

EDUCATION CODE

TITLE 3. HIGHER EDUCATION

SUBTITLE D. THE TEXAS A & M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

CHAPTER 88. AGENCIES AND SERVICES OF THE TEXAS A & M UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 88.001. AGENCIES AND SERVICES. The agencies and services of the Texas A & M University System are:

(1) the Texas Forest Service (see Subchapter B of this chapter);

(2) the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (see Subchapter C of this chapter);

(3) the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, established by action of the board of directors;

(4) the Texas Engineering Experiment Station, established by action of the board of directors;

(5) the Texas Engineering Extension Service, established by action of the board of directors; and

(6) other agencies and services that may be established by law or by action of the board of directors.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3209, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.002. DEFINITION. In this chapter, "board" means the board of regents of The Texas A&M University System.

Added by Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 488, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

SUBCHAPTER B. THE TEXAS FOREST SERVICE

Sec. 88.101. DIRECTOR OF TEXAS FOREST SERVICE. The board shall appoint a director of the Texas Forest Service, who shall be a technically trained forester with not less than two years of experience in professional forestry work.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3209, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971. Amended by Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 488, Sec. 2, eff.

Sept. 1, 1985; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 209, Sec. 1, eff. May 19, 1993.

Sec. 88.1015. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Director" means the director of the Texas Forest Service.

(2) "Wildfire" means any fire occurring on wildland or in a place where urban areas and rural areas meet. The term does not include a fire that constitutes controlled burning within the meaning of Section 28.01, Penal Code.

(3) "Wildland" means an area in which there is virtually no development except for:

(A) roads, railroads, transmission lines, and similar transportation facilities; or

(B) development related to use of the land for park purposes or for timberland or other agricultural purposes.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 209, Sec. 2, eff. May 19, 1993.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.1016. SUNSET PROVISION. The Texas Forest Service is subject to Chapter 325, Government Code (Texas Sunset Act). Unless continued in existence as provided by that chapter, the Texas Forest Service is abolished September 1, 2023.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., 1st C.S., Ch. 2 (S.B. 2), Sec. 1.02, eff. July 10, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.102. GENERAL DUTIES. Under the general supervision of the board, the director shall:

(1) assume direction of all forest interests and all matters pertaining to forestry within the jurisdiction of this state;

(2) subject to the approval and confirmation of the

board, appoint the assistants and employees necessary in executing the director's duties and the purposes of the board, their compensation to be fixed by the board;

(3) take any action deemed necessary by the board to prevent and extinguish wildfires;

(4) enforce all laws pertaining to the protection of forests and woodlands and prosecute violations of those laws;

(5) collect data relating to forest conditions; and

(6) prepare for the board an annual report stating the progress and condition of state forestry work and recommending plans for improving the state system of forest protection, management, and replacement.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3209, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971. Amended by Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 488, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.103. ENFORCEMENT; APPOINTMENT OF PEACE OFFICERS. The director may appoint not to exceed 25 employees of the Texas Forest Service who are certified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement as qualified to be peace officers to serve as peace officers under the direction of the director in executing the enforcement duties of that agency. The appointments must be approved by the board which shall commission the appointees as peace officers. Any officer commissioned under this section is vested with all the powers, privileges, and immunities of peace officers in the performance of the officer's duties. The officer shall take the oath required of peace officers.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3209, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971. Amended by Acts 1975, 64th Leg., p. 1840, ch. 570, Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 1975; Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 488, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1985; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 689, Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 1999; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 285, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 4, eff.

September 1, 2011.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 93 (S.B. 686), Sec. 2.15, eff. May 18, 2013.

Sec. 88.1035. USE OF FUNDS TO SUPPORT PEACE OFFICER TRAINING. The Texas Forest Service, subject to director approval, may use appropriated funds to purchase food and beverages for training functions required of peace officers of the Texas Forest Service.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1270 (H.B. 78), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.

Sec. 88.104. AUTHORITY TO ENTER PRIVATE LAND. (a) Authority is hereby granted to every employee of the Texas Forest Service and any outside labor or assistance the employee deems necessary to enter upon any privately-owned land in the performance of fire suppression duties which are by state law under the direction of the director. These entries on privately-owned land may be made whenever it is necessary to investigate forest and grass fires and to ascertain whether they are burning uncontrolled, and whenever it is necessary to suppress forest and grass fires that are known to be burning uncontrolled.

(b) An individual providing labor or assistance to the Texas Forest Service under Subsection (a) is not liable for civil damages, including personal injury, wrongful death, property damage, death, or other loss resulting from any act, error, or omission by the individual in providing that labor or assistance unless the act, error, or omission:

(1) proximately caused the loss; and

(2) was performed with malice or constitutes gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3210, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971. Amended by Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 488, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 34 (S.B. 1267), Sec. 1, eff. May 10, 2013.

Sec. 88.105. COOPERATION WITH PERSONS AND AGENCIES. On request, under the sanction of the board, and whenever the director deems it essential to the best interests of the people of the state, the director shall cooperate with counties, towns, corporations, or individuals in preparing plans for the protection, management, and replacement of trees, woodlots, and timber tracts, under an agreement that the parties obtaining the assistance pay at least the field expenses of the persons employed in preparing the plans. The board may cooperate with the National Forest Service under terms it deems desirable.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3210, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971. Amended by Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 488, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.106. COOPERATION WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES; RURAL FIRE PROTECTION PLANS; FIRE TRAINING; DISPOSITION OF USED OR OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT. (a) The director, under the supervision of the board, may cooperate on forestry projects with the National Forest Service and other federal agencies. Subject to the authorization of the board, the director may execute agreements relating to forest protection projects in cooperation with federal agencies and timberland owners and may also execute agreements with timberland owners involving supervision of forest protection and forest development projects when the projects are developed with the aid of loans from a federal agency and when the supervision by the state is required by federal statute or is deemed necessary by the federal agency.

(b) Under the supervision of the board, the director may:

(1) cooperate in the development of rural fire protection plans;

(2) provide training in suppression of fires; and

(3) sell, lend, or otherwise make available to volunteer fire departments used or obsolete fire control or fire

rescue equipment available to the Texas Forest Service, including federal excess or surplus property.

(c) A person may donate used or obsolete fire control or fire rescue equipment to the Texas Forest Service for the service's use or the service's distribution to other volunteer fire departments.

(d) A person is not liable in civil damages for personal injury, property damage, or death resulting from a defect in equipment donated in good faith by the person under this section unless the person's act or omission proximately causing the claim, damage, or loss constitutes malice, gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct. The Texas Forest Service and its director and other officers and employees are not liable in civil damages for personal injury, property damage, or death resulting from a defect in equipment sold, loaned, or otherwise made available in good faith by the director under this section unless the act or omission of the service or its director, officer, or employee proximately causing the claim, damage, or loss constitutes malice, gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct.

(e) In this section, "fire control or fire rescue equipment" includes a vehicle, fire fighting tool, protective gear, breathing apparatus, and other supplies and tools used in fire fighting or fire rescue. A breathing apparatus that is donated to the Texas Forest Service will be recertified to manufacturer's specifications before it is made available to an authorized group by a technician certified by the manufacturer.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3210, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971. Amended by Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 240, ch. 115, Sec. 1, eff. May 18, 1973; Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 488, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1985; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 28, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. [646](#)), Sec. 6, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.107. FOREST LAND: ACQUISITION BY GIFT OR PURCHASE.

