

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 319

BY REPRESENTATIVE ORGERON

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

BOARDS/COMMISSIONS: Provides relative to the Atchafalaya Trace Commission and Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Area

## 1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 25:1221(B)(8), 1222(A) and (B)(4), (9), and (14), 1223(A)(1),  
3 1224(A)(10), (B)(1)(a), (c), and (f), (2)(introductory paragraph), (a), (b), and (c), and  
4 (3)(introductory paragraph), and (a) through (f), relative to the Atchafalaya Trace  
5 Commission and Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Area; to change the name of the  
6 heritage area; to include Lafourche Parish within the heritage area; to increase the  
7 membership of the commission; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 25:1221(B)(8), 1222(A) and (B)(4), (9), and (14), 1223(A)(1),  
10 1224(A)(10), (B)(1)(a), (c), and (f), (2)(introductory paragraph), (a), (b), and (c), and  
11 (3)(introductory paragraph), and (a) through (f) are hereby amended and reenacted to read  
12 as follows:

13 §1221. Legislative recognition

14 \* \* \*

15 B. The legislature recognizes that:

16 \* \* \*

17 (8) Principal organizations and individuals, drawn from a broad cross section  
18 of constituencies, are willing to develop partnerships to achieve stated goals and

1 realize a vision consistent with establishment of a ~~heritage area~~ the Atchafalaya  
2 National Heritage Area Management Plan.

3 \* \* \*

4 §1222. Atchafalaya Trace Commission; creation

5 A. In furtherance of the legislature's recognition, there is hereby created the  
6 Atchafalaya Trace Commission, referred to in this Chapter as the "commission",  
7 which shall be an agency of state government within the Department of Culture,  
8 Recreation and Tourism. The legislature further establishes in the state of Louisiana  
9 the Atchafalaya ~~Trace~~ National Heritage Area, referred to in this Chapter as "the  
10 ~~trace~~ heritage area". The ~~trace~~ heritage area shall consist of the territory in the  
11 following parishes ~~as generally depicted on the map entitled the Atchafalaya Trace~~  
12 ~~Heritage Corridor Concept Plan copyrighted in 1996 by the Center for Landscape~~  
13 ~~Interpretation:~~ St. Mary, Iberia, St. Martin, St. Landry, Avoyelles, Pointe Coupee,  
14 Iberville, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafayette, West Baton Rouge, Concordia, ~~and~~  
15 East Baton Rouge<sub>2</sub>. ~~In addition, the trace area shall include all of the territory in~~  
16 ~~Ascension, and Parish Lafourche. However, no other parish may be added to the~~  
17 ~~Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Area until such time as criteria for inclusion into the~~  
18 ~~trace area have been identified and established by the commission.~~

19 B. The purposes of the commission shall include the following:

20 \* \* \*

21 (4) To improve transportation and communication facilities and access  
22 within the ~~trace~~ heritage area.

23 \* \* \*

24 (9) To seek recognition and federal funding for the ~~trace~~ heritage area as a  
25 National Heritage Area.

26 \* \* \*

27 (14) To develop an integrated natural, scenic, cultural, and historic resource  
28 management plan for the ~~trace~~ heritage area and assist appropriate federal, state, and  
29 local authorities in its implementation.

1           §1223. Membership; officers

2                   A.(1) The commission shall be comprised of ~~fourteen~~ fifteen members. The  
3 governing authority of each parish identified in R.S. 25:1222(A) as having territory  
4 within the ~~trace~~ heritage area shall appoint one member.

5                                   \*           \*           \*

6           §1224. Duties and authority

7                   A. The commission shall have the following duties and authority:

8                                   \*           \*           \*

9                   (10) The commission may acquire from any willing seller real property or  
10 interests in real property in the ~~trace~~ heritage area as deemed necessary to fulfill the  
11 purposes of this Chapter.

12                                  \*           \*           \*

13                   B.(1) To guide the commission's operations and in preparation for  
14 completing the management plan, the commission shall prepare a concept plan and  
15 feasibility study which:

16                   (a) Identifies the commission as the management entity for the ~~trace~~ heritage  
17 area and describes the organization, structure, people, programs, capabilities, and  
18 funding necessary and desirable for implementing the purposes of this Chapter.

19                                  \*           \*           \*

20                   (c) Determines the potential for the ~~trace~~ heritage area to become a  
21 nationally recognized heritage area.

22                                  \*           \*           \*

23                   (f) Defines the Atchafalaya ~~Trace~~ National Heritage Area driving corridor  
24 or scenic byway.

