestone mining activities. No rezonings, variances, or amendments to local comprehensive plans for any residential purpose may be approved for any property located in sections 35 and 36 and the east one-half of sections 24 and 25, Township 53 South, Range 39 East until such time as there is no active mining within 2 miles of the property. This section does not preclude residential development that complies with current regulations.

~~(5) The Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Plan Implementation Committee shall be appointed by the governing board of the South Florida Water Management District to develop a strategy for the design and implementation of the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Plan. The committee shall consist of the chair of the governing board of the South Florida Water Management District, who shall serve as chair of the committee, the policy director of Environmental and Growth Management in the office of the Governor, the secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, the director of the Division of Water Facilities or its successor division within the Department of Environmental Protection, the director of the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development within the office of the Governor, the secretary of the Department of Community Affairs, the executive director of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the director of the Department of Environmental Resource Management of Miami-Dade County, the director of the Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Department, the Director of Planning in Miami-Dade County, a representative of the Friends of the Everglades, a representative of the Florida Audubon Society, a representative of the Florida chapter of the Sierra Club, four representatives of the nonmining private landowners within the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Area, and four representatives from the limestone mining industry to be appointed by the governing board of the South Florida Water Management District. Two ex officio seats on the committee will be filled by one member of the Florida House of Representatives to be selected by the Speaker of the House of Representatives from among representatives whose districts, or some portion of whose districts, are included within the geographical scope of the committee as described in subsection (3), and one member of the Florida Senate to be selected by the President of the Senate from among senators whose districts, or some portion of whose districts, are included within the geographical scope of the committee as described in subsection (3). The committee may appoint other ex officio members, as needed, by a majority vote of all committee members. A committee member may designate in writing an alternate member who, in the member's absence, may participate and vote in committee meetings.~~

~~(6) The committee shall develop Phase II of the Lake Belt Plan which shall:~~

- (a) ~~Include a detailed master plan to further implementation;~~
- (b) ~~Consider the feasibility of a common mitigation plan for nonrock mining uses, including a nonrock mining mitigation fee. Any mitigation fee shall be for the limited purpose of offsetting the loss of wetland functions and values and not as a revenue source for other purposes.~~
- (c) ~~Further address compatible land uses, opportunities, and potential conflicts;~~
- (d) ~~Provide for additional wellfield protection;~~
- (e) ~~Provide measures to prevent the reclassification of the Northwest Miami-Dade County wells as groundwater under the direct influence of surface water;~~
- (f) ~~Secure additional funding sources;~~
- (g) ~~Consider the need to establish a land authority; and~~
- (h) ~~Analyze the hydrological impacts resulting from the future mining included in the Lake Belt Plan and recommend appropriate mitigation measures, if needed, to be incorporated into the Lake Belt Mitigation Plan.~~
- (7) ~~The committee shall remain in effect until January 1, 2002, and shall meet as deemed necessary by the chair. The committee shall monitor and direct progress toward developing and implementing the plan. The committee shall submit progress reports to the governing board of the South Florida Water Management District and the Legislature by December 31 of each year. These reports shall include a summary of the activities of the committee, updates on all ongoing studies, any other relevant information gathered during the calendar year, and the committee recommendations for legislative and regulatory revisions. The committee shall submit a Phase II report and plan to the governing board of the South Florida Water Management District and the Legislature by December 31, 2000, to supplement the Phase I report submitted on February 28, 1997. The Phase II report must include the detailed master plan for the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Area together with the final reports on all studies, the final recommendations of the committee, the status of implementation of Phase I recommendations and other relevant information, and the committee's recommendation for legislative and regulatory revisions.~~
- (8) ~~The committee shall report to the governing board of the South Florida Water Management District semiannually.~~
- (9) ~~In carrying out its work, the committee shall solicit comments from scientific and economic advisors and governmental, public, and private interests. The committee shall provide meeting notes, reports, and the strategy document in a timely manner for public comment.~~
- (10) ~~The committee is authorized to seek from the agencies or entities represented on the committee any grants or funds necessary to enable it to carry out its charge.~~

(5)(44) The secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, the secretary of the Department of Community Affairs, the secretary of the Department of Transportation, the Commissioner of Agriculture, the executive director of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the executive director of the South Florida Water Management District may enter into agreements with landowners, developers, businesses, industries, individuals, and governmental agencies as necessary to effectuate the Miami-Dade Lake Belt Plan and the provisions of this section.