(a) On the recommendation of the board, the governor may accept

gifts of land to the state to be held, protected, and administered by the board as state forests and to be used to demonstrate the practical utility of timber culture and water conservation and for game preserves. The gifts may be on terms and conditions agreed upon between the grantors of the property and the board.

(b) The board may purchase lands in the name of the state suitable chiefly for the production of timber as state forests, using for that purpose any special appropriation.

(c) All conveyances of property, by gift or otherwise, shall be submitted to the attorney general for approval as to form.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3210, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.108. ACQUISITION OF LAND FOR FORESTRY PURPOSES; DISPOSITION. (a) The board may accept gifts, donations, or contributions of land suitable for forestry purposes and may enter into agreements with the federal government or other agencies for acquiring by lease, purchase, or otherwise any land that in the judgment of the board is desirable for state forests.

(b) When land is acquired or leased under this section, the board may make expenditures, from any funds not otherwise obligated, for its management, development, and utilization. The board may sell or otherwise dispose of products from the land and may make rules and regulations that may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

(c) All revenue derived from land now owned or later acquired under the provisions of this section shall be segregated by the board for use in the acquisition, management, development, and use of the land until all obligations incurred have been paid in full. Thereafter, net profits accruing from the administration of the land shall be applicable for the purposes that the legislature may prescribe.

(d) Obligations for the acquisition of land incurred by the board under the authority of this section shall be paid solely and exclusively from revenue derived from the land and shall not impose any liability on the general credit and taxing power of the state.

(e) The board may sell, exchange, or lease state forest land

under its jurisdiction when in its judgment it is advantageous to the state to do so in the highest orderly development and management of state forests. However, no sale or exchange of any such land belonging to the state or the university shall be made until the sale or exchange is authorized by the legislature. The sale, lease or exchange shall not be contrary to the terms of any contract into which it has entered.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3211, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.109. USE OF CERTAIN DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE LAND FOR REFORESTATION. The several tracts of land in Cherokee County near Maydelle, consisting of approximately 2,150 acres, owned by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, is set aside for reforestation purposes to be used by Texas A&M University to demonstrate reforestation work.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3211, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 87 (S.B. [1969](#)), Sec. 25.054, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 88.110. PURCHASE OF LAND FOR SEEDLING NURSERY. The board may acquire by purchase in the name of the State of Texas for the use and benefit of the Texas Forest Service, and may improve, a sufficient quantity of land suitable for the operation of a forest tree seedling nursery in the reforestation program of the Texas Forest Service and for the production of other forest products. However, not more than 400 acres of land may be purchased under this section; and the selling price of seedlings produced on the land, as far as practical, shall represent the cost of production plus at least 10 percent.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3211, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.111. FOREST LAND ACQUIRED BY STATE UNDER TAX SALE. When pine forest land is sold to the state for the payment of taxes,

interest, penalty, and costs adjudged against the land, as provided in Article 7328, Revised Civil Statutes of Texas, 1925, as amended, and not redeemed or resold as provided in Article 7328, the land shall be withdrawn from the market and shall be held, protected, and administered by the board as state forest; and the board may manage, use, and improve the pine forest land as fully and to the same extent as in the case of other forest land held by it in accordance with the law. Forest land, as used in this section, includes all land on which is growing pine timber of any material value and all cutover pine timberland which may reasonably be expected to produce, by reason of natural or other methods of reforestation, another growth of pine timber of any material value. Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3211, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.112. SOUTH CENTRAL INTERSTATE FOREST FIRE PROTECTION COMPACT. The South Central Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact has been ratified by the states of Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Oklahoma. The text of the compact is set out in Section 88.116 of this code, and an authenticated copy is on file in the office of the secretary of state.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3212, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.113. COMPACT ADMINISTRATOR. The director of the Texas Forest Service shall act as compact administrator for the State of Texas and represent Texas in the South Central Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3212, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.114. ADVISORY COMMITTEE. The advisory committee referred to in Article III of the compact shall be composed of four members selected as follows: One member shall be named from the membership of the Senate of the State of Texas by the Lieutenant Governor; one member shall be named from the membership of the

House of Representatives of the State of Texas by the Speaker; and two members shall be appointed by the governor, one of whom shall be selected from among the persons who comprise the board of directors of The Texas A & M University System, and one of whom shall be a person associated with forestry or a forest products industry.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3212, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.115. LEGISLATIVE INTENT. It is the intent of the Legislature of the State of Texas, in ratifying the South Central Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact, that this compact is and shall be a joint program of the member states and that representatives of the United States government shall participate in compact meetings or in other activities under the compact only in the manner and to the extent authorized by the representatives of the member states, appointed pursuant to the terms of this compact. Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3212, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.116. TEXT OF COMPACT. The South Central Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact reads as follows:

SOUTH CENTRAL INTERSTATE FOREST FIRE PROTECTION COMPACT

ARTICLE I.

The purpose of this compact is to promote effective prevention and control of forest fires in the South Central region of the United States by the development of integrated forest fire plans, by the maintenance of adequate forest fire fighting services by the member States, by providing for mutual aid in fighting forest fires among the compacting States of the region and with States which are party to other Regional Forest Fire Protection compacts or agreements, and for more adequate forest development.

ARTICLE II.

This compact shall become operative immediately as to those States ratifying it whenever any two or more of the States of Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas which are contiguous have ratified it and Congress has given consent thereto. Any State not mentioned in this article which is contiguous with any

member State may become a party to this compact, subject to approval by the legislature of each of the member States.

ARTICLE III.

In each State, the State Forester or officer holding the equivalent position who is responsible for forest fire control shall act as compact administrator for that State and shall consult with like officials of the other member States and shall implement cooperation between such States in forest fire prevention and control.

The compact administrators of the member States shall organize to coordinate the services of the member States and provide administrative integration in carrying out the purposes of this compact.

There shall be established an advisory committee of legislators, representatives of the Board of Directors of the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College System, and forestry or forest products industries representatives, which shall meet from time to time with the compact administrators. Each member State shall name one member of the Senate and one member of the House of Representatives, and the Governor of each member State shall appoint one representative who shall be associated with forestry or forest products industries, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College System, to comprise the membership of the advisory committee. Action shall be taken by a majority of the compacting States, and each State shall be entitled to one vote.

The compact administrators shall formulate and, in accordance with need, from time to time, revise a regional forest fire plan for the member States.

It shall be the duty of each member State to formulate and put in effect a forest fire plan for that State and take such measures as may be necessary to integrate such forest fire plan with the regional forest fire plan formulated by the compact administrators.

ARTICLE IV.

Whenever the State forest fire control agency of a member State requests aid from the State forest fire control agency of any other member State in combating, controlling or preventing forest

fires, it shall be the duty of the State forest fire control agency of that State to render all possible aid to the requesting agency which is consonant with the maintenance of protection at home.

ARTICLE V.

Whenever the forces of any member State are rendering outside aid pursuant to the request of another member State under this compact, the employees of such State shall, under the direction of the officers of the State to which they are rendering aid, have the same powers (except the power of arrest), duties, rights, privileges and immunities as comparable employees of the State to which they are rendering aid.