25                                  \*           \*           \*

26                   (2) Within four years after the commission conducts its first meeting, it shall,  
27 through the secretary of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, submit  
28 to the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs and the Senate  
29 Committee on Natural Resources a Cultural Heritage and Corridor Management

1 Plan. The plan shall take into account existing federal, state, and local plans, and  
2 shall coordinate those plans and present a unified resource management and  
3 interpretation plan for the ~~trace~~ heritage area. The plan shall:

4 (a) Provide a complete resource inventory which also includes any property  
5 in the ~~trace~~ heritage area which should be preserved, restored, managed, developed,  
6 maintained, or acquired because of its national historic, cultural, scenic, or natural  
7 systems significance.

8 (b) Develop a historic, cultural, scenic, and natural resource interpretation  
9 plan to interpret the resources of the ~~trace~~ heritage area.

10 (c) Recommend policies for resource management which consider and detail  
11 the application of appropriate land and water management techniques, including the  
12 development of intergovernmental cooperative agreements, that will protect and  
13 interpret the ~~trace's~~ historical, cultural, scenic, and natural resources of the heritage  
14 area in a manner consistent with supporting appropriate and compatible economic  
15 revitalization efforts.

16 \* \* \*

17 (3) After review and approval of the plan by the legislature, by resolution,  
18 the commission shall implement the plan by taking appropriate steps in cooperation  
19 with any public or private entity to preserve and interpret the historic resources of  
20 the ~~trace~~ heritage area and to support public and private efforts in sustainable  
21 economic revitalization consistent with the goals of the plan. These steps may  
22 include but need not be limited to:

23 (a) Assisting the state, local, and federal governments in preserving the ~~trace~~  
24 heritage area and its surrounding area.

25 (b) Assisting the state, local, and federal governments, directly or indirectly,  
26 in designing, establishing, and maintaining visitor centers and other interpretive  
27 centers and exhibits in the ~~trace~~ heritage area.

28 (c) Assisting in increasing public awareness of and appreciation for the  
29 historical, scenic, natural, and cultural resources and sites in the ~~trace~~ heritage area.

1 (d) Assisting the state, local, and federal governments and nonprofit  
 2 organizations in the restoration of any historic building or structure and of any  
 3 damaged or impaired natural systems or features in the ~~trace~~ heritage area.

4 (e) Encouraging, by appropriate means, enhanced economic development in  
 5 the ~~trace~~ heritage area consistent with the goals of the plan.

6 (f) Ensuring that clear, consistent signs identifying access points, ~~trace~~  
 7 heritage driving corridor or scenic byway routes, points of interest, and services for  
 8 visitors are placed throughout the ~~trace~~ heritage area.

9 \* \* \*

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### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 319 Engrossed

2025 Regular Session

Orgeron

**Abstract:** Relative to the Atchafalaya Trace Commission and Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Area, changes the name of the area, includes Lafourche Parish within the area, and increases the membership of the commission.

Present law establishes the Atchafalaya Trace Commission ("commission") as an agency of state government within the Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law establishes the Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Area as consisting of the territory in the following parishes as generally depicted on the map entitled the Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Corridor Concept Plan copyrighted in 1996 by the Center for Landscape Interpretation: St. Mary, Iberia, St. Martin, St. Landry, Avoyelles, Pointe Coupee, Iberville, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafayette, West Baton Rouge, Concordia, and East Baton Rouge. Additionally provides that the trace area includes all of the territory in Ascension Parish.

Proposed law changes the name of the area from "Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Area" to "Atchafalaya National Heritage Area" and makes conforming changes in present law. Changes provisions of present law that refer to the "trace area" to instead refer to the "heritage area".

Proposed law removes the reference in present law to the area being generally depicted on the map entitled the Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Corridor Concept Plan copyrighted in 1996 by the Center for Landscape Interpretation. Additionally, adds Lafourche parish to the parishes included in the heritage area.

Proposed law otherwise retains present law.

Present law provides that no other parish may be added to the heritage area until such time as criteria for inclusion into the area have been identified and established by the commission. Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law provides that the commission is comprised of 14 members, one appointed by the governing authority of each parish identified in present law as having territory within the heritage area. Provides that the secretary of the U.S. Dept. of the Interior may appoint a representative of the National Park Service to serve as a nonvoting member of the commission under certain circumstances. Provides for terms of commissioners and officers and meetings of the commission.

Proposed law increases the membership of the commission from 14 members to 15 members. Otherwise retains present law.

(Amends R.S. 25:1221(B)(8), 1222(A) and (B)(4), (9), and (14), 1223(A)(1), 1224(A)(10), (B)(1)(a), (c), and (f), (2)(intro. para.), (a), (b), and (c), and (3)(intro. para.), and (a)-(f))