

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill would require the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish an advisory team prior to establishing a groundwater management area (GWMA) to assist with planning for the area. It also requires the DNR to receive approval from the advisory team prior to implementing a groundwater management plan.

A GWMA is an area designated by the DNR to address groundwater management issues. The DNR is currently in the process of designating three GWMA as pilots (the North and East Metro GWMA, the Straight River GWMA, and the Bonanza Valley GWMA). Within groundwater management areas, the DNR has additional authorities and may “limit total annual water appropriations and uses” in order “to ensure sustainable use of groundwater that protects ecosystems, water quality, and the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Water appropriations and uses within the areas must also be consistent with a plan approved by the DNR.

Section

- 1** **Groundwater management areas.** Amends § 103G.287, subd. 4. Requires the commissioner of natural resources to assemble an advisory team to assist with the development of groundwater management area boundaries and plans for the area. Specifies the criteria for membership of the team. Requires the commissioner to receive approval from the advisory team prior to implementing a groundwater management area plan. Provides a retroactive effective date and states that the requirements apply to all groundwater management areas in the state.