

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of the Calhoun County Groundwater Conservation District; providing authority to issue bonds.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subtitle H, Title 6, Special District Local Laws Code, is amended by adding Chapter 8860 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 8860. CALHOUN COUNTY GROUNDWATER

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 8860.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Board" means the board of directors of the district.

(2) "Director" means a board member.

(3) "District" means the Calhoun County Groundwater Conservation District.

Sec. 8860.002. NATURE OF DISTRICT. The district is a groundwater conservation district in Calhoun County created under and essential to accomplish the purposes of Section 59, Article XVI, Texas Constitution.

Sec. 8860.003. CONFIRMATION ELECTION REQUIRED. If the creation of the district is not confirmed at a confirmation election held under Section 8860.022 before December 31, 2016:

(1) the district is dissolved on December 31, 2016, except that the district shall:

- 1 (A) pay any debts incurred;
- 2 (B) transfer to Calhoun County any assets that
- 3 remain after the payment of debts; and
- 4 (C) maintain the organization of the district
- 5 until all debts are paid and remaining assets are transferred; and
- 6 (2) this chapter expires September 1, 2018.

7 Sec. 8860.004. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. (a) The
 8 organization of the district is feasible and practicable.

9 (b) All land in and residents of the district will benefit
 10 from the creation of the district.

11 (c) The creation of the district is a public necessity and
 12 will provide a public benefit.

13 Sec. 8860.005. INITIAL DISTRICT TERRITORY. The initial
 14 boundaries of the district are coextensive with the boundaries of
 15 Calhoun County.

16 [Sections 8860.006-8860.020 reserved for expansion]

17 SUBCHAPTER A-1. TEMPORARY PROVISIONS

18 Sec. 8860.021. APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY DIRECTORS.

19 (a) Not later than September 11, 2011, the Calhoun County
 20 Commissioners Court shall appoint five temporary directors as
 21 follows:

22 (1) one temporary director from each of the four
 23 commissioners precincts in the county to represent the precincts in
 24 which the temporary directors reside; and

25 (2) one temporary director who resides in the district
 26 to represent the district at large.

27 (b) If a temporary director fails to qualify for office or a

1 vacancy occurs on the temporary board, the remaining temporary
2 directors shall appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy. If
3 at any time there are fewer than three qualified temporary
4 directors, the Calhoun County Commissioners Court shall appoint the
5 necessary number of persons to fill all vacancies on the board.

6 (c) The temporary directors shall select from among
7 themselves a president, a vice president, and a secretary.

8 (d) Temporary directors serve until the earlier of:

9 (1) the date the creation of the district is confirmed
10 at an election held under Section 8860.022; or

11 (2) September 1, 2015.

12 (e) If the creation of the district has not been confirmed
13 under Section 8860.022 and the terms of the temporary directors
14 have expired, successor temporary directors shall be appointed in
15 the manner provided by Subsection (a) to serve terms that expire on
16 the earliest of:

17 (1) the date the district's creation is confirmed at an
18 election held under Section 8860.022;

19 (2) the date the requirements of Section 8860.003(1)
20 are fulfilled; or

21 (3) September 1, 2018.

22 Sec. 8860.022. CONFIRMATION ELECTION. (a) Not later than
23 October 1, 2011, the temporary directors shall meet and shall order
24 an election to be held in the district not later than September 1,
25 2012, to confirm the creation of the district.

26 (b) The ballot for the election shall be printed to provide
27 for voting for or against the proposition: "The creation of the

1 Calhoun County Groundwater Conservation District and the
2 imposition of a fee to pay the maintenance and operating costs of
3 the district."

4 (c) The temporary board may include other propositions on
5 the ballot that the board considers necessary.

6 (d) Section 41.001(a), Election Code, does not apply to an
7 election held under this section.

8 (e) If a majority of the votes cast at the election are in
9 favor of confirming the district's creation, the temporary
10 directors shall declare the district created. If a majority of the
11 votes cast are not in favor of confirming the district's creation,
12 the district's creation is not confirmed. The temporary directors
13 shall file a copy of the election results with the Texas Commission
14 on Environmental Quality.

15 (f) If the district's creation is not confirmed at an
16 election held under this section, the temporary directors may order
17 one or more subsequent elections to be held to confirm the creation
18 of the district not earlier than the first anniversary of the
19 preceding confirmation election. If the district's creation is not
20 confirmed at an election held under this section on or before
21 December 31, 2016, the district is dissolved in accordance with
22 Section 8860.003.

23 Sec. 8860.023. INITIAL DIRECTORS. (a) If the creation of
24 the district is confirmed at an election held under Section
25 8860.022, the temporary directors become the initial directors and
26 serve for the terms provided by Subsection (b).

27 (b) The initial directors representing commissioners

1 precincts 1 and 3 serve a term expiring on December 31 following the
2 expiration of two years after the date of the confirmation
3 election, and the initial directors representing commissioners
4 precincts 2 and 4 and the at-large director serve a term expiring on
5 December 31 following the expiration of four years after the date of
6 the confirmation election.