No member State or its officers or employees rendering outside aid pursuant to this compact shall be liable on account of any act or omission on the part of such forces while so engaged, or on account of the maintenance or use of any equipment or supplies in connection therewith; provided, that nothing herein shall be construed as relieving any person from liability for his own negligent act or omission, or as imposing liability for such negligent act or omission upon any State.

All liability, except as otherwise provided herein, that may arise either under the laws of the requesting State or under the laws of the aiding State or under the laws of a third State on account of or in connection with a request for aid, shall be assumed and borne by the requesting State.

Any member State rendering outside aid pursuant to this compact shall be reimbursed by the member State receiving such aid for any loss or damage to, or expense incurred in the operation of any equipment answering a request for aid, and for the cost of all materials, transportation, wages, salaries and maintenance of employees and equipment incurred in connection with such request; provided, that nothing herein contained shall prevent any assisting member State from assuming such loss, damage, expense or other cost or from loaning such equipment or from donating such service to the receiving member State without charge or cost.

Each member State shall provide for the payment of compensation and death benefits to injured employees and the representatives of deceased employees in case employees sustain

injuries or are killed while rendering outside aid pursuant to this compact, in the same manner and on the same terms as if the injury or death were sustained within such State.

For the purposes of this compact the term "employee" shall include any volunteer or auxiliary legally included within the forest fire fighting forces of the aiding State under the laws thereof.

The compact administrators shall formulate procedures for claims and reimbursement under the provisions of this article, in accordance with the laws of the member States.

ARTICLE VI.

Ratification of this compact shall not be construed to affect any existing statute so as to authorize or permit curtailment or diminution of the forest fire fighting forces, equipment, services or facilities of any member State.

Nothing in this compact shall be construed to limit or restrict the powers of any State ratifying the same to provide for the prevention, control and extinguishment of forest fires, or to prohibit the enactment or enforcement of State laws, rules or regulations intended to aid in such prevention, control and extinguishment in such State.

Nothing in this compact shall be construed to affect any existing or future cooperative relationship or arrangement between the United States Forest Service and a member State or States.

ARTICLE VII.

The compact administrators may request the United States Forest Service to act as the primary research and coordinating agency of the South Central Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact in cooperation with the appropriate agencies in each State, and the United States Forest Service may accept the initial responsibility in preparing and presenting to the compact administrators its recommendations with respect to the regional fire plan. Representatives of the United States Forest Service may attend meetings of the compact administrators.

ARTICLE VIII.

The provisions of Articles IV and V of this compact which relate to mutual aid in combating, controlling or preventing forest

fires shall be operative as between any State party to this compact and any other State which is party to a regional forest fire protection compact in another region; provided, that the Legislature of such other State shall have given its assent to such mutual aid provisions of this compact.

ARTICLE IX.

This compact shall continue in force and remain binding on each State ratifying it until the legislature or the Governor of such State takes action to withdraw therefrom. Such action shall not be effective until six months after notice thereof has been sent by the chief executive of the State desiring to withdraw to the chief executives of all States then parties to the compact.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3213, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.117. STATEWIDE FIRE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT. (a) The statewide fire contingency account is established as an account in the general revenue fund.

(b) The governor, the board, and the director may accept gifts and grants, including federal grants, and other federal assistance for deposit into the account. This program will be funded through private gifts, grants, or assistance.

(c) Money in the account may be used only to:

(1) develop and deploy fire overhead management teams;

(2) pay the direct costs of using Texas Forest Service equipment and personnel to support local fire-fighting forces in the suppression of fires during wildfire emergencies or threatened wildfire emergencies;

(3) pay the direct costs of local fire-fighting forces that are mobilized to respond to wildfire emergencies or threatened wildfire emergencies in aid of another fire-fighting force;

(4) pay for any expenses incurred by the Texas Forest Service, or otherwise by the state, when fires are combatted under the South Central Interstate Forest Fire Prevention Compact or with the assistance of the federal forest service; and

(5) pay for any other expenses that the director is required to pay from this account under federal law.

(d) Money in the account may not be used or transferred from the account except for the purposes prescribed by Subsection (c) of this section or as required by Subsection (e) of this section.

(e) Any unobligated amount over \$1,000,000 remaining in the account on August 31 of each year shall be transferred into the undedicated portion of the general revenue fund except as prohibited by other law.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 209, Sec. 2, eff. May 19, 1993.

Sec. 88.118. STATEWIDE FIRE COORDINATION CENTER. (a) The director shall establish a statewide fire coordination center.

(b) The center may provide continuous dispatching services for wildfire control.

(c) The center shall provide a central location for statewide:

(1) wildfire monitoring;

(2) coordination of the response to each major or potentially major wildfire in the state, with the coordination function including a direct liaison with the state emergency operating center; and

(3) assistance to fire-fighting forces in obtaining the transfer of needed and available resources.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 209, Sec. 2, eff. May 19, 1993.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 7, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.119. REGIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATORS. (a) The director shall divide the state into six wildfire control regions to coordinate wildfire control. The boundaries of the regions must be the same as existing Department of Public Safety regions that include state disaster district boundaries to the extent that the director determines that the same boundaries are practical.

(b) The director shall employ and assign a regional wildfire coordinator to each fire control region.

(c) Each regional wildfire coordinator shall, with respect to the coordinator's region:

(1) train, prepare, and coordinate fire fighters to respond to wildfire incidents locally, regionally, and statewide;

(2) inform the statewide coordination center of regional wildfire loads and of additional resources that may be required to handle a fire load;

(3) communicate as necessary with appropriate federal officials;

(4) assist and promote the development of mutual aid agreements among fire-fighting forces;

(5) develop wildfire strike teams and overhead strike teams;

(6) coordinate and assess the need for wildfire training;

(7) coordinate the rural community fire protection program;

(8) coordinate response activities through the appropriate state disaster district; and

(9) evaluate and acquire excess federal equipment and other property for use in the region.

(d) The director shall acquire and assign to each wildfire control region a regional command post that has the capability to assist in the management of wildfires and other disasters, including disasters not related to fire. The director and the director's designees shall determine when the regional command post may be used by personnel under the control of the director and when the regional command post may be used by local fire-fighting forces or other emergency response personnel. Each regional command post shall include mobile communications equipment, including a radio repeater and a supply of other necessary radio equipment.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 209, Sec. 2, eff. May 19, 1993.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 8, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.120. WILDFIRE TRAINING. The Texas Forest Service is the lead agency of the state for providing and coordinating training in fighting wildfires.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 209, Sec. 2, eff. May 19, 1993.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 9, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.122. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAMS. (a) The Texas Forest Service may support the state's all-hazard response operations by:

(1) providing incident management training to Texas Forest Service personnel and other state, local, and volunteer responders to develop and enhance the all-hazard response capability of this state; and

(2) maintaining incident management teams to respond to all-hazard events, including natural, man-made, and planned events.

(b) An incident management team maintained under this section may consist of Texas Forest Service employees and other state, local, and volunteer responders.

(c) The Texas Forest Service may mobilize an incident management team for a wildfire response operation.

(d) Under the direction of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, the Texas Forest Service may mobilize an incident management team to provide incident support for state, disaster district, or local jurisdiction operations.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.123. VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT ASSISTANCE. (a) In this section:

(1) "Partially paid fire department" means a fire department operated by its members, some of whom are volunteers and some of whom are paid.

(2) "Volunteer fire department" means a fire department operated by its members, including a partially paid fire department, that is operated on a not-for-profit basis.

