

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill would establish a Legislative Water Commission consisting of ten legislators (five from each legislative body) with various duties, including reviewing water related reports and making legislative recommendations.

The bill also would allow the commissioner of natural resources to require water appropriation permits for wells using amounts of water below current minimum thresholds in groundwater management areas. Groundwater management areas may be designated by the commissioner under existing authority.

Section

- 1 Legislative Water Commission.** Adds § 3.886. Establishes a ten-member Legislative Water Commission. The commission consists of five members from each legislative body to be appointed by the speaker (for house of representative members) and the Subcommittee on Committees (for senate members). Two members from each body must be from the minority caucus. Allows the commission to appoint staff and consultants as necessary.

Requires the commission to: review water policy reports and recommendations provided by various state entities and make recommendations to assist the legislature in formulating legislation. Provides that the commission is sunset July 1, 2018.
- 2 Permit required.** Amends § 103G.271, subd. 1. Technical.
- 3 Minimum use exemption and local approval of low use permits.** Amends § 103G.271, subd. 4. Codifies existing minimum water use thresholds used by the commissioner of natural resources when determining the need for water appropriation permits.

Section

- 4** **Groundwater management areas.** Amends § 103G.287, subd. 4. Allows the commissioner of natural resources to require water appropriation permits for those using water in amounts below current thresholds that trigger water appropriation permit requirements (currently 10,000 gallons per day or 1,000,000 gallons per year) in ground water management areas designated by the commissioner.

- 5** **Groundwater sustainability recommendations.** Requires the commissioner of natural resources to develop recommendations and tools to fully implement existing groundwater sustainability requirements and submit the recommendations to the legislature by January 15, 2014.