

Petition for a Florida Springs Protection Act

Petition summary and background	<p>Florida's 700 springs are world class resources that provide natural and recreational values to the citizens of Florida and, are vents of the Floridan Aquifer from which most Floridians obtain their drinking water and, these irreplaceable resources are under threat and deserve protection. Florida's springs 1) entertain over 2.5 million visitors in State parks containing springs, generating an estimated \$121 million of direct economic impact, 2) are the headwaters of at least six Florida rivers, 3) are the source of Florida's multimillion dollar bottled water industry, 4) occur in 40 counties of Central and North Florida, 5) have been and are being negatively impacted by various pollutants, including nitrates, DEET, and, antihistamines among others, 6) are threatened by over withdrawal of water, 7) use by the public is threatened by high bacterial counts and algae which have caused closure of swimming in several springs parks and, 8) deserve protection because of these and other threats and conditions. It is not possible to protect springs by owning only the springs. The water in a spring comes from surrounding land known as the springshed which can encompass a large land area. It is therefore, imperative to have a Florida Springs Protection Act.</p>
Action petitioned for	<p>We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens of Florida who urge our legislative leaders to act now to promulgate and enact a comprehensive Florida Springs Protection Act that will address the pertinent issues and threats to the springs of Florida and provide enhancement and protection of these valuable and valued resources. Such legislation should address 1) basin/springshed protection zones, 2) nutrient criteria, 3) nitrogen reducing septic systems and/or upgraded wastewater facilities, 4) master storm water management plans within the springshed, 4) provision of various funding mechanisms to aid in these upgrades, 5) protection of spring flow, 6) incentives for water conservation, 7) improvement of best management practices for agriculture and golf courses and, development of same for residential users, 9) funding for acquisition of vulnerable areas within the springs' protection zones, 10) requiring regular monitoring and reporting on the health of the springs and, 11) establishing a <i>Florida Springs Protection Trust Fund</i> to be funded by a service fee on bottled water.</p>

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Comment	Date