7 Sec. 8860.024. EXPIRATION OF SUBCHAPTER. This subchapter
8 expires September 1, 2018.

9 [Sections 8860.025-8860.050 reserved for expansion]

10 SUBCHAPTER B. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

11 Sec. 8860.051. GOVERNING BODY; TERMS. (a) The district is
12 governed by a board of five elected directors.

13 (b) Directors serve staggered four-year terms, with two or
14 three directors' terms expiring December 31 of each even-numbered
15 year.

16 Sec. 8860.052. METHOD OF ELECTING DIRECTORS: COMMISSIONERS
17 PRECINCTS. (a) The directors of the district are elected
18 according to the commissioners precinct method as provided by this
19 section.

20 (b) One director is elected by the voters of the entire
21 district, and one director is elected from each county
22 commissioners precinct by the voters of that precinct.

23 (c) Except as provided by Subsection (e), to be eligible to
24 be a candidate for or to serve as director at large, a person must be
25 a registered voter in the district. To be a candidate for or to
26 serve as director from a county commissioners precinct, a person
27 must be a registered voter of that precinct.

1 (d) A person shall indicate on the application for a place
2 on the ballot:

3 (1) the precinct that the person seeks to represent;

4 or

5 (2) that the person seeks to represent the district at
6 large.

7 (e) When the boundaries of the county commissioners
8 precincts are redrawn after each federal decennial census to
9 reflect population changes, a director in office on the effective
10 date of the change, or a director elected or appointed before the
11 effective date of the change whose term of office begins on or after
12 the effective date of the change, shall serve in the precinct to
13 which elected or appointed even though the change in boundaries
14 places the director's residence outside the precinct for which the
15 director was elected or appointed.

16 Sec. 8860.053. ELECTION DATE. The district shall hold an
17 election to elect the appropriate number of directors on the
18 uniform election date prescribed by Section 41.001, Election Code,
19 in November of each even-numbered year.

20 Sec. 8860.054. VACANCIES. If a vacancy occurs on the board,
21 the remaining directors shall appoint a person to fill the vacancy
22 until the next regularly scheduled election of directors. If the
23 position is not scheduled to be filled at the election, the person
24 elected serves only for the remainder of the unexpired term.

25 Sec. 8860.055. COMPENSATION; EXPENSES. (a) A director is
26 not entitled to receive compensation for performing the duties of a
27 director.

1 (b) The board may authorize a director to receive
2 reimbursement for the director's reasonable expenses incurred
3 while engaging in activities on behalf of the district.

4 [Sections 8860.056-8860.100 reserved for expansion]

5 SUBCHAPTER C. POWERS AND DUTIES

6 Sec. 8860.101. GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT POWERS
7 AND DUTIES. Except as otherwise provided by this chapter, the
8 district has the powers and duties provided by the general law of
9 this state, including Chapter 36, Water Code, applicable to
10 groundwater conservation districts created under Section 59,
11 Article XVI, Texas Constitution.

12 Sec. 8860.102. CERTAIN PERMIT DENIALS PROHIBITED. The
13 district may not deny the owner of a tract of land, or the owner's
14 lessee, who does not have a well equipped to produce more than
15 25,000 gallons each day on the tract, either a permit to drill a
16 well on the tract or the privilege to produce groundwater from the
17 tract, subject to district rules.

18 Sec. 8860.103. MITIGATION ASSISTANCE. In addition to the
19 authority granted by Chapter 36, Water Code, the district may
20 assist in the mediation between landowners regarding the loss of
21 existing groundwater supply of exempt domestic and livestock users
22 due to the groundwater pumping of others.

23 Sec. 8860.104. NO EMINENT DOMAIN POWER. The district may
24 not exercise the power of eminent domain.

25 [Sections 8860.105-8860.150 reserved for expansion]

26 SUBCHAPTER D. GENERAL FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

27 Sec. 8860.151. FEES. (a) The board by rule may impose a

1 reasonable fee on each well for which a permit is issued by the
2 district and that is not exempt from regulation by the district.

3 The fee may be based on:

- 4 (1) the size of column pipe used by the well; or
5 (2) the actual, authorized, or anticipated amount of
6 water to be withdrawn from the well.

7 (b) In addition to a fee imposed under Subsection (a), the
8 district may impose a reasonable fee or surcharge for an export fee
9 using one of the following methods:

- 10 (1) a fee negotiated between the district and the
11 transporter; or
12 (2) a combined production and export fee.

13 (c) Fees authorized by this section may be assessed annually
14 and may be used to fund the cost of district operations.

15 Sec. 8860.152. TAXES PROHIBITED. The district may not
16 impose a tax and does not have the authority granted by Sections
17 36.020 and 36.201-36.204, Water Code, relating to taxes.

18 SECTION 2. (a) The legal notice of the intention to
19 introduce this Act, setting forth the general substance of this
20 Act, has been published as provided by law, and the notice and a
21 copy of this Act have been furnished to all persons, agencies,
22 officials, or entities to which they are required to be furnished
23 under Section 59, Article XVI, Texas Constitution, and Chapter 313,
24 Government Code.

25 (b) The governor has submitted the notice and Act to the
26 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

27 (c) The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has filed

1 its recommendations relating to this Act with the governor,
2 lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives
3 within the required time.

4 (d) All requirements of the constitution and laws of this
5 state and the rules and procedures of the legislature with respect
6 to the notice, introduction, and passage of this Act are fulfilled
7 and accomplished.

8 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2011.