



Climate Change Statutes

STATE OF FLORIDA

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Current through the 2009 Legislative Session of the Florida General Assembly.

§ 253.034. State-owned lands; uses

(1) All lands acquired pursuant to chapter 259 shall be managed to serve the public interest by protecting and conserving land, air, water, and the state's natural resources, which contribute to the public health, welfare, and economy of the state. These lands shall be managed to provide for areas of natural resource based recreation, and to ensure the survival of plant and animal species and the conservation of finite and renewable natural resources. The state's lands and natural resources shall be managed using a stewardship ethic that assures these resources will be available for the benefit and enjoyment of all people of the state, both present and future. It is the intent of the Legislature that, where feasible and consistent with the goals of protection and conservation of natural resources associated with lands held in the public trust by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, public land not designated for single-use purposes pursuant to paragraph (2)(b) be managed for multiple-use purposes. All multiple-use land management strategies shall address public access and enjoyment, resource conservation and protection, ecosystem maintenance and protection, and protection of threatened and endangered species, and the degree to which public-private partnerships or endowments may allow the entity with management responsibility to enhance its ability to manage these lands. The council created in s. 259.035 shall recommend rules to the board of trustees, and the board shall adopt rules necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

(2) As used in this section, the following phrases have the following meanings:

(a) "Multiple use" means the harmonious and coordinated management of timber, recreation, conservation of fish and wildlife, forage, archaeological and historic sites, habitat and other biological resources, or water resources so that they are utilized in the combination that will best serve the people of the state, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources and giving consideration to the relative values of the various resources. Where necessary and appropriate for all state-owned lands that are larger than 1,000 acres in project size and are managed for multiple uses, buffers may be formed around any areas that require special protection or have special management needs. Such buffers shall not exceed more than one-half of the total acreage. Multiple uses within a buffer area may be restricted to provide the necessary buffering effect desired. Multiple use in this context includes both uses of land or resources by more than one management entity, which may include private sector land managers. In any case, lands identified as multiple-use lands in the land management plan shall be managed to enhance and conserve the lands and resources for the enjoyment of the people of the state.

(b) "Single use" means management for one particular purpose to the exclusion of all other purposes, except that the using entity shall have the option of including in its management

program compatible secondary purposes which will not detract from or interfere with the primary management purpose. Such single uses may include, but are not necessarily restricted to, the use of agricultural lands for production of food and livestock, the use of improved sites and grounds for institutional purposes, and the use of lands for parks, preserves, wildlife management, archaeological or historic sites, or wilderness areas where the maintenance of essentially natural conditions is important. All submerged lands shall be considered single-use lands and shall be managed primarily for the maintenance of essentially natural conditions, the propagation of fish and wildlife, and public recreation, including hunting and fishing where deemed appropriate by the managing entity.

(c) "Conservation lands" means lands that are currently managed for conservation, outdoor resource-based recreation, or archaeological or historic preservation, except those lands that were acquired solely to facilitate the acquisition of other conservation lands. Lands acquired for uses other than conservation, outdoor resource-based recreation, or archaeological or historic preservation shall not be designated conservation lands except as otherwise authorized under this section. These lands shall include, but not be limited to, the following: correction and detention facilities, military installations and facilities, state office buildings, maintenance yards, state university or state community college campuses, agricultural field stations or offices, tower sites, law enforcement and license facilities, laboratories, hospitals, clinics, and other sites that possess no significant natural or historical resources. However, lands acquired solely to facilitate the acquisition of other conservation lands, and for which the land management plan has not yet been completed or updated, may be evaluated by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund on a case-by-case basis to determine if they will be designated conservation lands.

(d) "Public access," as used in this chapter and chapter 259, means access by the general public to state lands and water, including vessel access made possible by boat ramps, docks, and associated support facilities, where compatible with conservation and recreation objectives.

