

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 451 of 1994

PART 311
LOCAL RIVER MANAGEMENT

324.31101 Definitions.

Sec. 31101. As used in this part:

(a) "Board" means a river management board created as the governing body of a river management district in accordance with this part.

(b) "Council" means a watershed council created under this part.

(c) "District" means a river management district established under this part.

(d) "Level of stream flow" means a measure of water quantity including the amount of water passing a designated point over a designated period and the levels of lakes that are an integral part of the surface drainage system of the watershed.

(e) "Local agencies" means local units of government, special districts, or other legally constituted agencies of local units of government exercising powers that may affect water resources.

(f) "River management" means the control of river flow by the operation of dams, reservoirs, conduits, and other human-made devices in order to improve and expand the uses of the river for those who depend upon it for a variety of private and public benefits.

(g) "Watershed" means the drainage area of a stream.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31102 Watershed council; petition; contents; organizational meeting; notice.

Sec. 31102. (1) To promote cooperation among local units of government in river management, a watershed council shall be established by the department upon a petition from 3 or more local units of government lying wholly or partially in the watershed as defined in the petition. The petition shall provide a statement of necessity, a description of general purposes and functions to be performed, a description of the area, including a map, and a list of all local units of government lying wholly or partly within the watershed, which shall be eligible for membership on the watershed council.

(2) Upon finding that the petition is in conformance with this part, the department shall establish the council, schedule an organizational meeting, and notify all local units of government eligible for membership by registered mail. The date for the meeting shall be not less than 60 or more than 90 days after the date of mailing the notice.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31103 Watershed council; membership; voting rights; term; river management board.

Sec. 31103. (1) The watershed council shall be composed of representatives of local units of government within the watershed who are appointed to and maintain membership in the council in the following manner:

(a) Each local unit of government using the river for water supply or waste disposal shall appoint 1 representative for each 20,000 population or fraction thereof. The governing body of each local unit of government shall determine the method by which its representatives are selected.

(b) Each county having 15% or more of its area in the watershed shall appoint 1 representative, and 1 additional representative for each 20,000 population or fraction thereof, which aggregate total shall be computed from the population of eligible townships not otherwise represented. These townships shall be eligible under this section if they have 15% or more of their respective areas in the basin. The methods by which the county representatives are selected shall be determined by the county board of commissioners.

(c) Any local agency wholly or partly within the basin may appoint a representative to the council upon a finding by the council that the agency is so affected by or concerned with the use and development of water resources in the basin as to warrant representation. If any township is represented under this subdivision, its population shall not be counted in determining the eligible total representatives of its county.

(2) Representatives on the watershed council shall be appointed for 2 years, but are subject to replacement at the pleasure of the appointing authority. A representative is not eligible to vote on the council unless the local government he or she represents has met its financial obligations to the council.

(3) Representatives to the watershed council may also represent their local units of government, if so designated by their local units of government, on river management boards established in accordance with this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31104 Watershed council; duties.

Sec. 31104. In carrying out its authorized functions, the council shall do all of the following:

- (a) Adopt bylaws that govern its operations.
- (b) Prepare an annual operating budget, including apportionment of costs to member governments.
- (c) Hold an annual meeting at which time it shall elect a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary-treasurer, submit an annual report to the member governments, and adopt an annual budget that constitutes the council's authorization of activities for the year.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31105 Watershed council; powers.

Sec. 31105. A watershed council may do 1 or more of the following:

- (a) Conduct, or cause to be conducted, studies of the water resources of the watershed, including investigations of water uses, water quality, and the reliability of the water resource.
- (b) Prepare periodic reports concerning, among other things, trends in water use and availability, emerging water problems, and recommendations for appropriate public policies and programs necessary to maintain adequate water resources for the watershed area.
- (c) Request the department to survey the watershed for the purpose of determining minimum levels of stream flow necessary for health, welfare, and safety as provided in sections 31112 through 31117.
- (d) Recommend the creation of a river management district or districts under the provisions of sections 31106 through 31111 when the need for river management seems to warrant such an action.
- (e) Advise agencies of federal, state, and local units of government as to the council's view of the watershed's problems and needs.
- (f) Cooperate with federal, state, and local agencies in providing stream gauges, water quality sampling stations, or other water resource data-gathering facilities or programs that aid the council in its responsibility for studying and reporting on water conditions.
- (g) Employ an executive secretary and such other professional, administrative, or clerical staff, including consultants, as may be provided for in an approved budget.
- (h) Establish such subcommittees or advisory committees as are considered helpful in the discharge of its functions.
- (i) Establish special project funds as needed to finance special studies outside its annual budget capacity. For this purpose, the council may accept gifts and grants from any person.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31106 River management district; establishment; powers; consolidation; coordination.