(3) "Volunteer firefighter" means a member of a volunteer fire department.

(b) The director may establish guidelines within which local volunteer fire departments may assist the Texas Forest Service in responding to a wildfire after other local firefighting resources have been exhausted.

(c) To the extent that resources are available, the Texas Forest Service may:

(1) compensate a volunteer firefighter or a volunteer fire department for labor and expenses related to the assistance provided by the firefighter or department under Subsection (b); and

(2) reimburse a volunteer fire department for equipment provided by the department under Subsection (b).

(d) The director shall determine:

(1) the rate at which a volunteer firefighter or a volunteer fire department may be compensated or reimbursed under this section;

(2) the types of labor and expenses for which a volunteer firefighter or a volunteer fire department may be compensated under this section;

(3) the types of equipment for which a volunteer fire department may be reimbursed under this section; and

(4) the minimum qualifications a volunteer firefighter must meet in order to be compensated under this section, which may include certification under a program administered by:

(A) the State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas; or

(B) the Texas Forest Service according to standards determined by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group.

(e) A volunteer firefighter who receives compensation under this section is not subject to the certification requirements of Subchapter B, Chapter 419, Government Code.

(f) The Texas Forest Service may request reimbursement from the legislature for a payment made to a volunteer firefighter or a volunteer fire department under this section.

(g) The Texas Forest Service may issue National Wildfire Coordinating Group certification to a volunteer firefighter under terms determined by the director.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.124. WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN. (a) The Texas Forest Service shall hold public meetings to develop and regularly update a wildfire protection plan. At a minimum, the plan must:

(1) define the Texas Forest Service's role in managing wildfires and supporting local fire department responses, and the manner in which a community may engage the Texas Forest Service on issues related to wildfires;

(2) describe in detail the role of volunteer fire departments in wildfire response, including any role relating to guidelines established by the director under Section 88.123;

(3) describe the expected revenue, expenditures, staffing, and future funding necessary to implement and sustain the plan;

(4) estimate the expected savings resulting from the plan's implementation;

(5) provide performance measures by which the plan's success may be evaluated;

(6) describe the Texas Forest Service's role in conducting prescribed burns and assess statewide efforts to conduct those burns;

(7) identify, analyze, and make recommendations regarding wildfire trends and issues; and

(8) address any other matter determined to be relevant by the director.

(b) The Texas Forest Service shall submit its most recent wildfire protection plan together with the service's legislative appropriations request to:

(1) the lieutenant governor;

(2) the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(3) the appropriate standing legislative committees having jurisdiction over wildfire issues.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.125. COST-EFFECTIVE USE OF RESOURCES. In determining the appropriate wildfire response, the Texas Forest Service shall use the most cost-effective combination of volunteer firefighters, temporary employees of the Texas Forest Service, and out-of-state personnel and equipment available.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 52 (S.B. 646), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2011.

SUBCHAPTER C. THE TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

Sec. 88.201. PURPOSES. There shall be established, at places in the state the board of directors deems proper, experiment stations for the purpose of making experiments and conducting investigations in the planting and growing of agricultural and horticultural crops and soils, and the breeding, feeding and fattening of livestock for slaughter.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3215, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.202. MAIN STATE EXPERIMENT STATION. The experiment station located at College Station, which is in part supported by the federal government, shall remain there as a permanent institution. It shall be known as the Main State Experiment Station and shall be under the supervision of the board of directors. The board may accept from the federal government any aid in its support that may be provided by Congress.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3216, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.203. SUBSTATIONS. (a) The board may:

(1) establish experiment substations at places in this state it deems proper;

(2) abandon or discontinue any substation which may become undesirable for experiment purposes, and if deemed necessary establish others in their stead at places it deems advisable; and

(3) sell any land or other state property used in the operation of an experiment station when abandoned and apply the

proceeds of the sale to the purchase of other land and property for the establishment of experiment stations.

(b) The board shall exercise a general supervision and direction over substations established under this subchapter. Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3216, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.204. SALE OF STATIONS. If property used in the operation of a station is sold, the title to the property shall not pass from this state until a deed of conveyance is made to the purchaser, duly signed by the governor and attested by the secretary of state under the state seal. All funds received from the sale of station lands or property shall be deposited in the state treasury and shall be paid out in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3216, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 300, Sec. 29, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.

Sec. 88.205. SALE OF CROPS. Proceeds from the sale, barter, or exchange of crops raised on any experiment station shall be applied to defray the expenses of operating the station.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3216, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.206. DONATIONS; LEASES. (a) The board may accept and receive donations of money and property when given to be used in connection with any experiment work authorized by this subchapter.

(b) In the location of any experiment station, the board may take into consideration and receive any donation of money, land, or other property to be used in the operation, equipment, or management of the station; and for experiment work may lease any land that in its judgment may be necessary for any of the purposes named in this subchapter.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3216, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.207. EXPENSES; PER DIEM. The necessary traveling expenses of the members of the board and those of the director and his assistants shall be paid out of the funds appropriated by this state for the maintenance and support of the experiment stations. In addition to actual traveling expenses, each member of the board, when traveling on the official business of the stations, shall be paid \$5 per day while actually engaged in the discharge of his duties.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3216, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.208. INSPECTIONS. The board shall visit the stations once a year and shall make criticisms to the director and his assistants that it deems expedient and necessary.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3217, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.209. DIRECTOR. (a) The main station and the substations are under the supervision, control, management, and direction of the director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station at College Station. The director shall reside at College Station.

(b) The board may pay a part of the director's salary from money appropriated by the Legislature for the maintenance and support of the experiment stations in the proportion that in its judgment is just and proper, taking into consideration the division of his time between the main station and the substations and the sum appropriated for the purpose by the federal government.

(c) The director may employ the assistants and labor and may purchase the livestock, farming implements, tools, seed, and other materials and supplies that he deems necessary for the successful management of any or all of the experiment stations, subject to the approval of the board.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3217, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.211. BULLETIN. The director shall periodically

issue and circulate among the farmers and livestock raisers of Texas printed bulletins showing the results of the experiments and the results accomplished and the progress made in the improvement of the agricultural and livestock interests of this state. The bulletins shall be mailed to all persons who desire them. The director shall invite the cooperation of persons engaged in those industries and shall give them advice when requested with reference to the management and cultivation of their farms and the care, management, and feeding of their stock.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3217, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.212. DISBURSEMENTS. Before warrants are issued by the comptroller in payment of state experiment station accounts, vouchers covering them shall be audited and signed by the director or an assistant designated by him, in writing, for that purpose, and also by a member of the board.

Acts 1971, 62nd Leg., p. 3217, ch. 1024, art. 1, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1971.

Sec. 88.213. AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH PRODUCTS. The board of regents of The Texas A&M University System shall generate revenues through agreements establishing equitable interests, royalties, and patent rights relating to releases of agricultural research products by the Texas agricultural experiment station when economically feasible.

