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	DIGEST	
SB 244 Original	2025 Regular Session	Hensgens

Present law establishes the office of conservation, lead by the commissioner of conservation to oversee the state's natural resources, subsurface disposal wells, and all surface and storage waste facilities related to oil and gas operations. The commissioner has rulemaking authority and jurisdiction over all persons and property necessary to enforce the state's laws on oil and gas conservation, including land use, establishment of drilling units, collection of fees, and permitting of production and injection well operations and pipelines related to oil and gas production.

Present law authorizes the commissioner to implement an expedited permitting program and provides for notice and reporting. Proposed law maintains present law, and requires the secretary to promulgate rules for expedited processing, including, requests, timelines, notice, record keeping, and appeals.

Proposed law maintains present law and moves the authority and responsibilities of the office of conservation and its commissioner under the department and its secretary.

Proposed law repeals the Cross-Unit Well Study Commission, which sunset on August 1, 2015.

Proposed law organizes the Dept. of Conservation and Energy and provides for the secretary, deputy secretary, undersecretary, and directors. The department is organized into the executive office of the secretary that include the office of state resources, the office of legal services, the office of administration, the office of permitting and compliance, the office of mineral resources, the office of enforcement, and the office of energy.

Proposed law requires reporting of oil, gas, and condensate production on an individual well basis.

Proposed law creates the Natural Resources Financial Security Fund to support the department's regulatory programs for which financial security or assurance are required. Provides for collection, custody, expenditure, and use of payments, premiums, and fees collected from operators under programs administered by the Natural Resources Trust Authority.

Proposed law provides that monies in the fund may be used for restoration, reimbursement, and administrative costs. All instruments currently held by the Oilfield Site Restoration Fund are to be transferred to the fund. Further changes the expenditure limit from \$950,000 to the the department's federal approved indirect cost rate or if that rate doesn't exist, 15 percent of direct costs

Proposed law requires federal orphan oilfield site appropriations and grant monies go to the

department's federal funds account to be spent on assessment, restoration, and plugging of orphan wells. The secretary may expend such monies through contracts authorized under present law.

Proposed law authorizes the secretary to enter orphaned oilfield site restoration contribution agreements limiting a party's obligations and resolving regulatory compliance responsibilities.

Proposed law removes minimum expenditure requirements for plugging certain wells between 2016 and 2022.

Proposed law provides that entities authorized to issue bonds on behalf of the Louisiana Local Government Environmental Facilities and Community Development Authority may be "issuers" of debt related to Oilfield Site Restoration Law.

Proposed law authorizes the department to regulate water resource dependent activities and promulgate rules for management, use and protection of water resources and prevention of saltwater intrusion, including water well drilling, use, and abandonment.

Proposed law authorizes the department to create groundwater districts and require permits for drilling or construction of water wells. Requires the department to develop a comprehensive water resource plan.

Present law establishes the State Mineral and Energy Board and provides for its membership and powers. Proposed law authorizes the State Mineral and Energy Board to enter operating agreements for use of state resources under the department's jurisdiction. Changes membership from the secretary to the undersecretary and provides for proxies.

Proposed law requires the secretary and commissioner of administration to enter into an MOU on the management of payments from the Saltwater and Oil Assessment process.

Present law organizes the Dept. of Energy and Natural Resources its officers and offices. Provides that the department is directed by a secretary, appointed by the governor with consent of the Senate.

Proposed law creates the Natural Resources Commission within the Dept. of Conservation and Energy. Proposed law provides that the membership of the commission, who may not serve by proxy or designee.

Proposed law requires the department, under the direction of the deputy secretary, to staff the commission and authorizes engagement of the legislative auditor for legislative or commission-requested reports. Proposed law provides for the commission's meeting requirements.

Proposed law requires the commission to serve as the primary coordinating body for water management planning and statewide flood protection and develop a process for centralized, uniform planning; develop processes for interagency and intergovernmental coordination and response; develop a process to respond to and prioritize legislative study requests; engage the legislative auditor for support in executive branch investigations, reports, and reviews; develop a process for identifying, clarifying, and addressing agency overlap, including with independent agencies and

political subdivisions.

Proposed law provides for procedures for the secretary to streamline and modernize the organization and operation of the department, including notifying the governor, the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Senate Natural Resources Committee.

Present law creates the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District and the Capital Area Groundwater Conservation District. Proposed law transfers the powers, duties, functions, responsibilities, programs, and operations of these entities to be exercised by and be under the administration and control of the secretary, except for those functions of each which are required to be performed and administered by the undersecretary. Further, proposed law authorizes the secretary to assign powers, duties, functions, responsibilities, programs, and operations of these entities to an office within the department, or may determine that any or all of them be exercised in such other manner, not inconsistent with law, as the secretary may decide.

Proposed law provides that the transfer of the rules, regulations, permits, license, registrations, variance and orders of these entities remain in full force and effect as rules and regulations of the Dept. of Conservation and Energy unless otherwise modified by law.

Proposed law provides that any legal proceeding pending shall continue in the name of the original agency. The department is deemed substituted for the former agency without the need to amend legal documents.

Proposed law provides that employees of the former groundwater conservation districts continue in their roles, to the extent deemed necessary by the secretary, and remain subject to applicable civil service laws.

Proposed law does not impair contractual or legal obligations of any agency or department affected by the legislation. All such obligations shall be assumed by the department. Additionally, any gift, trust, or other disposition of property made to a former agency shall be deemed vested in the department, with the department and its secretary acting as the legal successor in all respects.

