

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R23 JAM-F

S.B. 1061
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Natural Resources
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current regulations governing uranium mining permits in Texas, located in Water Code Section 27.0513, are convoluted and repetitive. Mining areas within previously approved boundaries are required to go through the approval process again for even limited changes. S.B. 1061 seeks to address this issue and simplify uranium mining regulation by repealing repetitive provisions and making certain applications for amendments to mining authorizations an uncontested matter.

S.B. 1061 amends Section 27.0513(d) of the Water Code to specify that applications for authorizations or amendments to authorizations allowing mining and restoration activities in production zones are considered uncontested matters. These are not subject to contested case hearings or the hearing requirements of Chapter 2001, Government Code, provided certain conditions are met.

S.B. 1061 makes sure authorization must pertain to a production zone within a permitted boundary that includes a range table of groundwater quality restoration values, and the application must specify restoration values for each production zone that do not exceed the upper limit of this established range.

S.B. 1061 also repeals Sections 27.0513(f) and 27.0513(g) of the Texas Water Code.

As proposed, S.B. 1061 amends current law relating to procedural requirements for uranium mining production area authorizations.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 27.0513(d), Water Code, as follows:

(d) Provides that, notwithstanding Sections 5.551 (Permitting Procedures; Applicability), 5.556 (Request for Reconsideration or Contested Case Hearing), 27.011 (Permit From Commission), and 27.018 (Hearing on Permit Application), an application for an authorization or an amendment to an authorization that allows the permit holder to conduct mining and restoration activities in production zones within the boundary established in the permit is an uncontested matter not subject to a contested case hearing or the hearing requirements of Chapter 2001 (Administrative Procedure), Government Code, if:

(1) the authorization is for a production zone located within the boundary of a permit that incorporates, for each production zone addressed in the application, a range table of groundwater quality restoration values used to measure groundwater restoration by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ);

(2) the application includes, for each production zone addressed in the application, groundwater quality restoration values falling at or below the upper limit of the range established in Subdivision (1); and

(3) makes no changes to this subdivision.

SECTION 2. Repealers: Sections 27.0513(f) (relating to the first application for a certain uranium mining issued authorization for a production zone located within a certain area) and (g) (relating to providing that a first authorization that has previously been issued for a production zone located within the boundary of a permit is effective for purposes of this subsection and a subsequent authorization for a production zone in the same permit boundary is not subject to an opportunity for a contested case hearing, with exceptions), Water Code.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2025.