Added by Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 239, Sec. 69, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 88.215. FIRE ANT RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT ADVISORY COMMITTEE; OTHER AGENCIES. (a) The Fire Ant Research and Management Account Advisory Committee is established as an advisory committee within the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

(b) The advisory committee consists of 11 members appointed as follows:

(1) one representative of Texas A & M University appointed by the director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station;

(2) one representative of Texas Tech University appointed by the dean of the College of Agriculture of Texas Tech University;

(3) one representative of The University of Texas appointed by the vice president for research of The University of Texas System;

(4) one representative of the Department of Agriculture appointed by the commissioner of agriculture;

(5) one representative of the Parks and Wildlife Department appointed by the director of the department;

(6) one representative of the Public Utility Commission of Texas appointed by the executive director of the commission;

(7) one representative of municipal governments appointed by the governor;

(8) one representative of the general public appointed by the governor;

(9) one representative of the agribusiness industry appointed by the governor;

(10) one representative of the chemical industry appointed by the Texas Chemical Council; and

(11) one representative of the oil and gas industry appointed by the Texas Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association.

(c) The members of the committee serve staggered two-year terms, with the terms of the members described by Subsections (b)(1)-(5) expiring on February 1 of each odd-numbered year and the terms of the other members expiring on February 1 of each even-numbered year. A member may serve more than one term.

(d) The members of the advisory committee shall elect a member of the committee to serve as presiding officer for a term of two years.

(e) The advisory committee shall meet not less than two times each year.

(f) The advisory committee may adopt rules for the advisory committee's internal procedures.

(g) The administrative expenses of the advisory committee may not exceed 20 percent of the total amount of funds available for

expenditure by the advisory committee.

(h) Members of the advisory committee are not entitled to compensation for service on the advisory committee. A member of the advisory committee who represents a university or state agency may receive reimbursement for travel expenses from the university or agency the member represents. A member of the advisory committee who does not represent a university or state agency shall pay the member's own expenses.

(i) The advisory committee shall:

(1) advise, assist, and direct the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in conducting fire ant research;

(2) encourage communication with other states that are infested with fire ants; and

(3) establish a framework for more efficient management of fire ant infestation problems.

(j) The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station shall:

(1) administer the fire ant basic research program under Section [77.022](#), Agriculture Code;

(2) solicit, distribute, and create competitive grant and other funding programs for fire ant research;

(3) engage in activities necessary to maximize funding received from the federal government for management of fire ants and research regarding fire ants; and

(4) with the advice of the advisory committee, plan a program of research regarding fire ants.

(k) The Texas Agricultural Extension Service shall:

(1) provide educational programs regarding fire ant infestation and treatment; and

(2) conduct public awareness programs regarding fire ant infestation and treatment through the use of the media, publications, demonstrations, and other means of public education.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 218, Sec. 1, eff. May 23, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 890 (H.B. [2458](#)), Sec. 2.01, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.216. AGRICULTURE AND WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND

MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE; OTHER AGENCIES. (a) The Agriculture and Wildlife Research and Management Advisory Committee is an advisory committee of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and is composed of:

(1) one representative of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, appointed by the director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station;

(2) one representative of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, appointed by the director of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service;

(3) one representative of Texas Tech University, appointed by the dean of the College of Agriculture of Texas Tech University;

(4) one representative of The University of Texas at Austin, appointed by the vice president for research of The University of Texas System;

(5) one representative of the Department of Agriculture, appointed by the commissioner of agriculture;

(6) one representative of the Parks and Wildlife Department, appointed by the director of the department;

(7) one representative of the Texas Water Development Board, appointed by the executive administrator of the board;

(8) one representative of county government, appointed by the governor;

(9) one representative of the general public, appointed by the governor;

(10) one representative of the agribusiness industry, appointed by the governor;

(11) one representative of environmental interests, appointed by the governor;

(12) one representative of wildlife interests, appointed by the governor; and

(13) one representative of the Texas rice industry, appointed by the governor.

(b) The members of the committee serve staggered two-year terms, with the terms of the members appointed under Subsections (a)(1)-(6) expiring on February 1 of each odd-numbered year and the

terms of the remaining members expiring on February 1 of each even-numbered year.

(c) The members of the committee shall select a presiding officer who shall serve for a term of two years.

(d) The advisory committee shall meet not less than two times each year.

(e) The administrative expenses of the advisory committee may not exceed 20 percent of the total amount of funds available for expenditure by the advisory committee.

(f) Members of the advisory committee are not entitled to compensation for service on the advisory committee or reimbursement for travel expenses, except that a member who represents a university or state agency may receive any reimbursement for travel expenses to which the member is otherwise entitled from the university or agency.

(g) The advisory committee shall:

(1) assist the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in conducting agriculture and wildlife research;

(2) encourage communication with states that are interested in agriculture, wildlife, and water issues; and

(3) establish a plan for more efficient management of water resources related to wildlife habitats and agriculture production in the Gulf Coast Region.

(h) The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station shall:

(1) administer an agriculture and wildlife research program;

(2) solicit grants and create funding programs for agriculture and wildlife research;

(3) engage in activities designed to maximize funding from the federal government for agriculture and wildlife research and management; and

(4) with the advice of the advisory committee, plan a program of research regarding agriculture production and its relationship with water use and wildlife habitats.

(i) The Texas Agricultural Extension Service shall:

(1) provide educational programs relating to agriculture production, water use, and wildlife habitats; and

(2) conduct public awareness programs relating to the interaction of agriculture production, water use, and wildlife habitats through the use of mass communications media, publications, demonstrations, and other means of public education. Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1074, Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 1999. Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 161 (S.B. 1093), Sec. 4.012, eff. September 1, 2013.

SUBCHAPTER D. TEXAS TASK FORCE 1

Sec. 88.301. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Local government employee member" means a member employed by a local government as defined by Section 102.001, Civil Practice and Remedies Code.

(2) "Member" means an individual, other than an employee of The Texas A&M University System, who has been officially designated as a member of Texas Task Force 1.

(3) "Nongovernment member" means a member who is not a state employee member, a local government employee member, or an employee of The Texas A&M University System.

(4) "State employee member" means a member employed by an agency of the state other than a component of The Texas A&M University System.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 644, Sec. 1, eff. June 20, 2003.

Sec. 88.302. TEXAS TASK FORCE 1. Texas Task Force 1 is a program of the Texas Engineering Extension Service providing training and responding to assist in search, rescue, and recovery efforts following natural or man-made disasters.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 644, Sec. 1, eff. June 20, 2003.

Sec. 88.303. WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE COVERAGE. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, during any period in which Texas Task Force 1 is activated by the Texas Division of Emergency Management, or during any training session sponsored or sanctioned by Texas Task Force 1, a participating nongovernment member or

local government employee member is included in the coverage provided under Chapter 501, Labor Code, in the same manner as an employee, as defined by Section 501.001, Labor Code.

(b) Service with Texas Task Force 1 by a state employee member who is activated is considered to be in the course and scope of the employee's regular employment with the state.

(c) Service with Texas Task Force 1 by an employee of The Texas A&M University System is considered to be in the course and scope of the employee's regular employment with The Texas A&M University System.

(d) Notwithstanding Section 412.0123, Labor Code, as added by Chapter 1098, Acts of the 75th Legislature, Regular Session, 1997, the Texas Division of Emergency Management shall reimburse the State Office of Risk Management for the actual medical and indemnity benefits paid on behalf of a covered member of Texas Task Force 1 at the beginning of the next state fiscal year occurring after the date the benefits are paid.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 644, Sec. 1, eff. June 20, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1146 (H.B. 2730), Sec. 2B.02, eff. September 1, 2009.

