

373.467 The Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council.—

There is created within the St. Johns River Water Management District, with assistance from the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Lake County Water Authority, the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council.

(1)(a) The council shall consist of nine voting members, which include: a representative of waterfront property owners, a representative of the sport fishing industry, an environmental engineer, a person with training in biology or another scientific discipline, a person with training as an attorney, a physician, a person with training as an engineer, and two residents of the county who do not meet any of the other qualifications for membership enumerated in this paragraph, each to be appointed by the Lake County legislative delegation. No person serving on the council may be appointed to a council, board, or commission of any council advisory group agency. The council members shall serve as advisors to the governing board of the St. Johns River Water Management District. The council is subject to the provisions of chapters 119 and 120.

(b) There shall be an advisory group to the council which shall consist of one representative each from the St. Johns River Water Management District, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Transportation, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Lake County Water Authority, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the University of Florida, each of whom shall be appointed by his or her respective agency, and each of whom, with the exception of the representatives from the Lake County Water Authority and the University of Florida, shall have had training in biology or another scientific discipline.

(2) Immediately after appointment, the council shall meet and organize by electing a chair, a vice chair, and a secretary, whose terms shall be for 2 years each. Council officers shall not serve consecutive terms. Each council member shall be a voting member.

(3) The council shall meet at the call of its chair, at the request of six of its members, or at the request of the chair of the governing board of the St. Johns River Water Management District.

(4) The council shall have the powers and duties to:

(a) Review audits and all data specifically related to lake restoration techniques and sport fish population recovery strategies, including data and strategies for shoreline restoration, sediment control and removal, exotic species management, floating tussock management or removal, navigation, water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat improvement, particularly as they may apply to the Harris Chain of Lakes.

(b) Evaluate whether additional studies are needed.

(c) Explore all possible sources of funding to conduct the restoration activities.

(d) Report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives before November 25 of each year on the progress of the Harris Chain of Lakes restoration program and any recommendations for the next fiscal year.

(5) The St. Johns River Water Management District shall provide staff to assist the council in carrying out the provisions of this act.

(6) Members of the council shall receive no compensation for their services, but are entitled to be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses incurred during execution of their official duties, as provided in s. 112.061. State and federal agencies shall be responsible for the per diem and travel expenses of their respective appointees to the council, and the St. Johns River Water Management District shall be responsible for per diem and travel expenses of other appointees to the council.

History.--s. 1, ch. 2001-246.