



26 Florida's Natural Resources Act."

27 Section 2. Section 570.891, Florida Statutes, is created  
28 to read:

29 570.891 Agriculture, shellfish aquaculture, and timber  
30 operations cost-share program.-

31 (1) The Legislature finds that:

32 (a) Maintaining healthy and sustainable agriculture,  
33 shellfish aquaculture, and timber industries is vital to this  
34 state's economy, environment, and natural resources, including  
35 making significant environmental contributions to water quality  
36 and quantity, air purification, carbon sequestration, coastal  
37 resilience, and habitat for threatened and endangered wildlife  
38 species.

39 (b) The continued expansion of urban and coastal areas has  
40 increased pressure on the agriculture and timber industries, and  
41 in recent years there has been a significant decrease in  
42 agricultural and timber acreage.

43 (c) Water quality and quantity problems in this state's  
44 coastal waters have harmed the aquaculture industry,  
45 specifically shellfish farming. Filter feeder shellfish, such as  
46 oysters, hard clams, and sunray venus clams, are beneficial to  
47 this state's imperiled seagrass.

48 (d) To ensure healthy and sustainable agriculture,  
49 shellfish aquaculture, and timber industries, a cost-share  
50 program is necessary to provide incentives to the owners within

51 these industries to continue activities that are beneficial to  
52 water quality and quantity, air purification, carbon  
53 sequestration, nutrient remediation, coastal resilience, and  
54 habitat for threatened and endangered wildlife species.

55 (2) A cost-share program is established within the  
56 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Subject to the  
57 appropriation of funds by the Legislature, the program shall  
58 reimburse the owners of agriculture, shellfish aquaculture, and  
59 timber operations for up to 75 percent of the value of the  
60 environmental resources and services provided by such  
61 industries.

62 (3) The department shall do all of the following:

63 (a) In consultation with the Florida Sea Grant and the  
64 University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural  
65 Sciences, conduct a study to determine the value of  
66 environmental services, such as water recharge, stormwater  
67 filtration, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, nutrient  
68 remediation, coastal resilience and flood protection, and air  
69 quality benefits, provided by the agriculture, shellfish  
70 aquaculture, and timber industries.

71 (b) In cooperation with the University of Florida  
72 Shellfish Aquaculture Research and Extension Program, the  
73 Wakulla Environmental Institute, and the Florida Agricultural  
74 and Mechanical University College of Agriculture and Food  
75 Sciences, promote the cost-share program and prioritize

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76 distribution of assistance to low-income communities,  
77 historically under-resourced communities of color, and rural  
78 communities impacted by Hurricane Michael in 2018.

79 (c) Update all relevant brochures, websites, and marketing  
80 materials to provide information on participation in the cost-  
81 share program.

82 (d) Adopt rules to implement this section.

83 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.