
DIGEST

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HB 425 Original

2023 Regular Session

Bourriaque

Abstract: Creates the Acadiana Watershed District and provides for its boundaries, purpose, governance, authority to levy taxes within the district, and relation to other public entities related to watershed management.

Proposed law establishes the Acadiana Watershed District, provides for its purpose, and defines its geographic boundaries.

Proposed law provides for the district's corporate status, authority to incur debt, domicile, ownership, operation, and maintenance of a regional sensor network, and for recognition of the La. Watershed Flood Center at UL-Lafayette as a regional data resource.

Proposed law provides for the responsibilities and auditing of the district and for its use, storage, and maintenance of the LWI Region 5 hydrologic and hydraulic model.

Proposed law establishes a board of commissioners to govern and manage the affairs of the district to be composed of the following members:

- (1) The police jury presidents of the parishes of Acadia, Allen, Avoyelles, Calcasieu, Cameron, Evangeline, Jefferson Davis, Rapides, and Vermillion, or their respective designees.
- (2) The mayor-president of Lafayette Parish or his designee.
- (3) The parish presidents of the parishes of Iberia, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, St. Landry, St. Martin, and St. Mary, or their respective designees.

Proposed law provides for the creation of bylaws, for meetings, compensation, terms of service, and vacancies.

Proposed law authorizes the board to establish a technical advisory committee comprised of the following members:

- (1) A representative of the Soil & Water Conservation District IV.
- (2) A representative of the Teche-Vermilion Fresh Water District.
- (3) A representative of the La. Watershed Flood Center.

- (4) A representative of the La. Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Division.
- (5) Two at-large members appointed by a municipality or municipalities with a population of thirty thousand or more and meeting the technical qualifications requirements described in this Section.
- (6) Two at-large members appointed by a municipality or municipalities with a population of less than thirty thousand and meeting the technical qualification requirements described in this Section.
- (7) One member appointed by the secretary of the Dept. of Transportation and Development (DOTD).
- (8) One member appointed by the executive director of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA).
- (9) One member appointed by the Commander and District Engineer of the New Orleans District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Proposed law provides for the powers of the board of commissioners, including that to acquire funding and property, to contract with public and private entities, to levy taxes on any property within the district subject to taxation, to advise state and local government on drainage and flooding issues, to conduct public hearings, to construct and maintain drainage works, to develop and recommend regional planning and practice guidance, and to develop and implement a waterway management plan and a comprehensive drainage, flood control, and water resource management plan.

Proposed law authorizes the district to develop a regional hazard mitigation plan that is consistent with parish hazard mitigation plans.

Proposed law precludes the division of administration, DOTD and the CPRA from displacing, replacing, or supplanting district funding.

(Amends the heading of Chapter 17 of Title 38; Adds R.S. 38:3321-3327)