



## SB24-038

**SHORT TITLE:** Authorize Conservancy District Water Management

**LONG TITLE:** Concerning conservancy districts, and, in connection therewith, authorizing a conservancy district to participate in a plan for augmentation; contract with water users outside the conservancy district for the provision of services; exercise certain powers regarding the control, delivery, use, and distribution of water; establish a water activity enterprise; and sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of the use of water or capacity in works by contract.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Simpson and Bridges/Representatives Martinez and McCormick

**COMMITTEES:** Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee

**PURPOSE OF THE BILL:** To allow non-exempt well owners in Division 3 that are not part of the Rio Grande Water Conservation district or the Trinchera Water Conservancy district an avenue to comply with non-exempt well groundwater rules and regulations.

**PROPOSERS OF THE BILL:** Water and Ag Resources Review Committee

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS:** Well owners in Division 3; State Engineer

**Is this bill necessary this year?** There is no deadline

**BACKGROUND:** According to the sponsor, non-exempt wells in southern Costilla County are currently exempt from rules and as the state gains more confidence in modeling groundwater impacts to surface water system eventually these well owners will be required to comply. The bill is intended to offer an alternative to individual plans for augmentation.

**How does the bill change current law?** It allows the board of a conservancy district to conserve, develop, utilize, or dispose of water for commercial uses as well as for agricultural, municipal, and industrial uses as under current law. It expands the authority of a board of a conservancy district to participate in a plan for augmentation and, in conjunction with the plan, manage, control, deliver, use, and distribute water; contract services for the use and reuse of water and the retirement of wells; enter long-term contracts with public and private entities, and avail itself of public assistance from federal, state, and local governments; and establish a water activity enterprise.

**Does the bill affect the prior appropriations system?** No

**How is the bill implemented?** Persons desiring to organize a conservancy district would need to file a petition with the district court. Once organized, the district would have the powers enumerated in the bill.

**Practical considerations:** What would be the cost and timeframe necessary to organize a conservancy district and adopt the necessary rules?

**Fiscal Impact:** There is no fiscal note or state expenditure noted.

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