

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1698
By: Wentworth
Natural Resources
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As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Current law requires groundwater conservation districts to submit groundwater management plans, with certain goals, to the executive administrator of the Texas Water Development Board for review and certification. However, there is no formal review for the quality or appropriateness of the submitted plan. As proposed, S.B. 1698 requires a groundwater conservation district to develop goals for groundwater management plans.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 36.1071(a), Water Code, to require the groundwater conservation district (district), following notice and hearing, in coordination with surface water management entities on a regional basis, to develop a comprehensive management plan which contains a management goal describing the desired future condition for the aquifer in quantified terms and which address certain management goals.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 36.1072, Water Code, by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsections (h), (i), and (j), as follows:

(b) Requires the executive administrator of the Texas Water Development Board (executive administrator), within 150 days, rather than 60 days, after receiving a management plan adopted under Section 36.1071, to certify a management plan if the plan is administratively complete and if the review committee has made the findings required by Subsection (i). Authorizes the executive administrator to determine that conditions justify waiver of the requirements under Section 36.1071(e)(4) or justify certification of the management plan without the findings required by Subsection (i).

(h) Requires the executive administrator to organize a review committee to make recommendations regarding management plans submitted for certification. Requires the review committee to be composed of certain individuals.

(i) Requires the review committee established under Subsection (h) to recommend that the executive administrator certify a management plan only if the committee makes certain findings.

(j) Authorizes the board of a water district (board) to reimburse the person selected to serve on the review committee under Subsection (h)(4) for the reasonable costs incurred for travel, lodging, and meals in serving on the review committee.

SECTION 3. (a) Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2003.

(b) Provides that the changes in law made by this Act apply only to a management plan submitted under Section 36.1071, Water Code, on or after the effective date of this Act.