

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 25 (HB 75)

2020 Second Extraordinary Session

McFarland

Existing law creates the Forest Protection Fund within the state treasury and requires that monies deposited into the fund be used for acquisition and maintenance of equipment used for the protection of forest lands from damage by fire or other causes.

New law creates the Wildfire Suppression Subfund within the Forest Protection Fund and exempts monies in the subfund from the uses mandated for the fund.

Existing law requires that any unexpended or unencumbered monies in the Forest Protection Fund at the end of the year revert to the La. Agricultural Finance Authority. New law exempts monies in the Wildfire Subfund from this reversion.

Existing law levies an annual assessment of eight cents per acre on each acre of timberland in the state and requires the assessment to be deposited into the Forest Protection Fund.

New law requires the state treasurer to credit an amount equal to 25% of the severance tax on timber allocated to the state pursuant to Article VII, Section 4(D) into the Wildfire Subfund beginning with the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year.

New law requires the La. Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) to spend the monies in the Wildfire Subfund as appropriated by the legislature on fire suppression with an intent that the money is primarily used for the appointment and retention of forest firefighters.

New law provides that monies in the Wildfire Subfund be invested in the same manner as monies in the state general fund and that any interest earned is credited to the subfund. Requires that any unexpended or unencumbered monies in the Wildfire Subfund at the end of the fiscal year remain in the subfund.

New law prohibits any money appropriated from the Forest Protection Fund and Wildfire Subfund from displacing, replacing, or supplanting appropriations from the state general fund for LDAF for any purpose for which a general fund appropriation was made in the previous year unless the total appropriations for the fiscal year from the state general fund for such purpose exceed general fund appropriations for the previous year.

Effective upon signature of governor (Oct. 28, 2020).

(Amends R.S. 3:4321(C) and (D); Adds R.S. 3:4321(E))