Lands acquired by the state as a gift, through donation, or by any other conveyance for which no consideration was paid, and which are not managed for conservation, outdoor resource-based recreation, or archaeological or historic preservation under a land management plan approved by the board of trustees are not conservation lands.

(3) In recognition that recreational trails purchased with rails-to-trails funds pursuant to s. 259.101(3)(g) or s. 259.105(3)(h) have had historic transportation uses and that their linear character may extend many miles, the Legislature intends that when the necessity arises to serve public needs, after balancing the need to protect trail users from collisions with automobiles and a preference for the use of overpasses and underpasses to the greatest extent feasible and practical, transportation uses shall be allowed to cross recreational trails purchased pursuant to s. 259.101(3)(g) or s. 259.105(3)(h). When these crossings are needed, the location and design should consider and mitigate the impact on humans and environmental resources, and the value of the land shall be paid based on fair market value.

(4) No management agreement, lease, or other instrument authorizing the use of lands owned by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund shall be executed for a period greater than is necessary to provide for the reasonable use of the land for the existing or planned life cycle or amortization of the improvements, except that an easement in perpetuity may be granted by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund if the improvement is a transportation facility. An entity managing or leasing state-owned lands from the board may not sublease such lands without prior review by the division and, for conservation lands, by the Acquisition and Restoration Council created in s. 259.035. All management agreements, leases, or other instruments authorizing the use

of lands owned by the board shall be reviewed for approval by the board or its designee. The council is not required to review subleases of parcels which are less than 160 acres in size.

(5) Each manager of conservation lands shall submit to the Division of State Lands a land management plan at least every 10 years in a form and manner prescribed by rule by the board and in accordance with the provisions of s. 259.032. Each manager of conservation lands shall also update a land management plan whenever the manager proposes to add new facilities or make substantive land use or management changes that were not addressed in the approved plan, or within 1 year of the addition of significant new lands. Each manager of nonconservation lands shall submit to the Division of State Lands a land use plan at least every 10 years in a form and manner prescribed by rule by the board. The division shall review each plan for compliance with the requirements of this subsection and the requirements of the rules established by the board pursuant to this section. All land use plans, whether for single-use or multiple-use properties, shall include an analysis of the property to determine if any significant natural or cultural resources are located on the property. Such resources include archaeological and historic sites, state and federally listed plant and animal species, and imperiled natural communities and unique natural features. If such resources occur on the property, the manager shall consult with the Division of State Lands and other appropriate agencies to develop management strategies to protect such resources. Land use plans shall also provide for the control of invasive nonnative plants and conservation of soil and water resources, including a description of how the manager plans to control and prevent soil erosion and soil or water contamination. Land use plans submitted by a manager shall include reference to appropriate statutory authority for such use or uses and shall conform to the appropriate policies and guidelines of the state land management plan. Plans for managed areas larger than 1,000 acres shall contain an analysis of the multiple-use potential of the property, which analysis shall include the potential of the property to generate revenues to enhance the management of the property. Additionally, the plan shall contain an analysis of the potential use of private land managers to facilitate the restoration or management of these lands. In those cases where a newly acquired property has a valid conservation plan that was developed by a soil and conservation district, such plan shall be used to guide management of the property until a formal land use plan is completed.

(a) State lands shall be managed to ensure the conservation of the state's plant and animal species and to ensure the accessibility of state lands for the benefit and enjoyment of all people of the state, both present and future. Each land management plan shall provide a desired outcome, describe both short-term and long-term management goals, and include measurable objectives to achieve those goals. Short-term goals shall be achievable within a 2-year planning period, and long-term goals shall be achievable within a 10-year planning period. These short-term and long-term management goals shall be the basis for all subsequent land management activities.

(b) Short-term and long-term management goals shall include measurable objectives for the following, as appropriate:

1. Habitat restoration and improvement.
2. Public access and recreational opportunities.
3. Hydrological preservation and restoration.
4. Sustainable forest management.
5. Exotic and invasive species maintenance and control.

