

CS/CS/CS/SB 550 — Environmental Protection

by Policy and Steering Committee on Ways and Means; Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee; Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee; and Senator Constantine

This is a comprehensive water resources bill that addresses multiple water issues. Specifically, the bill:

- Reorganizes various water resources provisions of ch. 373, F.S., into a new ch. 373, F.S., part VII.
- Provides funding eligibility for alternative water supply projects through the State Board of Administration.
- Provides that conservation projects may be eligible for alternative water supply funding.
- Adds a high-water recharge protection tax assessment program criterion to the alternative water supply ranking criteria.
- Extends an existing state program to provide that limestone mining operations may be issued life-of-the-mine permits.
- Modifies mitigation fee provisions for Lake Belt mining operations in order to allow them to meet the requirements of new federal permitting conditions.
- Directs that up to \$200 million in bonds may be issued for sewage collection, treatment and disposal in the Florida Keys Area of Critical State Concern.
- Provides specific standards that central wastewater facilities and onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (septic tanks) in the Florida Keys Area of Critical State Concern must meet.
- Extends the deadline of compliance for central wastewater facilities and septic tank upgrades to December 31, 2015 from July 1, 2010 in the Florida Keys Area of Critical State Concern.
- Provides procedures for removal of the designation of the Florida Keys Area of Critical State Concern once all requirements of the Administration Commission are met.
- Establishes a statewide septic tank evaluation program.
- Requires the Department of Health and the Department Environmental Protection (DEP) to report to the Governor and Legislature by February 1, 2011, on how to achieve a ban on the land application of septage after January 1, 2016.
- Establishes a grant program for low-income owners of septic tanks to assist costs associated with inspections, pumpouts, repairs and replacements.
- Directs the DEP to submit a report to the Governor and Legislature on the effects of reclaimed water use by February 1, 2012.
- Clarifies calculations used for determining the quantity of reuse a wastewater facility must produce.
- Increases the state's ability to leverage wastewater and drinking water funds by combining existing financing mechanisms.
- Provides clarification for the use of mitigation banking credits in the Wekiva basin.
- Reinforces the water management districts (WMDs) duty to negotiate disputes in good faith before proceeding to litigation against other governmental entities.

- Requires the lining of all new and expanded landfills that will begin accepting construction and demolition debris after July 1, 2010, unless the owners can prove that their unlined landfills will not violate water quality standards.
- Clarifies requirements for consumptive use permits by WMDs.
- Encourages public/private partnerships and procurement procedures in order to promote water resource development, flood control and land conservation.
- Allows 10-year reviews for consumptive use permits rather than the current 5-year reviews.
- Directs that wastewater utilities, reuse utilities and the DEP are to be included in reuse planning.
- Provides legislative findings regarding numeric nutrient criteria and the potential economic impacts of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rule.
- Expands eligibility and corrects reporting dates for the brownfield cleanup program.
- Transfers certain responsibilities for the expedited permitting of economic development projects from the Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development to the DEP
- Expands expedited permitting to the production of renewable energy production and biofuels production.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2010, unless otherwise specified.

Vote: Senate 34-4; House 76-37