

Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation

SB 244 — Water Management Districts

by Senator Dean

The bill provides the water management districts (WMDs) with guidance concerning minimum flows and levels (MFLs), water reservations, recovery or prevention strategies, and multi-district projects by:

- requiring proposed water reservations and waterbodies that may be affected by water withdrawals in an adjacent water management district to be identified on a district's annual MFL priority list and schedule;
- directing the WMDs to provide technical information and staff support to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) when the department proposes adoption of a reservation, MFL, or recovery or prevention strategy by rule;
- requiring the WMDs to apply any reservation, MFL, or recovery or prevention strategy adopted by the DEP to the applicable waterbody without having to adopt its own district rules;
- authorizing the WMDs to enter into interagency agreements designating a single district to conduct or fund non-regulatory water management activities or projects that cross district boundaries;
- providing for joint regional water supply planning between WMDs and affected regional water supply authorities; and
- excluding WMD cooperative funding programs from rulemaking requirements.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2013.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 117-0