6. Capital facilities and infrastructure.
7. Cultural and historical resources.
8. Imperiled species habitat maintenance, enhancement, restoration, or population restoration.

(c) The land management plan shall at a minimum contain the following elements:

1. A physical description of the land.
2. A quantitative data description of the land which includes an inventory of forest and other natural resources; exotic and invasive plants; hydrological features; infrastructure, including recreational facilities; and other significant land, cultural, or historical features. The inventory shall reflect the number of acres for each resource and feature, when appropriate. The inventory shall be of such detail that objective measures and benchmarks can be established for each tract of land and monitored during the lifetime of the plan. All quantitative data collected shall be aggregated, standardized, collected, and presented in an electronic format to allow for uniform management reporting and analysis. The information collected by the Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to s. 253.0325(2) shall be available to the land manager and his or her assignee.
3. A detailed description of each short-term and long-term land management goal, the associated measurable objectives, and the related activities that are to be performed to meet the land management objectives. Each land management objective must be addressed by the land management plan, and where practicable, no land management objective shall be performed to the detriment of the other land management objectives.
4. A schedule of land management activities which contains short-term and long-term land management goals and the related measurable objective and activities. The schedule shall include for each activity a timeline for completion, quantitative measures, and detailed expense and manpower budgets. The schedule shall provide a management tool that facilitates development of performance measures.
5. A summary budget for the scheduled land management activities of the land management plan. For state lands containing or anticipated to contain imperiled species habitat, the summary budget shall include any fees anticipated from public or private entities for projects to offset adverse impacts to imperiled species or such habitat, which fees shall be used solely to restore, manage, enhance, repopulate, or acquire imperiled species habitat. The summary budget shall be prepared in such manner that it facilitates computing an aggregate of land management costs for all state-managed lands using the categories described in s. 259.037(3).

(d) Upon completion, the land management plan will be transmitted to the Acquisition and Restoration Council for review. The Acquisition and Restoration Council shall have 90 days to review the plan and submit its recommendations to the board of trustees. During the review period, the land management plan may be revised if agreed to by the primary land manager and the Acquisition and Restoration Council taking into consideration public input. If the Acquisition and Restoration Council fails to make a recommendation for a land management

plan, the secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, Commissioner of Agriculture, or Executive Director of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or their designees shall submit the land management plan to the board of trustees. The land management plan becomes effective upon approval by the board of trustees.

(e) Land management plans are to be updated every 10 years on a rotating basis.

(f) In developing land management plans, at least one public hearing shall be held in each affected county.

(g) The Division of State Lands shall make available to the public an electronic copy of each land management plan for parcels that exceed 160 acres in size. The Division of State Lands shall review each plan for compliance with the requirements of this subsection, the requirements of chapter 259, and the requirements of the rules established by the board pursuant to this section. The council shall also consider the propriety of the recommendations of the managing entity with regard to the future use of the property, the protection of fragile or nonrenewable resources, the potential for alternative or multiple uses not recognized by the managing entity, and the possibility of disposal of the property by the board. After its review, the council shall submit the plan, along with its recommendations and comments, to the board. The council shall specifically recommend to the board whether to approve the plan as submitted, approve the plan with modifications, or reject the plan. If the Acquisition and Restoration Council fails to make a recommendation for a land management plan, the secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, Commissioner of Agriculture, or Executive Director of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or their designees shall submit the land management plan to the board of trustees.

(h) The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund shall consider the land management plan submitted by each entity and the recommendations of the council and the Division of State Lands and shall approve the plan with or without modification or reject such plan. The use or possession of any such lands that is not in accordance with an approved land management plan is subject to termination by the board.

