

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 642

To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate the portion of the Myakka River lying within Sarasota County, Florida as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 23, 2025

Mr. STEUBE (for himself and Mr. BUCHANAN) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate the portion of the Myakka River lying within Sarasota County, Florida as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Myakka Wild and Sce-
5 nic River Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Public Law 95–625 amended section 5 of
2 the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1276) to
3 require the study of the Myakka River for potential
4 inclusion in the national wild and scenic rivers sys-
5 tem.

6 (2) The study determined the Myakka River,
7 was eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and
8 Scenic Rivers System.

9 (3) The State of Florida has demonstrated its
10 commitment to protecting this river by the enact-
11 ment of the Myakka River Wild and Scenic Designa-
12 tion and Protection Act (Florida Statute Chapter
13 258.501).

14 (4) The Florida county of Sarasota and the cit-
15 ies of Venice and North Port have demonstrated
16 their commitment to protect this river in their com-
17 prehensive land use plans, local ordinances, and land
18 development regulations.

19 (5) The desire for designation of this river as
20 a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers
21 System has been demonstrated through strong pub-
22 lic support, State and local agency support, and the
23 endorsement of designation by the Myakka River
24 Management Coordinating Council, which represents
25 a broad cross section of State and local agencies, ag-

1 ricultural interests, landowners, environmental, and
2 nonprofit organizations.

3 (6) A 12-mile segment of the Myakka River is
4 within the Myakka River State Park with an addi-
5 tional 22-mile segment containing conservation lands
6 held in public ownership or conservation easements
7 within the Myakka River Watershed.

8 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF MYAKKA RIVER, FLORIDA, AS A**
9 **COMPONENT OF THE NATIONAL WILD AND**
10 **SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM.**

11 (a) Section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
12 (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)) is amended by adding at the end the
13 following new paragraph:

14 “(_____) MYAKKA RIVER, FLORIDA.—The 34-
15 mile segments, within Sarasota County referred to in
16 this paragraph, to be administered by the Secretary
17 of the Interior, in partnership with the Myakka
18 River Management Coordinating Council.”.

19 (b) IN GENERAL.—The following segments of the
20 Myakka River, within Sarasota County, to be administered
21 in the following classifications:

22 “(A) The approximately 8.0-mile segment
23 from the Manatee County/Sarasota County line
24 to S.R. 72, as a scenic river.

1 “(B) The approximately 11.2-mile seg-
 2 ment, from S.R. 72 to Laurel Road, as a wild
 3 river.

4 “(C) The approximately 1.9-mile segment,
 5 from Laurel Road to Border Road, as a scenic
 6 river.

7 “(D) The approximately 1.5-mile segment,
 8 from Border Road to just south of the I-75
 9 Bridge, as a recreational river.

10 “(E) The approximately 1.5-mile segment,
 11 from south of the I-75 Bridge to Snook Haven,
 12 as a scenic river.

13 “(F) The approximately 3.2-mile segment,
 14 from Snook Haven to Ramblers Rest, as a wild
 15 river.

16 “(G) The approximately 2.7-mile segment,
 17 from Ramblers Rest to U.S. 41, as a scenic
 18 river.

19 “(H) The approximately 4.0-mile segment,
 20 from U.S. 41 to the Charlotte County Line, as
 21 a scenic river.”.

22 **SEC. 4. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO MYAKKA**
 23 **RIVER.**

24 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section and section 5:

1 (1) MYAKKA RIVER.—The term “Myakka
2 River” means the segments of the Myakka River in
3 the State of Florida designated as components of the
4 National Wild and Scenic Rivers System by para-
5 graph (___) of section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic
6 Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)), as added by this
7 Act.

8 (2) COUNCIL.—The term “Council” means the
9 Myakka River Management Coordinating Council es-
10 tablished pursuant to Florida Statute Chapter
11 258.501.

12 (3) COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN.—
13 The terms “comprehensive management plan” and
14 “plan” mean the Myakka River Wild and Scenic
15 Management Plan developed by the Council shall be
16 considered to satisfy the requirements for the com-
17 prehensive management plan under section 3(d) of
18 the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(d)).

19 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
20 the Secretary of the Interior.

21 (b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

22 (1) USE AUTHORIZED.—In order to provide for
23 the long-term protection, preservation, and enhance-
24 ment of the Myakka River, the Secretary shall co-
25 ordinate administration responsibilities under this

1 section, and may enter into cooperative agreements
2 pursuant to sections 10(e) and 11(b)(1) of the Wild
3 and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1281(e),
4 1282(b)(1)) with the State of Florida Department of
5 Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation
6 and Parks, appropriate local political jurisdictions of
7 the State, the county of Sarasota, City of North
8 Port, City of Venice and appropriate local planning
9 and non-profit organizations.

10 (2) EFFECT OF AGREEMENT.—Administration
11 of the Myakka River by the Secretary of the Interior
12 through the use of cooperative agreements shall
13 not—

14 (A) constitute National Park Service ad-
15 ministration of the Myakka River for purposes
16 of section 10(c) of such Act (U.S.C. 1281(c));
17 or

18 (B) cause the Myakka River to be consid-
19 ered a unit of the National Park System.

20 (3) PUBLICLY OWNED LANDS.—Nothing in this
21 Act or an agreement under this Act shall affect the
22 management of publicly or privately owned lands
23 within the boundaries of the Myakka River water-
24 shed by the agencies having jurisdiction over the
25 lands, in accordance with the statutory authority of

1 Florida Statute 258.501 and the mission of such
2 agencies.

3 (4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER SUP-
4 PORT.—The Secretary may provide technical assist-
5 ance, staff support, and funding to assist in the up-
6 dating and implementation of the comprehensive
7 management plan.

8 (5) ACQUISITION OF LAND.—the authority of
9 the Secretary to acquire land for the Myakka River
10 segments shall be limited to acquisition by donation
11 or acquisition with the consent of the owner thereof.

12 (6) NO CONDEMNATION.—No land or interest
13 in land may be acquired for the Myakka River seg-
14 ments by condemnation.

15 **SEC. 5. MYAKKA RIVER MANAGEMENT COUNCIL.**

16 (a) EXISTING STRUCTURE.—the Secretary shall co-
17 ordinate the management responsibilities of the Secretary
18 with the Council in the updating and implementation of
19 the comprehensive management plan for the Myakka
20 River.

21 (b) REPRESENTATIVE FROM DOI.—The Secretary
22 shall select a representative who shall be added to the
23 Council to represent the National Park Service.

1 (c) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—Other interested par-
2 ties may be added to the Council, in accordance with the
3 statutory authority under Florida Statute 258.501.

4 (d) COORDINATION WITH COUNCIL.—The Secretary
5 shall coordinate the management responsibilities with the
6 Council in the updating and implementation of the Man-
7 agement plan for the Myakka River, to assist the Sec-
8 retary in carrying out the management responsibilities of
9 the Secretary under this Act.

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