(6)(12)(a) All agencies of the state shall review the status of their landholdings within the boundaries of the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt. Those lands for which no present or future use is identified must be made available, together with other suitable lands, to the Department of Environmental Protection committee for its use in carrying out the objectives of this act.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that lands provided to the Department of Environmental Protection committee be used for land exchanges to further the objectives of this act.

Section 4. Section 373.4415, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

373.4415 Role of Miami-Dade County in processing permits for limerock mining in Miami-Dade County Lake Belt.—The department and Miami-Dade County shall cooperate to establish and fulfill reasonable requirements for the departmental delegation to the Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resource Management of authority to implement the permitting program under ss. 373.403-373.439 for limerock mining activities within the geographic area of the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt which was recommended for mining in the report submitted to the Legislature in February 1997 ~~by the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Plan Implementation Committee~~ under s. 373.4149. The delegation of authority must be consistent with s. 373.441 and chapter 62-344, Florida Administrative Code. To further streamline permitting within the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt, the department and Miami-Dade County are encouraged to work with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to establish a general permit under s. 404 of the Clean Water Act for limerock mining activities within the geographic area of the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt consistent with the report submitted in February 1997. Miami-Dade County is further encouraged to seek delegation from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for the implementation of any such general permit. This section does not limit the authority of the department to delegate other responsibilities to Miami-Dade County under this part.

Section 5. Section 378.4115, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

378.4115 County certification for limerock mining in the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt.—The department and Miami-Dade County shall cooperate to establish and fulfill reasonable requirements for the departmental certification of the Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resource Management to implement the reclamation program under ss. 378.401-378.503 for limerock mining activities within the geographic area of the Miami-Dade County Lake Belt which was recommended for mining

in the report submitted to the Legislature in February 1997 by the ~~Miami-Dade County Lake Belt Plan Implementation Committee~~ under s. 373.4149. The delegation of implementing authority must be consistent with s. 378.411 and chapter 62C-36, Florida Administrative Code. Further, the reclamation program shall maximize the efficient mining of limestone, and the littoral area surrounding the lake excavations shall not be required to be greater than 100 feet average in width.

Section 6. Paragraphs (b) and (d) of subsection (4) of section 373.4595, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

373.4595 Lake Okeechobee Protection Program.—

(4) LAKE OKEECHOBEE PROTECTION PERMITS.—

(b) Permits obtained pursuant to this section are in lieu of all other permits under chapter 373 or chapter 403, except those issued under s. 403.0885, if applicable. No additional permits are required for the Lake Okeechobee Construction Project or structures discharging into or from Lake Okeechobee, if permitted under this section. Construction activities related to implementation of the Lake Okeechobee Construction Project may be initiated prior to final agency action, or notice of intended agency action, on any permit from the department under this section.

(d) The department shall require permits for Lake Okeechobee Construction Project facilities. However, projects identified in sub-subparagraph (3)(b)1.b. that qualify as exempt pursuant to s. 373.406 shall not need permits under this section. Such permits shall be issued for a term of 5 years upon the demonstration of reasonable assurances that:

1. The Lake Okeechobee Construction Project facility, based upon the conceptual design documents and any subsequent detailed design documents developed by the district, will achieve the design objectives for phosphorus required in paragraph (3)(b);

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 Okeechobee Construction Project are minimized and mitigated, as appropriate.

