

**HOUSE SUMMARY OF SENATE AMENDMENTS****HB 544****2021 Regular Session****Hodges**

WATERWAYS: Extends the period for which the Comite River is exempt from certain provisions of the Louisiana Scenic Rivers Act

**Synopsis of Senate Amendments**

1. Provides for a permitting exception from May 1, 2021 through August 1, 2026 applicable to clearing and snagging, and dredging operations for draining purposes in Bayou Manchac.

**Digest of Bill as Finally Passed by Senate**

Present law provides that, beginning Aug. 1, 2018, through Aug. 1, 2021, no evaluation or permit will be required for the channelization, clearing and snagging, channel realignment, reservoir construction, or dredging operations for drainage purposes in the Comite River.

Present law further provides that from Aug. 1, 2018, through Aug. 1, 2021, use of a motor vehicle or other wheeled or tracked vehicle on the Comite River is prohibited, except for permitted uses and direct crossings by immediately adjacent landowners, lessees, or other persons who have written permission from the landowner to access adjoining tracts of land for noncommercial activities in a manner that does not directly and significantly degrade the ecological integrity of the stream. Specifies that written permission must be in the person's possession and include the landowner's contact information.

Proposed law retains present law and extends the exemption from Aug. 1, 2021, to Aug. 1, 2026.

Present law requires clearing and snagging, and dredging operations for drainage purposes, in Bayou Manchac to be permitted by the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries in accordance with the requirements and procedures provided for in present law.

Proposed law provides an exception to the present law permitting requirements for those operations beginning May 1, 2021, and extending through Aug. 1, 2026.

(Amends R.S. 56:1855(M)(2) and (P)(1)(intro. para.))