

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 4230
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Economic Development
5/22/2025
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department conducted a trail study in 2022 and concluded in its report that a key impediment to the development of regional and statewide trails is a lack of coordination between all agencies involved. In response to the study's conclusions and interest from constituents and stakeholders in expanding outdoor recreation and preserving Texas history, H.B. 4230 seeks to create a statutory framework for the planning, development, and management of a unified hike and bike trail network named the Bicentennial Trail that would connect key historical and environmental landmarks in Texas.

H.B. 4230 amends current law relating to the establishment of a hike and bike trail to be known as the Bicentennial Trail.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the General Land Office in SECTION 1 (Section 31.5011, Natural Resources Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 31, Natural Resources Code, by adding Subchapter J, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. BICENTENNIAL TRAIL

Sec. 31.501. DEFINITION. Defines "hike and bike trail."

Sec. 31.5011. ESTABLISHMENT OF BICENTENNIAL TRAIL. (a) Requires the General Land Office (GLO) to coordinate the establishment of a hike and bike trail network for the purposes described by Section 31.502, with connections as described by that section, to be known as the Bicentennial Trail.

(b) Requires GLO to undertake to ensure that the Bicentennial Trail is established on or before January 1, 2036.

(c) Requires GLO, as necessary or convenient to coordinate the establishment and maintenance of the Bicentennial Trail, to enter into memoranda of understanding with political subdivisions, nonprofit organizations, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), the Texas Department of Transportation, and other appropriate persons or entities.

(d) Authorizes a memorandum of understanding entered into under Subsection (c) to address coordination of trail development, trail maintenance, acquisition of interests in real property, conservation efforts along the trail routes, or any other matter pertinent to the establishment or maintenance of the trail.

(e) Authorizes GLO to adopt rules as necessary to coordinate the establishment of the Bicentennial Trail, including a timeline for the acquisition of real property and real property interests as necessary to complete the trail route.

(f) Prohibits real property or interests in real property necessary to complete the trail routes from being acquired through eminent domain.

(g) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2037.

Sec. 31.502. BICENTENNIAL TRAIL PURPOSES. Provides that the Bicentennial Trail is established as a network of hike and bike trails to connect the Alamo to the State Capitol and to include hike and bike trail connections to Barton Springs, San Marcos Springs, Comal Springs, and San Antonio Springs for the purposes of promoting outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship, and the historical and cultural heritage of this state.

Sec. 31.503. USE OF BICENTENNIAL TRAIL PROPERTY. Provides that real property acquired by this state for the Bicentennial Trail is authorized to be used only for the purposes of the Bicentennial Trail.

Sec. 31.504. BICENTENNIAL TRAIL MAINTENANCE, Requires TPWD to maintain any real property it acquires for the Bicentennial Trail.

SECTION 2. Provides that the expiration of Section 31.5011, Natural Resources Code, as added by this Act, does not affect the validity of a memorandum of understanding entered into under that section.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2025.