(6) The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund shall determine which lands, the title to which is vested in the board, may be surplus. For conservation lands, the board shall make a determination that the lands are no longer needed for conservation purposes and may dispose of them by an affirmative vote of at least three members. In the case of a land exchange involving the disposition of conservation lands, the board must determine by an affirmative vote of at least three members that the exchange will result in a net positive conservation benefit. For all other lands, the board shall make a determination that the lands are no longer needed and may dispose of them by an affirmative vote of at least three members.

(a) For the purposes of this subsection, all lands acquired by the state prior to July 1, 1999, using proceeds from the Preservation 2000 bonds, the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund, the Water Management Lands Trust Fund, Environmentally Endangered Lands Program, and the Save Our Coast Program and titled to the board, which lands are identified as core parcels or within original project boundaries, shall be deemed to have been acquired for conservation purposes.

(b) For any lands purchased by the state on or after July 1, 1999, a determination shall be made by the board prior to acquisition as to those parcels that shall be designated as having been acquired for conservation purposes. No lands acquired for use by the Department of Corrections, the Department of Management Services for use as state offices, the Department

of Transportation, except those specifically managed for conservation or recreation purposes, or the State University System or the Florida Community College System shall be designated as having been purchased for conservation purposes.

(c) At least every 10 years, as a component of each land management plan or land use plan and in a form and manner prescribed by rule by the board, each manager shall evaluate and indicate to the board those lands that are not being used for the purpose for which they were originally leased. For conservation lands, the council shall review and shall recommend to the board whether such lands should be retained in public ownership or disposed of by the board. For nonconservation lands, the division shall review such lands and shall recommend to the board whether such lands should be retained in public ownership or disposed of by the board.

(d) Lands owned by the board which are not actively managed by any state agency or for which a land management plan has not been completed pursuant to subsection (5) shall be reviewed by the council or its successor for its recommendation as to whether such lands should be disposed of by the board.

(e) Prior to any decision by the board to surplus lands, the Acquisition and Restoration Council shall review and make recommendations to the board concerning the request for surplusing. The council shall determine whether the request for surplusing is compatible with the resource values of and management objectives for such lands.

(f) In reviewing lands owned by the board, the council shall consider whether such lands would be more appropriately owned or managed by the county or other unit of local government in which the land is located. The council shall recommend to the board whether a sale, lease, or other conveyance to a local government would be in the best interests of the state and local government. The provisions of this paragraph in no way limit the provisions of ss. 253.111 and 253.115. Such lands shall be offered to the state, county, or local government for a period of 45 days. Permissible uses for such surplus lands may include public schools; public libraries; fire or law enforcement substations; governmental, judicial, or recreational centers; and affordable housing meeting the criteria of s. 420.0004(3). County or local government requests for surplus lands shall be expedited throughout the surplusing process. If the county or local government does not elect to purchase such lands in accordance with s. 253.111, then any surplusing determination involving other governmental agencies shall be made upon the board deciding the best public use of the lands. Surplus properties in which governmental agencies have expressed no interest shall then be available for sale on the private market.

(g) 1. The sale price of lands determined to be surplus pursuant to this subsection and s. 253.82 shall be determined by the division and shall take into consideration an appraisal of the property, or, when the estimated value of the land is less than \$100,000, a comparable sales analysis or a broker's opinion of value. If the appraisal referenced in this paragraph yields a value equal to or greater than \$1 million, the division, in its sole discretion, may require a second appraisal. The individual or entity requesting to purchase the surplus parcel shall pay all appraisal costs.

2. a. A written valuation of land determined to be surplus pursuant to this subsection and s. 253.82, and related documents used to form the valuation or which pertain to the valuation, are confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution.

b. The exemption expires 2 weeks before the contract or agreement regarding the purchase, exchange, or disposal of the surplus land is first considered for approval by the board.

c. Prior to expiration of the exemption, the division may disclose confidential and exempt appraisals, valuations, or valuation information regarding surplus land:

(I) During negotiations for the sale or exchange of the land.

(II) During the marketing effort or bidding process associated with the sale, disposal, or exchange of the land to facilitate closure of such effort or process.