Section 7. Subsection (7) of section 373.470, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

373.470 Everglades restoration.—

(7) ANNUAL REPORT.—To provide enhanced oversight of and accountability for the financial commitments established under this section and the

progress made in the implementation of the comprehensive plan, the following information must be prepared annually:

(a) The district, in cooperation with the department, shall provide the following information as it relates to implementation of the comprehensive plan:

1. An identification of funds, by source and amount, received by the state and by each local sponsor during the fiscal year.
2. An itemization of expenditures, by source and amount, made by the state and by each local sponsor during the fiscal year.
3. A description of the purpose for which the funds were expended.
4. The unencumbered balance of funds remaining in trust funds or other accounts designated for implementation of the comprehensive plan.
5. A schedule of anticipated expenditures for the next fiscal year.

(b) The department shall prepare a detailed report on all funds expended by the state and credited toward the state's share of funding for implementation of the comprehensive plan. The report shall include:

1. A description of all expenditures, by source and amount, from the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund, the Land Acquisition Trust Fund, the Preservation 2000 Trust Fund, the Florida Forever Trust Fund, the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund, and other named funds or accounts for the acquisition or construction of project components or other features or facilities that benefit the comprehensive plan.
2. A description of the purposes for which the funds were expended.
3. The unencumbered fiscal-year-end balance that remains in each trust fund or account identified in subparagraph 1.

(c) The district, in cooperation with the department, shall provide a detailed report on progress made in the implementation of the comprehensive plan, including the status of all project components initiated after the effective date of this act or the date of the last report prepared under this subsection, whichever is later.

The information required in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) shall be provided annually in a single report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and copies of the report must be made available to the public. The initial report is due by November 30, 2000, and each annual report thereafter is due by January 31 ~~November 30~~.

Section 8. Paragraph (g) of subsection (2) of section 403.088, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403.088 Water pollution operation permits; conditions.—

(2)

(g) The Legislature finds that the restoration of the South Florida ecosystem Everglades Protection Area, including the construction, operation, and maintenance of stormwater treatment areas (STAs) is in the public interest. Accordingly, whenever a facility to be constructed, operated, or maintained in accordance with s. 373.1501, s. 373.1502, s. 373.4595, or s. 373.4592 is subjected to permitting requirements pursuant to chapter 373 or this chapter, and the issuance of the initial permit for a new source, a new discharger, or a recommencing discharger is subjected to a request for hearing pursuant to s. 120.569, the administrative law judge may, upon motion by the permittee, issue a recommended order to the secretary who, within 5 days, shall issue an order authorizing the interim construction, operation, and maintenance of the facility if it complies with all uncontested conditions of the proposed permit and all other conditions recommended by the administrative law judge during the period until the final agency action on the permit.

1. An order authorizing such interim construction, operation, and maintenance shall be granted if requested by motion and no party opposes it.

2. If a party to the administrative hearing pursuant to ss. 120.569 and 120.57 opposes the motion, the administrative law judge shall issue a recommended order granting the motion if the administrative law judge finds that:

a. The facility is likely to receive the permit; and

b. The environment will not be irreparably harmed by the construction, operation, or maintenance of the facility pending final agency action on the permit.

3. Prior to granting a contested motion for interim construction, operation, or maintenance of a facility regulated or otherwise permitted authorized by s. 373.1501, s. 373.1502, s. 373.4595, or s. 373.4592, the administrative law judge shall conduct a hearing using the summary hearing process defined in s. 120.574, which shall be mandatory for motions made pursuant to this paragraph. Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 120.574(1), summary hearing proceedings for these facilities shall begin within 30 days of the motion made by the permittee. Within 15 days of the conclusion of the summary proceeding, the administrative law judge shall issue a recommended order either denying or approving interim construction, operation, or maintenance of the facility, which shall be submitted to the secretary who shall within 5 days thereafter, enter an order granting or denying interim construction operation or maintenance of the facility. The order shall remain in effect until final agency action is taken on the permit.

Section 9. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor June 6, 2001.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 6, 2001.