SUBCHAPTER E. TEXAS ENGINEERING EXPERIMENT STATION

Sec. 88.500. ESTABLISHMENT. The Texas Engineering Experiment Station is a part of The Texas A&M University System under the management and control of the board of regents of The Texas A&M University System.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 204, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 88.501. PURPOSE. (a) The Texas Engineering Experiment Station serves as a state-supported engineering research and development agency.

(b) It is the purpose of the agency to foster innovations in research, education, and technology that support and aid the business and industrial communities and enhance the economic development of the state and nation.

(c) In order to carry out its purposes, the agency may enter into contracts and agreements with other entities.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 204, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 88.502. ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS. In addition to any other authority which it may possess, the board of regents is authorized to accept funds from both public and private sources, in addition to any amounts which shall be appropriated by the legislature for the use of any program or division of the agency.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 204, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 88.503. SPATIAL REFERENCE CENTER. (a) The board may create and operate a spatial reference center at Texas A&M University--Corpus Christi for the purpose of:

(1) facilitating the federal height modernization project for the state;

(2) conducting basic and applied research regarding elevation and geodetic and vertical datums in the state;

(3) collecting geodetic data for state mapping and control; and

(4) establishing and maintaining an official digital spatial reference system for the state, in coordination with:

(A) the United States National Geodetic Survey;

(B) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

(C) the Texas Water Development Board.

(b) The board shall adopt rules relating to the operation of the spatial reference center.

(c) The spatial reference center may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and appropriations for the purposes of this section.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1323 (S.B. 1436), Sec. 13, eff. September 1, 2007.

SUBCHAPTER F. EQUINE RESEARCH

Sec. 88.521. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) Repealed by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522,

Sec. 27(1), eff. September 1, 2011.

(2) "Director" means the executive director of Texas AgriLife Research, formerly known as the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

(3) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003 of this code.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 386, Sec. 73, eff. Aug. 26, 1991.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522 (H.B. 2271), Sec. 21, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522 (H.B. 2271), Sec. 27(1), eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.522. ACCOUNT. (a) A special account known as the equine research account is created in the general revenue fund. Money in the account may be used only for the purposes described in this subchapter.

(b) The director shall administer the account through established procedures of Texas AgriLife Research, formerly known as the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

(c) The comptroller shall periodically transfer the amounts specified by Sections 6.08(f) and (h), Texas Racing Act (Article 179e, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes), to the account.

(d) The director may accept gifts and grants for deposit into the account.

(e) The transactions of the director with respect to the account are subject to audit by the state auditor in accordance with Chapter 321, Government Code.

(f) Not more than 10 percent of the account may be spent each year on the cost incurred in the operation or administration of the account.

(g) All money received by the account under this chapter is subject to Subchapter F, Chapter 404, Government Code.

(h) Sections 403.094 and 403.095, Government Code, do not apply to the account.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 386, Sec. 73, eff. Aug. 26, 1991.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 110, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1,

1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522 (H.B. [2271](#)), Sec. 22, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.525. GRANTS. (a) To be eligible for a grant under this subchapter, the applicant must be affiliated with an institution of higher education.

(a-1) In awarding grants under this section, the director shall comply with the conflict of interest provisions of The Texas A&M University System.

(b) The director shall develop annually a request for proposals for equine research grants. Each proposal received may be evaluated by a peer review committee appointed by the director and subject matter experts as necessary to evaluate the proposal. The peer review committee shall consider the applicant's research capacity and the relevance and scientific merit of the proposal and make recommendations to the director.

(b-1) The director may award a grant to an applicant who proposes to commingle grant money awarded under this section with other sources of funding or proposes to conduct research that includes equine research.

(c) Repealed by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522, Sec. 27(7), eff. September 1, 2011.

(d) A person shall use a grant awarded under this subchapter to defray the direct costs of the approved research project.

(e) A person may not use a grant awarded under this subchapter to:

(1) replace funds that the applicant would have otherwise received from another source; or

(2) defray operating costs of an institution of higher education that are the institution's prior responsibility.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 386, Sec. 73, eff. Aug. 26, 1991.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522 (H.B. [2271](#)), Sec. 23, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522 (H.B. [2271](#)), Sec. 27(7),

eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 88.526. REPORTING. (a) The director shall prepare an annual report on equine research funded under this subchapter. The director shall distribute the report to members of the Texas horse racing industry. The director shall make copies of the report available to interested parties.

(b) The director may prepare and distribute other publications regarding equine research as the director finds appropriate.

(c) The director shall, at least annually, consult with the Texas Racing Commission on the use of the account and the impact of equine research funded by the account.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 386, Sec. 73, eff. Aug. 26, 1991.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 110, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522 (H.B. 2271), Sec. 24, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1203 (S.B. 1455), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 88.527. CONFERENCE. Texas AgriLife Research shall conduct an annual conference on equine research. Money from the equine research account shall be used to defray the costs of the conference. The conference must be designed to bring to the attention of the Texas horse racing industry the latest research results and technological developments in equine research. The director shall make the report created under Section 88.526 available at the conference.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 386, Sec. 73, eff. Aug. 26, 1991.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 522 (H.B. 2271), Sec. 25, eff. September 1, 2011.

SUBCHAPTER G. TEXAS CENTER FOR ADULT LITERACY AND LEARNING

Sec. 88.541. DUTIES OF TEXAS CENTER FOR ADULT LITERACY AND LEARNING. (a) The Texas Center for Adult Literacy and Learning shall evaluate instructional videotapes or similar recorded materials generally available for use in providing adult literacy instruction and from time to time shall publish a guide describing and evaluating those videotapes and materials. The center shall encourage cable companies and other appropriate entities to use the guide in selecting materials to use in broadcasting and may take other action to promote the broadcast or dissemination of workbooks and other materials the center considers effective in teaching adult literacy.

(b) The center shall develop voluntary standards for the curriculum and workbooks and other materials used in adult literacy programs, including programs for teaching English as a second language. To develop the standards, the center shall organize an advisory group and shall encourage the participation of major providers of adult literacy programs in this state, including private nonprofit organizations, institutions of education, and correctional facilities. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall designate an employee of the department to participate in the initial development of the standards.

(c) In connection with the standards developed under Subsection (b), the center shall develop workbooks and other materials to be used by teachers and students in adult literacy programs to track the progress of the student and to allow the student to understand and maintain a record of the student's progress and proficiency.

(d) The center shall develop and update as necessary informational brochures, promotional posters, workbooks, or similar materials suitable for distribution to state employees or the general public describing the need for adult literacy and education services in this state and encouraging qualified persons to support or volunteer to assist programs that provide those services. As the center determines is appropriate, the center may provide samples of those workbooks and other materials to the governing boards or chief executive officers of state agencies, including institutions of higher education, and to other employers

and institutions in this state and shall encourage those entities to distribute or make available the workbooks and other materials to their employees.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 655, Sec. 7.03, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

SUBCHAPTER H. CENTER FOR PORTS AND WATERWAYS

Sec. 88.601. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Center" means the Center for Ports and Waterways.

(2) "Consortium" means Lamar University, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University at Galveston, The University of Texas at Brownsville, Texas A&M University, Texas Transportation Institute, and the Center for Transportation Research at The University of Texas at Austin.

