

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R20057 BEE-F

H.B. 4204
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Water, Agriculture & Rural Affairs
5/14/2021
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Concerns have been raised regarding fluctuating water levels on Falcon Lake. As a result, there have been calls to conduct a study to determine the cause of this fluctuation and to determine what should be the optimum water level for the lake. Accordingly, H.B. 4204 provides for this study and a related report.

H.B. 4204 amends current law relating to a study and report on the water level of Falcon Lake in Zapata and Starr Counties.

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. STUDY. Requires the Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to jointly conduct a study on the water level of Falcon Lake in Zapata and Starr Counties. Requires that the study:

- (1) evaluate the optimum water level for recreational fishing on the lake; and
- (2) examine the factors that contribute to or are affected by the rise and fall of the lake's water levels, including flood control, conservation, and hydroelectric power projects.

SECTION 2. REPORT. Requires TPWD and TCEQ, not later than December 1, 2022, to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the House of Representatives of the State of Texas a report that includes:

- (1) the findings of the study conducted under Section 1 of this Act; and
- (2) recommendations to achieve and maintain the optimum water level for recreational fishing on Falcon Lake, consistent with the purpose of the lake's construction.

SECTION 3. EXPIRATION DATE. Provides that this Act expires September 1, 2023.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.