

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 323 (SB 102)

2023 Regular Session

Fred Mills

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

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

New 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.

New law establishes a board of commissioners to govern and manage the affairs of the district, provides for the membership appointments, for creation of bylaws, for meetings, for a technical advisory committee comprised of non-voting members, for compensation of board members, for terms, and for replacement of board members.

New law provides that the board shall be comprised of the following members:

- (1) The police jury presidents of the parishes of Acadia, Allen, Avoyelles, Calcasieu, Cameron, Evangeline, Jefferson Davis, Rapides, and Vermilion, 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.
- (4) The chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, or his designee.
- (5) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, or his designee.

New law requires that technical advisory committee appointees have professional experience in engineering, project management, certified flood plain management, or other drainage-related field such as geosciences, hydrology, or water management.

New 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.

New law prohibits levy of a property tax without a majority vote of the electors in each parish within the territorial jurisdiction of the authority.

New law provides that by entering into a cooperative endeavor agreement with the state, the district shall be recognized as the primary entity responsible for and charged with operating, managing, and maintaining models and any derivative work.

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

New law precludes the division of administration, Dept. of Transportation and Development, and the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority from displacing, replacing, or supplanting district funding.

New law requires that in developing the master plan the board is to consider the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority and the Atchafalaya Basin Program master plans.

Effective August 1, 2023.

(Adds R.S. 38:3321-3327)