
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2493

Brief Description: Extending the expiration date of the habitat and recreation lands coordinating group.

Sponsors: Representatives Smith and Tharinger; by request of Recreation and Conservation Office.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the expiration date of the Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group from July 31, 2017, to July 31, 2027.

Hearing Date: 1/20/16

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group (Lands Group) is a statutorily created work group assigned with the task of annually reporting to the Office of Financial Management on issues relating to state habitat and recreation land purchases and disposals.

The Lands Group is required to include the participation of staff from the various state agencies involved on some level with public land acquisition and management. In addition, representatives of appropriate stakeholder groups may be invited to participate by the Director of the Recreational and Conservation Office. Currently the Lands Group has 16 members representing various state agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations, industry trade groups, and legislative districts.

The Lands Group has been assigned specific statutory duties. These include:

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- reviewing agency land acquisition and disposal plans to help ensure statewide coordination;
- producing a forecast of land acquisition and disposal plans;
- convening an annual forum for agencies to coordinate near-term acquisition and disposal plans;
- developing recommendations for geographic information systems mapping and acquisition and disposal recordkeeping; and
- developing an approach for monitoring the success of acquisitions.

The Lands Group was created in 2007 and set to expire in 2012. However, before the original expiration date arrived, the Legislature extended its existence until July 31, 2017. During the Land Group's 2012 renewal, the Legislature declared that state agency participation on the Lands Group must be funded within existing resources.

Summary of Bill:

The expiration date of the Lands Group is extended from July 31, 2017, to July 31, 2027.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.