

Summary of House NR Interim Recommendations

Drought

State Water Plan Funding

Provide for the establishment of a dedicated fund and funding source for the implementation of the State Water Plan in order to offer meaningful funding alternatives and incentives to local entities.

Drought Planning

Continue to monitor the performance of state, regional, and local entities in addressing current and future drought conditions, as well as planning to meet the growing demand on existing water supplies and to find ways to exceed current water resource availability.

Continue identifying and assisting public water systems and rural water suppliers that appear on the Priority Watch List. Encourage these systems/ suppliers to become more involved in the regional planning process for future needs and more effectively manage water supplies to meet current needs.

Drought Management

Further evaluate drought contingency plans to consider including consistent statewide drought stages and other baseline standards.

Monitor water management plans with respect to certain river basins in the state. Work with the appropriate agencies to ensure that a variety of needs are met for the protection of all of the state's resources and best benefit for economic development.

Strategies for Managing Future Droughts

Encourage local and regional entities to better develop and more strongly consider identifying short-term and long-term strategies in order to be more prepared for drought conditions. These strategies should include research and development of new innovative water technologies.

Define appropriate conservation measures for state water planning and funding. Clarify that conservation measures should be longstanding goals implemented not only during times of drought but also as daily best management practices.

Water and Energy: Energy Production

Disclosure and Water Use Reporting Requirements

Continue to monitor the implementation of House Bill 3328 from the 82nd Legislative Session. Improve the access and ease of which the public interacts with information collected and disclosed through the FracFocus website. Evaluate the impacts of water use in energy exploration and production through reporting requirements and integrate these numbers into regional and state water planning.

Groundwater Management

Examine uniformity of statutory language for complying with groundwater conservation district rules and reporting requirements for energy exploration and production.

Mining Regulation

Evaluate ambiguous requirements in the regulatory oversight of the mining industry and consider clarifying or eliminating any subjective standards. Consider streamlining administrative procedures related to contested case hearings in the permitting process of the mining industry.

Reuse/ Recycling Technologies

Strongly encourage the reuse and recycling of freshwater used in fracturing work performed at onshore oil and gas wells. Alternatively, strengthen existing incentives to encourage greater reuse and recycling in order to reduce the overall impact on freshwater supplies.

Statutory Definitions of Groundwater

Consider standardizing existing statutory definitions for water, subsurface water, fresh groundwater, underground water, brackish groundwater, usable quality groundwater, etc. among the various state regulatory codes especially as they relate to energy exploration and production, and environmental protection.

Water and Energy: Electricity Generation

Interplay of Water and Energy

Continue to examine and monitor the interplay of water and energy resources in Texas, especially focusing on the use of water and electric generation.

Drought Management and Energy Generation

Continue to coordinate and enhance communications between regulatory agencies and electric generators, so that implementation of drought contingency measures and state emergency actions do not inadvertently effect electric supply and availability.

Other Initiatives in Electric Generation

Continue to evaluate the economic impact and overall effectiveness of other initiatives, such as one technology cooling and hybrid we-dry cooling, in relation to Texas' climate and demography.

Conservation and Electric Generation

Enhance conservation efforts in the public, private, and utility sectors, by creating and implementing more incentives that encourage generators, users, and consumers to conserve water and electricity.

Desalination

Pilot Studies and Permitting

Consider the effectiveness of pilot studies and testing requirements in the development of desalination projects.

Continue streamlining the process review for planning in order to expedite the permitting process for a desalination plant.

Local and Regional Planning

Encourage local and regional entities to further consider desalination as an available alternative water supply to meet immediate demands, especially in times of drought.

Waste Disposal of Brine

Continue studying the environmental impacts of brine disposal, while continuing to improve and advance more cost-effective disposal methods.

Distinguishing Between Fresh Groundwater and Brackish Groundwater

Consider clarifying statutory language in order to distinguish fresh groundwater from brackish groundwater in the management and development of groundwater resources.

Agricultural Irrigation Conservation

Continue to monitor the advancements of water conservation and agricultural irrigation.

Continue to encourage and support the use of grant and loan programs through state and federal agencies.

Consider ways to enhance incentives for furthering agricultural irrigation conservation efforts through demonstration projects and cost share programs.