



JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF CONSERVATION

THOMAS F. HARRIS
SECRETARY

RICHARD P. IEYOUB
COMMISSIONER OF CONSERVATION

June 9, 2017

Zack Spivey, Chairman
Sparta Ground Water Conservation Commission
912 Goodgoin Rd.
Ruston, LA 71270

Re: Office of Conservation Process for Meeting House Bill 689 Obligations

Dear Chairman Spivey:

The Louisiana Legislature recently passed Representative Denise Marcelle's House Bill 689 (attached) which establishes certain new obligations for the state's groundwater conservation districts and likewise provides for additional oversight responsibilities by the Office of Conservation relative to these requirements as part of La. R.S. 38:3097.8. Provided below are the Office of Conservation's intended actions to meet its statutory responsibilities as defined in this legislation, pending its approval by the Governor. In order to meet these obligations, the agency will:

1. Consult with legislative staff as appropriate to clarify our interpretation of the law in order to provide the best possible guidance to groundwater conservation districts.
2. Draft a guidance document form and reporting checklist.
3. Promulgate said form and checklist according to law.

The Office of Conservation values highly the work of the Sparta Commission in north Louisiana. We also understand the limits of the Commission's statutory authority and I want to assure you that my staff will be available to answer questions and otherwise assist the Commission in meeting its new obligations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard P. Ieyoub".

Richard P. Ieyoub
Commissioner of Conservation

Cc: Lindsay Gouedy

Attachment

RPI/jmr

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 689 (Substitute for House Bill No. 535 by Representative Marcelle)

BY REPRESENTATIVE MARCELLE

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AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 38:3097.8 and to enact R.S. 38:3097.3(G) and 3097.9, relative to water resource management; to provide for the duties and powers of the commissioner of conservation; to provide for reporting and parliamentary requirements for certain water conservation districts; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 38:3097.8 is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 38:3097.3(G) and 3097.9 are hereby enacted to read as follows:

§3097.3. Commissioner of conservation; powers and duties

* * *

G. The commissioner shall ensure submission of the semiannual reports required of the ground water conservation districts by R.S. 38:3097.8. If the reports are not submitted timely or do not include the pertinent information required, the commissioner is authorized to require monthly submissions of the reports until he is satisfied with the adequacy and informative nature of the reports.

* * *

§3097.8. ~~Annual report~~ Semiannual reports regarding groundwater quality and saltwater intrusion

A. On or before ~~April first annually, each water conservation district, fresh water district, and groundwater~~ May first and November first every year, each ground water conservation district created by law or designated as a regional body, pursuant to R.S. 38:3097.4(D)(6), shall submit a written report of the district's groundwater resources to the commissioner of conservation, the Water Resources Commission, the Water Management Advisory Task Force, the Senate Committee

1 on ~~Natural Resources~~ Environmental Quality, and the House Committee on Natural
 2 Resources and Environment a written report detailing the district's ground water
 3 resources and the activities and actions taken with respect to each of the district's
 4 powers delineated by laws creating the district. The report shall also include but not
 5 be limited to the amount of water used for residential, commercial or industrial, or
 6 agricultural purposes, respectively; actual and projected saltwater intrusion or
 7 encroachment; and any current or projected sale of water for use outside of the state,
 8 including the amount of water so sold and the price paid by each out-of-state user.

9 B. For purposes of the ~~annual~~ semiannual report, the amount of water used
 10 for agricultural or industrial purposes may be estimated.

11 C. The commissioner shall promulgate a form with a checklist of the
 12 pertinent information required to be included in the semi-annual report.

13 §3097.9. Ground water conservation district meetings

14 Any governing authority of a ground water conservation district created by
 15 law or designated as a regional body, pursuant to R.S. 38:3097.4(D)(6), shall adhere
 16 to the Open Meetings Law, R.S. 42:11 et seq. Such governing authority shall issue
 17 public notice of meetings, including an agenda, at least twenty-four hours in
 18 advance. In addition, the public shall be provided the opportunity to comment on
 19 each item on the agenda and for general comments at the end of each meeting. Any
 20 such governing authority shall operate under Robert's Rules of Order and shall record
 21 and maintain minutes of each meeting. Any standing subcommittee created by such
 22 governing authority shall be composed only of members of the governing authority
 23 and the governing authority shall not establish ad hoc committees.

 SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

 PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

 GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____