

Committee on Environmental Preservation And Conservation

CS/CS/HB 1075 — State Areas

by State Affairs Committee; Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee; and Rep. Caldwell and others (CS/SB 1290 by Appropriations Committee; and Senator Simpson)

CS/CS/HB 1075:

- Consolidates the acquisition procedures currently in chapters 253 and 259, F.S., into chapter 253, F.S.
- Revises the management requirements for conservation lands from managed for the purposes for which the lands were acquired to managed for conservation, recreation, or both, consistent with the land management plan.
- Requires the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (board) to encourage the use of sovereignty submerged lands for minimal secondary non-water dependent uses related to water-dependent uses.
- Provides the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) with additional options to consider lands for which the managing or leasing entities are not meeting their short-term goals as established in a land management plan for conservation lands or a land use plan for nonconservation lands.
- Creates a process whereby a person who owns land contiguous to land titled to the board may submit a request to the Division of State Lands (division) to exchange all or a portion of state-owned land, with the state retaining a permanent conservation easement over all or a portion of the contiguous privately owned land.
- Removes the requirement that the board, before they are authorized to sell any land to which they hold title, provide notice and afford an opportunity to a county in which the land is situated to receive such lands before the board is authorized to sell such land.
- Requires the DEP to add federally owned conservation lands, lands on which the federal government holds a conservation easement, and all lands on which the state holds a conservation easement to the Florida State-Owned Lands and Records Information System by July 1, 2018.
- Requires each local government to submit a list to the DEP of all conservation lands it owns or holds a permanent conservation easement on by July 1, 2018. Financially disadvantaged small communities have an additional year to submit such information.
- Directs the DEP to complete a study regarding the technical and economic feasibility of including privately owned conservation lands in a public lands inventory by July 1, 2018.
- Revises the noticing requirements that a water management district must adhere to when selling or exchanging lands and provides an expedited process for selling surplus lands that are valued at \$25,000 or less.
- Requires increased priority to be given to proposed Florida Forever projects that:
 - Can be acquired in less than fee ownership;
 - Contributes to improving the quality and quantity of surface water or groundwater; or
 - Contributes to improving the water quality and flow of springs.
- Authorizes the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to establish spring protection zones.

- Consolidates the surplus procedures for lands titled to the board into s. 253.0341, F.S.
- Requires the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to follow certain acquisition procedures when acquiring conservation easements through the Rural and Family Lands Protection Programs.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2016.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 106-10