(3) "Director" means the director of the Center for Ports and Waterways.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.602. ESTABLISHMENT. The Center for Ports and Waterways is established as a component of the Texas Transportation Institute, a component of The Texas A&M University System. The operating budget, staffing, and activities of the center shall be approved by the board of regents of The Texas A&M University System. Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.603. PURPOSE. The center shall carry out a program of research, education, and technology transfer to support the state's role in the inland waterway and port system in Texas.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.604. PROGRAM. The program of the center shall be authorized to include:

(1) the development and testing of new marine and maritime technologies and supporting their implementation;

(2) aiding transportation planners to better prepare for future inland and coastal waterway transportation needs;

(3) studying complex policy issues and assisting the state in defining roles of marine and intermodal transportation for sustainable development;

(4) conducting research and studies that foster productivity and competitiveness in the maritime/marine industry;

(5) fostering public awareness of the importance of ports and waterways to the economy of Texas;

(6) transferring knowledge and technology to industry, state and local governments, and the public;

(7) establishing programs and partnerships with public or private entities to develop and implement new policies, technology, strategies, relationships, and sources of funding;

(8) studying environmental conflicts, complements, and risks associated with water transportation; and

(9) other services consistent with the purpose of the program.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.605. DIRECTOR. The center is under the supervision and direction of the director and shall be operated and managed as a joint program between the consortium. The director of the center is under the supervision and direction of the Director of the Texas Transportation Institute.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.606. STEERING COMMITTEE. (a) The steering committee is appointed by the Director of the Texas Transportation Institute and shall include a representative of each member of the consortium and others. The president or the director of each consortium member shall recommend an individual to serve as a member of the steering committee.

(b) The steering committee is established to advise and make recommendations to the director on the operations and activities of the center.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.607. MARITIME/MARINE INDUSTRY COUNCIL. (a) The

Maritime/Marine Industry Council is composed of at least nine persons appointed by the Director of the Texas Transportation Institute with at least the following representation:

(1) one member shall be the President of the Texas Waterway Operators or the president's designated representative;

(2) one member shall be the President of the Texas Ports Association or the president's designated representative;

(3) four members shall be representatives from Texas ports to be selected by the membership of the Texas Ports Association;

(4) three members shall be representatives from the barge industry;

(5) the director of the center shall be an ex officio member;

(6) a representative from the Texas Department of Transportation designated by the Texas Department of Transportation shall be an ex officio member; and

(7) two registered professional engineers having relevant marine experience shall be ex officio members.

(b) The Maritime/Marine Industry Council shall make program priority recommendations to the director and serve as a resource group for the center.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.608. FUNDING. The center is authorized to receive state appropriated funds as deemed appropriate by the legislature.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.609. GIFTS AND GRANTS. The center shall seek and may receive gifts and grants from federal sources, foundations, individuals, and other sources for the benefit of the center.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

Sec. 88.610. CONTRACTS. The center is authorized to enter into interagency contracts and agreements and to contract with local, state, county, federal, and private sources for work under the center's programs.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 292, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1995.

SUBCHAPTER I. RURAL VETERINARIAN INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Sec. 88.621. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "College" means The Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine.

(2) "Committee" means the rural veterinarian incentive program committee.

(3) "Eligible participant" means a person eligible to participate in the program under Section 88.624.

(4) "Fund" means the rural veterinarian incentive fund.

(5) "Program" means the rural veterinarian incentive program established by this subchapter.

(6) "Rural county" means a county with a population of less than 50,000.

(7) "University" means Texas A&M University.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 435, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1999.

Sec. 88.622. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM. The university shall administer the program in accordance with the rules adopted by the committee.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 435, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1999.

Sec. 88.623. RURAL VETERINARIAN INCENTIVE PROGRAM COMMITTEE; RULES. (a) The rural veterinarian incentive program committee consists of:

(1) the executive director of the Texas Animal Health Commission, or the executive director's designee;

(2) the executive director of the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, or the executive director's designee;

(3) the dean of the college;

(4) a veterinarian with a mixed animal practice appointed by the board of regents of The Texas A&M University System; and

(5) a veterinarian with a large animal practice appointed by the board of regents of The Texas A&M University System.

(b) The dean of the college serves as the presiding officer of the committee.

(c) An appointed member of the committee serves a term of two years.

(d) The committee shall adopt rules:

(1) establishing criteria to determine whether a person is an eligible participant as the committee considers reasonable, including the person's:

(A) minimum grade point average; and

(B) financial need;

(2) providing for the distribution of money from the fund for the program;

(3) establishing the criteria necessary for a community or political subdivision in a rural county to qualify as a student sponsor under Section 88.625;

(4) governing agreements of financial support between a rural sponsor and an eligible student; and

(5) establishing other procedures necessary to administer the program.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 435, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1999.

Sec. 88.624. ELIGIBLE VETERINARY STUDENT OR GRADUATE. A person is eligible to participate in the program only if the person:

(1) is enrolled as a student of the college or applies to participate in the program on or before the first anniversary of the date the person graduates from the college;

(2) will receive or has received from a student loan at least 50 percent of the funds for tuition and fees for one or more academic years while enrolled in the college; and

(3) meets any additional qualifications adopted by the committee.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 435, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1999.

Sec. 88.625. RURAL SPONSORS; AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE

FINANCIAL SUPPORT. (a) A community or political subdivision located in a rural county that qualifies under the rules of the committee may become a sponsor of an eligible participant and may provide financial support to the eligible participant under the program.

(b) To participate as a sponsor in the program, the community or political subdivision must enter into an agreement with the eligible participant to provide financial support to the eligible participant in an amount not less than the tuition and fees required for a full academic year for a student enrolled in the college in exchange for the eligible participant's agreement to practice veterinary medicine in the sponsoring community or political subdivision.

(c) Financial support under this section:

(1) may be provided in whole or part by a grant, scholarship, or funds provided by a private foundation; and

(2) shall be deposited in the fund for distribution to the eligible participant by the university.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 435, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1999.

Sec. 88.626. FINANCIAL SUPPORT; COMMITMENT TO PRACTICE IN RURAL COUNTY. (a) To participate in the program, an eligible participant must enter into an agreement with the university to practice veterinary medicine in a rural county for one calendar year for each academic year for which the student receives financial support under the program.

(b) The financial support received by an eligible participant under this subchapter must be used to retire student loan debt or to pay tuition and fees to the university while the eligible participant is enrolled in the college.

(c) Financial support from the fund shall be awarded in the form of grants.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 435, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1999.

Sec. 88.627. RURAL VETERINARIAN INCENTIVE FUND. (a) The rural veterinarian incentive fund is a special fund in the state treasury outside the general revenue fund.

(b) The fund consists of legislative appropriations for purposes of the program, gifts, grants, donations, the market value of in-kind contributions, and other sources of revenue deposited to the credit of the fund by the university.

(c) The fund shall be administered by the university in accordance with rules adopted by the committee. The university may use a portion of the money deposited to the credit of the fund, not to exceed 10 percent of that amount, for the administration of the program.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 435, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1999.

SUBCHAPTER I-1. TEXAS VETERINARY MEDICAL DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

Sec. 88.701. TEXAS VETERINARY MEDICAL DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY. The Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory is a state agency under the jurisdiction and supervision of the board. Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.702. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND EMPLOYEES. (a) The board shall staff the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory with an executive director and other employees necessary for the agency to properly function.