Sec. 31106. (1) The governing bodies of 2 or more local units of government may petition the department to establish a river management district in order to provide an agency for the acquisition, construction, operation, and financing of water storage and other river control facilities necessary for river management. The petition shall be accompanied by a statement of necessity, a description of the district purposes, functions, and operating procedures, which shall include methods of financing capital improvements and of apportioning benefit charges, and a general plan of development. Not later than 60 days following receipt of such a petition, the department shall establish the time and place for a public hearing on the petition and shall publish notice of the hearing. The notice shall be published twice in each county involved in at least 1 newspaper of general circulation in the county. At the hearing, the applicant and any other interested party may appear, present witnesses, and submit evidence. Following the hearing, the department may establish the district and publish notice of the establishment in the manner provided for publication of notice of hearing, upon finding the following conditions:

- (a) That the proposal is consistent with the public interest in the conservation, development, and use of

water resources, and the proposed district is geographically suitable to effectuation of the district purposes.

(b) That the establishment and operation of the district will not unreasonably impair the interests of the public or of riparians in lands or waters or the beneficial public use of lands or waters, and will not endanger public health or safety.

(2) A management district shall not be created that affects any city now or hereafter having a population of more than 1,500,000, except with the concurrence of the governing body of that city.

(3) Prior to approving the establishment of a district consisting of a portion of a river basin, the department shall determine the feasibility of establishing the district to include the entire river basin or as large a portion of the basin as possible. Approval of districts consisting of a portion of a river basin shall be on the basis that when in the judgment of the department it becomes feasible to form a district including the entire river basin, the river management boards shall initiate proceedings to combine the smaller districts into larger districts or into an entire watershed-wide district.

(4) Any plans for a river management district shall be coordinated with plans of adjacent river basins, organizations, or agencies and with any comprehensive regional master programs for river management.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31107 River management district; organizational meeting; notice; date; board; membership; term; voting rights.

Sec. 31107. (1) Within 60 days after establishing a district, the department shall schedule an organizational meeting of the district board and shall provide notice of the meeting by registered mail to the governing bodies of all local units of government comprising the district. The date for the meeting shall be not less than 60 or more than 90 days after the date of mailing the notice. At the meeting, the department shall serve as temporary chairperson. The board shall elect a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and treasurer and adopt bylaws.

(2) A district shall be governed by a river management board composed of representatives of local units of government within the district. The representation of each local unit of government on the board may be provided as part of the operating procedures submitted to the department in the petition of local units of government made in accordance with section 31106. If the composition of the board is not so designated, representation shall be established under section 31103.

(3) Representatives on the river management board shall be appointed for 2 years but are subject to replacement at the pleasure of the appointing authority. A representative is not eligible to vote on the board unless the local government he or she represents has met its financial obligations to the district.

(4) Representatives to the river management board may also serve as representatives of their local units of government, if so designated by their local units of government, on the watershed council.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31108 River management board; powers.

Sec. 31108. A river management board may do any of the following:

(a) Conduct a continuing study of river use requirements and needs for river management within its area of jurisdiction; analyze alternative methods of meeting needs; and develop and adopt a river management program, including plans for constructing, operating, and financing water storage and river control structures and negotiating coordinated policies and programs relating to river use among local units of government within the district.

(b) Impound and control the waters of the river system within the district, subject to minimum levels of stream flow established pursuant to sections 31112 and 31113, through acquisition, construction, maintenance, and/or operation of water storage reservoirs, dams, or other river control structures as necessary to assure adequate quantity, quality, and stability of river flow to protect the public health, welfare, and safety. A river management district shall not release water in such an amount as to produce or increase flooding or otherwise damage downstream interests.

(c) Contract with or enter into agreement with the federal government or any agency or department of the federal government or with other governmental agencies or with private individuals or corporations that may maintain and operate reservoirs and control structures or that may construct, maintain, and operate new reservoirs and control structures as necessary to carry out the purposes of this part.

(d) Perform, with respect to the area within the district, the functions assigned to a watershed council by

sections 31102 through 31105 whenever a relevant watershed council has not been formed, or if the appropriate watershed council's failure to act impairs the functions and programs of a district.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31109 River management district; body corporate; powers; taxing power.