Present law establishes the Mineral and Energy Operations Fund.

Proposed law maintains present law and provides that monies may be transferred from the Natural Resources Financial Security Fund to the Mineral and Energy Operations Fund.

Present law vest responsibilities, powers, and duties in the commissioner of conservation relative to water and groundwater management, including determining an area of groundwater concern and membership on water related boards and commissions. Proposed law replaces the commissioner with the secretary of the Dept. of Conservation and Energy.

Proposed law provides for public records exceptions. Proposed law provides for the secretaries authority to review determinations of pipe lines as common carrier.

Present law requires the secretary to adopt rules providing for special areas within the coastal zone that would require special management procedures. Proposed law retains present law and changes the requirement to an authorization to adopt such rules.

Present law provides for authority of the department relative to oysters and oyster leases. Proposed law retains present law with the authority vesting in the Dept. of Conservation and Energy.

Proposed law repeals the Louisiana Environmental Education Act, the Interagency council, requirements and procedures for obtaining a discharge prevention and response certificate by a terminal facility, and the Water Resources Commission.

Effective August 1, 2025.

(Amends R.S. 30:1(A), (B), and (C), 3(3), (6), (7), (9), and (18), 4(A), (B), introductory paragraph of (C), (C)(1)(a)(v) and (b), 14, (16)(b), (17)(a) and (b), introductory paragraph of (D), (D)(1), (2), introductory paragraph of (3), (3)(a) and (b), and (5), (E), (F), (G), (H), introductory paragraph of (I), (I)(1), (3), (4), (5), (9), and (11), (K), introductory paragraph of (L)(1), introductory paragraph of (M), (M)(3), introductory paragraph of (6) and (6)(b), (N)(1), introductory paragraph of (4), (4)(a), and (5), (O)(1) and (2), (P), (Q), introductory paragraph of (R), and (T), introductory paragraph of R.S. 30:4.1(B), 4.1(B)(1) and (2), (C), (D), (E), (F)(1), (I), and (K), 4.2, 4.3, 5(A), (B), introductory paragraph of (C)(1), (C)(1)(a) and (b), introductory paragraph of (2), (2)(d), (4), and (6), and (D)(1) and (2), 30:5.1(A)(1), (2), introductory paragraph of (3), (3)(e), (5), (6), (7), (8), and (9), (B)(1), (2), and introductory paragraph of (3), (5), (7), (9), (10), (12), and (13), 5.2(A), (B), introductory paragraph of (C), (E), (F), (G), and (H), 6, 6.1(A), (B), (C), (D)(1), and (F), 8(A)(1), (2), (3), and (4), and (B), introductory paragraph of R.S. 30:9(A), (B), (C), and (D), 10(A)(1), (2)(a)(i) and (ii), (b)(ii)(ii), introductory paragraph of (vi), (vi)(bb), (c), (d), and (f), and (3), (B), and (C)(7), 10.1(B)(1), (3), (4), and (5), 11.1, 12(A), (B)(1), (2), (3), (4), introductory paragraph of (5), and (5)(f), and (C), 13, 14, 15, 18(A)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6)(a)(i) and (ii), (b), (c)(i)(ff), (ii), (iii), (d), and (e), and (B), 20(A) and (D), 21(A) and (B)(1) and (2)(a) and (b), 22(B), (C), (D), and (E), introductory paragraph of 23(B), (C), and (D), 23.1(A), 25(A)(2), (3), (5), (6), and (7), (D), (E), and (F), 26(A), 27(A), (D), and (F), 28(A), (C), introductory paragraph of (D), (D)(2), (3), (5), (6), and (7), (F), (G), (H), (I)(1)(a), (d), and (g), and (J), 29(A) and (B)(1), 41, 42, 44, 45, 48, introductory paragraph of 61, 73(1), 74(A) and (B), 79(A), (B), and (C), 82(1), (6), (7), (11), and (14), 83(A)(5) and (7), 83.1(B)(3), 85(A) and (C), 86(A)(2), (D)(8), (9), and (10), (E)(2), (6) and (7), (F), (G), and (H), 88(B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (I), and introductory paragraph of (J), 88.1(A)(3) and (4), (C), (D), (E), (G), and (H), 88.2(C), (E)(1), and (F), 89(A), (B), introductory paragraph of (C), (C)(2) and (3), and (D), 90(C), introductory paragraph of (D), (D)(1) and (4), and (E)(4), introductory paragraph of R.S. 30:91(A), 91(A)(1), (B)(1), (2)(a) and (c), (3), and (4), and (D), 92(A) and (C), introductory paragraph of R.S. 30:93(A), 94(A), introductory paragraph of (B)(1), (2)(b), and (3), and (C), 95(B), (C), and (D), 101.2(A), introductory paragraph of R.S. 30:101.3, and 101.3(2), 101.4, introductory paragraph of 101.5(A), and 101.5(A)(2), introductory paragraph of 101.6(A) and 101.6(B), 101.7(A), 101.8, 101.9(D)(1) and (2), 101.10(A) and introductory paragraph of (B), 101.13(A) and introductory paragraph of (B), (B)(2), and (C)(4), 101.14(A) and (B), introductory paragraph of R.S. 30:103.1(A), 121(A), (C), and (D), 125, 127.1(C)(10) and (11), and (D), 129(B)(1)(a), 135, 136.3(C) and (D), 143(D)(2) and (3), 148.8, 148.9(A)(1) and (2), 153, 172, 209(4)(e), 209.1(A) and (B)(1), 413(A) and

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