(b) The executive director and employees are eligible to participate in the retirement systems and personnel benefits available to employees of The Texas A&M University System. Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.704. CONFLICT OF INTEREST. (a) In this section, "Texas trade association" means a cooperative and voluntarily joined statewide association of business competitors in this state designed to assist its members and its industry in dealing with mutual business or professional problems and in promoting their common interest.

(b) A person may not serve as the executive director of the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory and may not be an employee of the laboratory employed in a "bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity," as that phrase is used for purposes of establishing an exemption to the overtime provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. Section 201 et seq.) if:

(1) the person is an officer, employee, or paid consultant of a Texas trade association in the field of veterinary medicine; or

(2) the person's spouse is an officer, manager, or paid consultant of a Texas trade association in the field of veterinary medicine.

(c) A person may not serve as the executive director or act as the general counsel to the laboratory if the person is required to register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305, Government Code, because of the person's activities for compensation on behalf of a profession related to the operation of the laboratory.

Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.705. USE OF TECHNOLOGY. The executive director shall implement a policy requiring the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory to use appropriate technological solutions to improve the laboratory's ability to perform its functions. The policy must ensure that the public is able to interact with the laboratory on the Internet.

Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.706. NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING; ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION. (a) The executive director of the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory shall develop and implement a policy to encourage the use of:

(1) negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter

2008, Government Code, for the adoption of rules by the laboratory; and

(2) appropriate alternative dispute resolution procedures under Chapter 2009, Government Code, to assist in the resolution of internal and external disputes under the laboratory's jurisdiction.

(b) The laboratory's procedures relating to alternative dispute resolution must conform, to the extent possible, to any model guidelines issued by the State Office of Administrative Hearings for the use of alternative dispute resolution by state agencies.

(c) The executive director shall designate a trained person to:

(1) coordinate the implementation of the policy adopted under Subsection (a);

(2) serve as a resource for any training needed to implement the procedures for negotiated rulemaking or alternative dispute resolution; and

(3) collect data concerning the effectiveness of those procedures, as implemented by the laboratory.

Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.707. FEES. (a) The Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory may charge and collect fees for goods and services the laboratory provides to any person, including a governmental entity.

(b) The laboratory may adopt a fee or change the amount of a fee only after the laboratory:

(1) at least 30 days before the date the laboratory adopts the fee or changes the amount of the fee, provides notice of the proposed fee:

(A) in any newsletter distributed by the laboratory; and

(B) on the laboratory's Internet website;

(2) provides the public a reasonable opportunity to

submit written comments on the proposed fee or fee amount; and

(3) considers all public comments received under Subdivision (2).

Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.708. POWERS AND DUTIES. (a) The Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory shall:

(1) provide diagnostic testing to aid in the identification of diseases affecting animals;

(2) provide testing to facilitate the international, intrastate, or interstate shipment of animals;

(3) identify and monitor disease epidemics in animals;

(4) assist livestock owners and veterinarians to identify, diagnose, and treat disease and other animal health matters, including matters that could affect human health;

(5) report the identification of a disease or other animal health matter, including a matter that could affect human health, to the appropriate state or federal agency or official as required by law;

(6) disseminate to veterinarians, animal owners, and the public news and other information, including information relating to general trends in animal health derived from diagnostic testing, that the laboratory determines appropriate concerning animal disease outbreaks and other animal health matters, including matters that could affect human health; and

(7) perform other functions as provided by law or that the laboratory determines necessary or appropriate to provide diagnostics, surveillance, and reporting of diseases affecting animals.

(b) The laboratory may provide diagnostic testing services for pets and other domestic animals or out-of-state clients only when and to the extent that laboratory resources are not required for diagnostic testing services for livestock in this state.

Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1,

eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.709. COMPLAINTS. (a) The Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory shall maintain a system to promptly and efficiently act on complaints filed with the laboratory. The laboratory shall maintain information about each complaint that includes:

- (1) the parties to the complaint;
- (2) the subject matter of the complaint;
- (3) a summary of the results of the review or investigation of the complaint; and
- (4) the disposition of the complaint.

(b) The laboratory shall make information available describing the laboratory's procedures for complaint investigation and resolution.

(c) The laboratory shall periodically notify the parties to a complaint of the status of the complaint until final disposition. Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 88.710. PLAN COORDINATOR; NATIONAL POULTRY IMPROVEMENT PLAN. (a) The poultry programs administrator for the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory serves as the state plan coordinator for the National Poultry Improvement Plan.

(b) The state plan coordinator shall work with the Texas Poultry Improvement Board in the administration of the National Poultry Improvement Plan.

Redesignated from Education Code, Subchapter I, Chapter 88 and amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 111 (H.B. 2024), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

SUBCHAPTER J. CENTER FOR TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Sec. 88.801. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

- (1) "Center" means the Center for Transportation Safety.

(2) "Institute" means the Texas Transportation Institute, a component of The Texas A&M University System.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 714, Sec. 2, eff. June 13, 2001.

Sec. 88.802. ESTABLISHMENT. The Center for Transportation Safety is established as a component of the institute and shall be administered in the same manner as other programs of the institute.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 714, Sec. 2, eff. June 13, 2001.

Sec. 88.803. PROGRAMS. (a) The center shall conduct programs of research, education, and technology transfer to support the state's role in improving the safety of the roadways in this state.

(b) The programs may include, but are not limited to:

(1) developing and testing roadway safety technologies and supporting their implementation;

(2) aiding transportation planners to better prepare for future roadway transportation needs;

(3) studying complex policy issues and providing input as to how roadway safety affects such issues and affects roadway transportation for sustainable development;

(4) conducting research and studies that foster productivity and competitiveness in the roadway safety industry;

(5) fostering public awareness of the importance of roadway safety to the economy of this state;

(6) transferring knowledge and technology to industry, state and local governments, and the public;

(7) establishing programs and partnerships with public or private entities to develop and implement new policies, technology, strategies, relationships, and sources of funding;

(8) studying environmental conflicts, complements, and risks associated with roadway transportation;

(9) engaging in other activities consistent with the purpose of the center; and

(10) other activities as determined by the board.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 714, Sec. 2, eff. June 13, 2001.

Sec. 88.804. CONTRACTS. The center may enter into interagency contracts and agreements and may contract with local, state, county, federal, and private entities for work under the center's programs.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 714, Sec. 2, eff. June 13, 2001.

SUBCHAPTER K. TEXAS AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

Sec. 88.821. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "extension service" means the Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 954 (H.B. 3429), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2009.

Sec. 88.822. PROGRAM REPORTS. (a) The extension service shall make a presentation to the commissioner of education, the commissioner of agriculture, and the commissioner of the Department of State Health Services and shall provide copies of reports to the Texas Education Agency, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of State Health Services, and any council in which representatives from all three of those agencies are members, on the following programs:

(1) the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), which provides nutrition education for economically disadvantaged parents of young children;

(2) the Better Living for Texans (BLT) program, a component of the national Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides education programs to food stamp recipients, applicants, and other approved audiences to help improve their ability to plan and prepare nutritious meals, stretch food dollars, and prepare and store food safely; and

(3) other similar programs as determined by the extension service.

(b) Not later than December 15 of each even-numbered year, the extension service shall provide a copy of each report described by Subsection (a) to the legislature.

(c) This section does not affect any other requirement for the extension service to make a report to any state or federal

agency.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 954 (H.B. [3429](#)), Sec. 1,
eff. June 19, 2009.