(III) When the passage of time has made the conclusions of value invalid.

(IV) When negotiations or marketing efforts concerning the land are concluded.

3. A unit of government that acquires title to lands hereunder for less than appraised value may not sell or transfer title to all or any portion of the lands to any private owner for a period of 10 years. Any unit of government seeking to transfer or sell lands pursuant to this paragraph shall first allow the board of trustees to reacquire such lands for the price at which the board sold such lands.

(h) After reviewing the recommendations of the council, the board shall determine whether lands identified for surplus are to be held for other public purposes or whether such lands are no longer needed. The board may require an agency to release its interest in such lands. For an agency that has requested the use of a property that was to be declared as surplus, said agency must have the property under lease within 6 months of the date of expiration of the notice provisions required under this subsection and s. 253.111.

(i) Requests for surplusing may be made by any public or private entity or person. All requests shall be submitted to the lead managing agency for review and recommendation to the council or its successor. Lead managing agencies shall have 90 days to review such requests and make recommendations. Any surplusing requests that have not been acted upon within the 90-day time period shall be immediately scheduled for hearing at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the council or its successor. Requests for surplusing pursuant to this paragraph shall not be required to be offered to local or state governments as provided in paragraph (f).

(j) Proceeds from any sale of surplus lands pursuant to this subsection shall be deposited into the fund from which such lands were acquired. However, if the fund from which the lands were originally acquired no longer exists, such proceeds shall be deposited into an appropriate account to be used for land management by the lead managing agency assigned the lands prior to the lands being declared surplus. Funds received from the sale of surplus nonconservation lands, or lands that were acquired by gift, by donation, or for no consideration, shall be deposited into the Internal Improvement Trust Fund.

(k) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, no such disposition of land shall be made if such disposition would have the effect of causing all or any portion of the interest on any revenue bonds issued to lose the exclusion from gross income for federal income tax purposes.

(l) The sale of filled, formerly submerged land that does not exceed 5 acres in area is not subject to review by the council or its successor.

(m) The board may adopt rules to implement the provisions of this section, which may include procedures for administering surplus land requests and criteria for when the division may approve requests to surplus nonconservation lands on behalf of the board.

(7) This section shall not be construed so as to affect:

(a) Other provisions of this chapter relating to oil, gas, or mineral resources.

(b) The exclusive use of state-owned land subject to a lease by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of state-owned land for private uses and purposes.

(c) Sovereignty lands not leased for private uses and purposes.

(8)(a) Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, the Division of State Lands is directed to prepare a state inventory of all federal lands and all lands titled in the name of the state, a state agency, a water management district, or a local government on a county-by-county basis. To facilitate the development of the state inventory, each county shall direct the appropriate county office with authority over the information to provide the division with a county inventory of all lands identified as federal lands and lands titled in the name of the state, a state agency, a water management district, or a local government. The Legislature recognizes the value of the state's conservation lands as water recharge areas and air filters and, in an effort to better understand the scientific underpinnings of carbon sequestration, carbon capture, and greenhouse gas mitigation, to inform policymakers and decisionmakers, and to provide the infrastructure for landowners, the Division of State Lands shall contract with an organization experienced and specialized in carbon sinks and emission budgets to conduct an inventory of all lands that were acquired pursuant to Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever and that were titled in the name of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund. The inventory shall determine the value of carbon capture and carbon sequestration. Such inventory shall consider potential carbon offset values of changes in land management practices, including, but not limited to, replanting of trees, routine prescribed burns, and land use conversion. Such an inventory shall be completed and presented to the board of trustees by July 1, 2009.

(b) The state inventory must distinguish between lands purchased by the state or a water management district as part of a core parcel or within original project boundaries, as those terms are used to meet the surplus requirements of subsection (6), and lands purchased by the state, a state agency, or a water management district which are not essential or necessary for conservation purposes.