Sec. 31109. A district formed under this part is a body corporate with powers to contract; to sue and be sued; to exercise the right of eminent domain; to apportion administrative costs and benefit charges for river management and related facilities among the local units of government members, which costs shall be payable from general funds or taxes raised by the local units of government; to collect revenues for services rendered by the exercise of its functions; to issue bonds; to apply for and receive grants, gifts, and other devises from any governmental agency or from the federal government; and to exercise other powers as necessary to implement this part. The river management district shall not have direct taxing power.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31110 River management board; duties.

Sec. 31110. A river management board shall do all of the following:

- (a) Adopt bylaws to govern its operations.
- (b) Prepare an annual operating budget and levy an annual assessment of local unit of government members to cover costs of organizing, developing plans, and maintaining general overhead administration.
- (c) Adopt and maintain a schedule of benefit assessments upon local units of government in the district levied to help defray the costs of capital improvements, which schedule constitutes a legal obligation upon those assessed.
- (d) Hold an annual meeting at which it shall report to its members and to the watershed council, elect officers, and adopt an annual budget.
- (e) Maintain a public record of its transactions.
- (f) Do all other things necessary for the operation of the district.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31111 Executive secretary; additional staff.

Sec. 31111. The executive secretary of a watershed council may serve as executive secretary to the river management board. If a relevant watershed council does not exist, or if the executive secretary of a watershed council is otherwise unavailable, the board may employ an executive secretary. In addition, the board may employ additional staff as it determines appropriate within its approved budget.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31112 Minimum level of stream flow; industrial use of water.

Sec. 31112. Upon request of a council or a board, the department shall determine, within the watershed subject to the council, the minimum level of stream flow necessary to safeguard the public health, welfare, and safety, but a determination or order shall not prevent any industry along the stream from using water from the stream for industrial use sufficient for the industry's requirement if all the water used is returned to the stream within 72 hours of the taking.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31113 Minimum level of stream flow; order of determination; notice; publication; review.

Sec. 31113. In carrying out its authority to determine minimum levels of stream flow, the department, after public hearing, shall issue an order of determination setting forth minimum levels at locations as necessary to carry out the purposes of this part. Notice of the order of determination shall be published and the order may be reviewed in the circuit court in accordance with the administrative procedures act of 1969, Act No. 306 of

the Public Acts of 1969, being sections 24.201 to 24.328 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, upon petition filed by any person within 15 days following the last date of the publication.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31114 Minimum level of stream flow; determination by watershed council or department; request.

Sec. 31114. A river management board may request a watershed council to seek a determination of minimum levels of stream flow in accordance with sections 31112 and 31113, or the board may request the department to make the determinations if a watershed council has not been formed for the larger watershed of which the district is a part, or when an appropriately established council fails to act within 90 days upon the district's request.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31115 Measurement of stream flow, lake levels, and water quality; gauges and sampling devices; entering public property.

Sec. 31115. The department may maintain gauges and sampling devices to measure stream flow, lake levels, and water quality as necessary to implement this part, and may enter at all reasonable times in or upon any public property for the purpose of inspecting and investigating conditions relating to implementing this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31116 Preparation of river management plan; advice, assistance, and supervision by department.

Sec. 31116. The department may cooperate and negotiate with any person in establishing and maintaining gauges and sampling devices to measure stream flow, lake levels, or water quality or in implementing any other provision of this part. When requested by a council or board, the department shall provide technical advice and assistance in the preparation of a river management plan of the district. A river management plan shall not be placed into effect until it has been approved by the department as conforming to the stated objectives of the petition. The department shall maintain supervision over the functioning of the district to the extent it considers necessary for the purpose of ensuring conformance with the plan in the public interest.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31117 Rules.

Sec. 31117. The department shall promulgate rules to implement this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31118 Authority of department not affected by part.

Sec. 31118. This part does not abridge the authority vested in the department by part 31. Permits granted by the department in accordance with part 35 are not affected by this part. The granting of future permits under part 35 shall proceed without regard to anything contained in this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA

324.31119 Director of public health; powers unaffected.

Sec. 31119. The functions, powers, and duties of the director of public health as provided for by Act No. 98 of the Public Acts of 1913, being sections 325.201 to 325.214 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, shall

remain unaffected by this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Popular name: Act 451

Popular name: NREPA