

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 4530
By: Romero
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Texas Water Trust was established to allow for the voluntary dedication of water rights to support environmental and conservation purposes. Current law requires review and approval for surface water rights placed in the trust but does not extend the same oversight to groundwater rights, resulting in a regulatory gap. H.B. 4530 seeks to resolve this gap by requiring the Texas Water Development Board to review and approve all groundwater rights dedicated to the trust, aligning them with the existing review processes for surface water rights.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

H.B. 4530 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code and Water Code to limit the water rights placed in trust in the Texas Water Trust whose dedication must be reviewed and approved by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and the dedication of which the Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is required to encourage and facilitate and for which TPWD may manage, as applicable, to surface water rights. The bill requires the dedication of any groundwater rights placed in such trust to be reviewed and approved by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) and requires the TWDB to provide notice of the dedication to any district or authority that was created under certain provisions of the Texas Constitution and that has the authority to regulate the spacing of or production from water wells located in the aquifer, subdivision of the aquifer, or geologic stratum in which the groundwater that is the subject of the groundwater rights is located.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.