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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

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Floor: WD

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03/05/2026 09:41 AM

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Senator Brodeur moved the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 65 - 195

and insert:

plan for the restoration of the Ocklawaha River with the goal of restoring the river's natural flow, hydrology, and floodplain function to the approximate conditions that existed before the construction of the Cross Florida Barge Canal project and its associated project works. The project plan must provide for restoration and increased resiliency and recreation benefits of the Ocklawaha and St. Johns Rivers and Silver Springs. The



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12 project plan must incorporate the best available science and
13 include engineering and design updates, including topographic
14 and bathymetric surveys, and precise estimates of material to be
15 dredged or excavated. In addition, the project plan must provide
16 recommendations for road and bridge construction which are
17 compatible with the restoration plan and ensure continued access
18 for the communities west of the project. The project plan must
19 include estimates by fiscal year of the cost of implementing the
20 project plan and potential sources of funding for such costs.

21 (b) Notwithstanding any law or rule, the project plan for
22 the restoration of the Ocklawaha River is an environmental
23 restoration or enhancement project subject to a general permit
24 from the department and water management districts for
25 environmental restoration or enhancement pursuant to rule 62-
26 330.405, Florida Administrative Code, and rule 62-330.485,
27 Florida Administrative Code.

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

31 (3) NORTHEAST FLORIDA RIVER AND SPRINGS RECREATION AND
32 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL.-

33 (a) Establishment of the council.-

34 1. By October 31, 2026, the Northeast Florida River and
35 Springs Recreation and Economic Development Advisory Council, an
36 advisory council as defined in s. 20.03(7), shall be established
37 and assigned to the department. The council shall be
38 administratively housed within the department. The project lead
39 shall serve as the council chair, and the members shall meet at
40 the call of the project lead. Members shall serve without



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41 compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and
42 travel expenses pursuant to s. 112.061. Council members shall
43 serve 4-year terms, except that the initial terms shall be
44 staggered.

45 2. In addition to the project lead, the council shall be
46 composed of the following 19 members:

47 a. Six members of the council shall be appointed by and
48 serve at the pleasure of the Governor and shall include
49 representatives from the Department of Environmental Protection,
50 the Fish and Wildlife Commission, and the Department of
51 Commerce.

52 b. Six members of the council shall be appointed by the
53 Legislature, with 3 members appointed by the Senate and 3
54 members appointed by the House of Representatives. The
55 appointees must include:

56 (I) A representative of river recreation-related businesses
57 local to Marion or Putnam County.

58 (II) A representative of recreation-related businesses
59 local to Marion County.

60 (III) A representative local to the Town of Welaka.

61 (IV) Two representatives local to Putnam County.

62 (V) One representative of an environmental community-
63 supporting organization who has subject matter expertise in
64 springs or rivers.

65 c. Six members of the council shall be appointed by the
66 boards of county commissioners for the following counties:

67 (I) Putnam County shall appoint two members, one of whom
68 oversees parks and recreation for the county.

69 (II) Marion County shall appoint two members, one of whom



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70 oversees parks and recreation for the county.
71 (III) Clay County shall appoint one member.
72 (IV) St. Johns County shall appoint one member.
73 d. One member shall be the commanding officer of Naval Air
74 Station Jacksonville or his or her designee.
75 (b) Report.—The council shall submit an advisory report to
76 the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the
77 House of Representatives, and the department by February 1,
78 2027, and annual progress reports each February 1 thereafter.
79 The report must include all of the following:
80 1. Recommendations for projects to be included in the
81 outdoor recreation plan created in subsection (4), including
82 priorities for state-funded land projects.
83 2. Recommendations to the department for the creation of
84 guidelines to govern the grant program created in subsection
85 (5).
86 3. Recommendations to the Department of Commerce for the
87 creation of guidelines to administer the economic development
88 program created in subsection (6).
89 4. Recommendations for measures to minimize the impact of
90 the restoration plan on property owners or businesses directly
91 affected by the restoration project.
92 (c) Repeal.—In accordance with s. 20.052(8), this
93 subsection is repealed October 2, 2032, unless reviewed and
94 saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.
95 (4) OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN.—
96 (a) The department, in collaboration with the Fish and
97 Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Northeast Florida River
98 and Springs Recreation and Economic Development Advisory



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99 Council, and the local governments of river communities in Clay,
100 Marion, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties, shall develop an outdoor
101 recreation plan.

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

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

111 (d) Subject to the provision of state, federal, or other
112 funds and the commencement of the project plan developed
113 pursuant to subsection (2), the department shall complete
114 projects on state-owned lands identified in the outdoor
115 recreation plan by December 31, 2035.

116 (5) GRANT PROGRAM.—

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

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

122 (c) The department shall implement the grant program upon
123 the commencement of the project plan developed pursuant to
124 subsection (2).

125 (6) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.—

126 (a) The Department of Commerce shall develop guidelines and
127 processes for an economic development program for Marion and



128 Putnam Counties. The economic development program must support
129 projects that encourage job creation, capital investment, and
130 strengthening and diversification of each county's economy.

131 (b) The economic development program must be compatible
132 with the project plan, the outdoor recreation plan, and the
133 grant program.

134 (c) The Department of Commerce shall implement the economic
135 development program upon the commencement of the project plan
136 pursuant to subsection (2).

137
138 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

139 And the title is amended as follows:

140 Delete lines 35 - 47

141 and insert:

142 to certain funding and the commencement of specified
143 plans; requiring the department to develop a grant
144 program for a specified purpose; requiring that the
145 grant program be compatible with certain plans;
146 requiring the department to implement the grant
147 program contingent on the commencement of the project
148 plan; requiring the Department of Commerce to develop
149 guidelines and processes for and implement an economic
150 development program for Marion and Putnam Counties for
151 a specified purpose by a specified date; requiring
152 that the economic development plan be compatible with
153 certain plans and programs; requiring the Department
154 of Commerce to implement the economic development
155 program contingent on the commencement of the project
156 plan