

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 517

By: Armbrister

Land & Resource Management
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, the Coastal Erosion Planning and Response Act (CEPRA), Chapter 33, Subchapter H of the Natural Resources Code, does not permit expenditure of CEPRA funds on any hard structure (such as a geotextile tube, seawall, or revetment) that would be located on or landward of a public beach on the Gulf of Mexico shoreline. Instead, the Act gives preference to “soft” methods. Currently, all other types of erosion response projects except beach nourishment are considered hard structures. A November 2003 study by the University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology reported that new technologies, such as geotextile tubes, in conjunction with beach nourishment, provide a viable response to erosion on the Texas Gulf coast.

Geotextile tubes are fabric tubes filled with sand. These tubes are placed parallel to the shoreline to protect property from storm surge and erosion. Since parts of the Texas coast are undergoing long-term shoreline retreat, local government officials are using these types of projects in conjunction with beach nourishment to mitigate the effects of erosion.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the opinion of the committee that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state office, department, agency or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. *Amends Section 33.603, Natural Resources Code, by amending Subsections (b) and (d) and adding Subsection (g), as follows:*

Addresses and authorizes the use of sediment bypass systems in the construction of retrofitting of dams, jetties, groins, and other impoundment structures.

Addresses the use of hard or soft structures for the purpose of remedying erosion on bay shorelines

Addresses and authorizes the use of additional methods of structural shoreline protection projects utilizing innovative technologies such as geotextile tubes.

Authorizes the Commissioner of the General Land Office (GLO) to undertake or provide funding for one or more erosion response demonstration projects if the states portion does not exceed one-tenth of the total appropriated to the GLO for coastal erosion planning and response.

SECTION 2. Effective Date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005