(c) In any county having a population of 75,000 or fewer, or a county having a population of 100,000 or fewer which is contiguous to a county having a population of 75,000 or fewer, in which more than 50 percent of the lands within the county boundary are federal lands and lands titled in the name of the state, a state agency, a water management district, or a local government, those lands titled in the name of the state or a state agency which are not essential or necessary to meet conservation purposes may, upon request of a public or private entity, be made available for purchase through the state's surplusing process. Rights-of-way for existing, proposed, or anticipated transportation facilities are exempt from the requirements of this paragraph. Priority consideration shall be given to buyers, public or private, willing to return the property to productive use so long as the property can be reentered onto the county

ad valorem tax roll. Property acquired with matching funds from a local government shall not be made available for purchase without the consent of the local government.

(d) If state-owned lands are subject to annexation procedures, the Division of State Lands must notify the county legislative delegation of the county in which the land is located.

(9) Land management plans required to be submitted by the Department of Corrections, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Children and Family Services, or the Department of Education are not subject to the provisions for review by the council or its successor described in subsection (5). Management plans filed by these agencies shall be made available to the public for a period of 90 days at the administrative offices of the parcel or project affected by the management plan and at the Tallahassee offices of each agency. Any plans not objected to during the public comment period shall be deemed approved. Any plans for which an objection is filed shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund for consideration. The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund shall approve the plan with or without modification, or reject the plan. The use or possession of any such lands which is not in accordance with an approved land management plan is subject to termination by the board.

(10) The following additional uses of conservation lands acquired pursuant to the Florida Forever program and other state-funded conservation land purchase programs shall be authorized, upon a finding by the board of trustees, if they meet the criteria specified in paragraphs (a)-(e): water resource development projects, water supply development projects, stormwater management projects, linear facilities, and sustainable agriculture and forestry. Such additional uses are authorized where:

(a) Not inconsistent with the management plan for such lands;

(b) Compatible with the natural ecosystem and resource values of such lands;

(c) The proposed use is appropriately located on such lands and where due consideration is given to the use of other available lands;

(d) The using entity reasonably compensates the titleholder for such use based upon an appropriate measure of value; and

(e) The use is consistent with the public interest.

A decision by the board of trustees pursuant to this section shall be given a presumption of correctness. Moneys received from the use of state lands pursuant to this section shall be returned to the lead managing entity in accordance with the provisions of s. 259.032(11)(d).

(11) Lands listed as projects for acquisition may be managed for conservation pursuant to s. 259.032, on an interim basis by a private party in anticipation of a state purchase in accordance with a contractual arrangement between the acquiring agency and the private party that may include management service contracts, leases, cost-share arrangements or resource conservation agreements. Lands designated as eligible under this subsection shall be managed to maintain or enhance the resources the state is seeking to protect by acquiring the land. Funding for these contractual arrangements may originate from the documentary stamp tax revenue deposited into the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund and Water Management Lands Trust Fund. No more than 5 percent of funds allocated under the trust funds shall be expended for this purpose.

(12) Any lands available to governmental employees, including water management district employees, for hunting or other recreational purposes shall also be made available to the general public for such purposes.

(13) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, funds from the sale of property by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles located in Palm Beach County are authorized to be deposited into the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund to facilitate the exchange as provided in the General Appropriations Act, provided that at the conclusion of both exchanges the values are equalized. This subsection expires July 1, 2009.

(14) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, funds derived from the sale of property by the Department of Citrus located in Lakeland, Florida, are authorized to be deposited into the Citrus Advertising Trust Fund. This subsection expires July 1, 2010.

(15) By February 1, 2010, the commission shall submit a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the efficacy of using state-owned lands to protect, manage, or restore habitat for native or imperiled species. This subsection expires July 1, 2014.

(16) Before a building or parcel of land is offered for lease, sublease, or sale to a local or federal unit of government or a private party, it shall first be offered for lease to state agencies and state universities, with priority consideration given to state universities.