

By: Johnson

S.B. No. 1624

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the purposes for which the Texas Water Bank and the Texas Water Trust may accept and hold water rights.

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

SECTION 1. Section 12.028(b), Parks and Wildlife Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) Consistent with Section 11.0235(b), Water Code, and the department's duties and responsibilities, the department shall encourage and facilitate the dedication of water rights in the Texas Water Trust through lease, donation, purchase, or other means of voluntary transfer for conservation or environmental needs, including for the purpose of maintaining or improving:

(1) water supply management;

(2) instream flows;

(3) [~~2~~] water quality;

(4) [~~3~~] fish and wildlife habitat; and

(5) [~~4~~] bay and estuary inflows.

SECTION 2. Section 15.703(a), Water Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The board may take all actions necessary to operate the water bank and to facilitate the transfer of water rights from the water bank for future beneficial use including but not limited to:

(1) negotiating a sale price and terms acceptable to the depositor and purchaser;

- 1 (2) maintaining a registry of water bank deposits and
2 those water users in need of additional supplies;
- 3 (3) informing water users in need of additional supply
4 of water rights available in the bank;
- 5 (4) encouraging water right holders to implement water
6 conservation practices and deposit the right to use the conserved
7 water into the bank;
- 8 (5) establishing requirements for deposit of a water
9 right into the water bank including minimum terms for deposit;
- 10 (6) purchasing, holding, and transferring water or
11 water rights in its own name;
- 12 (7) establishing regional water banks;
- 13 (8) acting as a clearinghouse for water marketing
14 information including water availability, pricing of water
15 transactions, environmental considerations, and potential buyers
16 and sellers of water rights;
- 17 (9) preparing and publishing a manual on structuring
18 water transactions;
- 19 (10) accepting and holding donations of water rights
20 to meet conservation or environmental needs, including water supply
21 management, instream flow, water quality, fish and wildlife
22 habitat, or bay and estuary inflow needs;
- 23 (11) entering into contracts with persons to pay for
24 feasibility studies or the preparation of plans and specifications
25 relating to water conservation efforts or to estimate the amount of
26 water that would be saved through conservation efforts; and
- 27 (12) other actions to facilitate water transactions.

1 SECTION 3. Section 15.7031(a), Water Code, is amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (a) The Texas Water Trust is established within the water
4 bank to hold water rights dedicated to conservation or
5 environmental needs, including water supply management, instream
6 flow [~~flows~~], water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, or bay and
7 estuary inflow needs [~~inflows~~].

8 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.