

- SUBJECT:** Designation of critical erosion areas in GLO coastal erosion response plan
- COMMITTEE:** Land and Resource Management — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — Bonnen, Farrar, Alvarado, Hamilton, Homer, Orr, Paxton, Thibaut
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Bolton
- WITNESSES:** For — Jerry Patterson, General Land Office; Ellis Pickett, Surfrider Foundation Texas Upper Coast Chapter; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Terry Hallmark)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Natural Resources Code, sec. 33.602 requires the commissioner of the General Land Office (GLO) to develop a coastal erosion response plan in coordination with state and federal agencies and local governments. The plan's benefits must be balanced throughout the Texas coast, maximize federal and local financial participation, and take the severity of the erosion effects into account.
- DIGEST:** HB 2074 would authorize the GLO commissioner to designate critical coastal erosion areas as part of the office's coastal response plan. The commissioner would be allowed to develop a coast-wide cost-benefit analysis that considered historical erosion rates and any man-made contributions to erosion, as well as factors related to an area adjacent to the shoreline such as:
- elevation;
 - the presence of adjacent critical infrastructure;
 - population density;
 - amount of economic activity conducted; and
 - the presence of natural resources.

The commissioner also would be able to consider any other factor that the commissioner deemed relevant.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2009.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

Most of the Texas coast currently is considered in critical need considering how many feet of beach are lost each year to erosion. Allowing the General Land Office to identify and target the areas in the most critical need of erosion response would allow for a more efficient use of state resources. Placing greater emphasis and restrictions on these areas would be key in preserving the Texas coastline.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.

NOTES:

The companion bill, SB 1136 by Hegar, was considered in a public hearing by the Senate Natural Resources Committee on April 9 and left pending.