

Senate Fiscal Agency  
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**SFA**

BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 5145 (as reported without amendment)  
Sponsor: Representative David Mead  
House Committee: Conservation and Outdoor Recreation  
Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

Date Completed: 3-11-02

### **RATIONALE**

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) provides for conservation districts (formerly called soil conservation districts), and requires a conservation district board to consist of five elected or appointed directors, who must be elected at an annual meeting by residents of the district. The NREPA also requires the annual meeting to be held within 30 days following the close of the district's fiscal year. Reportedly, the fiscal year of most conservation districts ends on June 30 or September 30. For districts whose fiscal year ends on September 30, the annual meeting must be held in October, which can conflict with harvesting. Apparently, therefore, some conservation districts have difficulty scheduling a meeting within the required time period. It has been suggested that a district's board of directors be allowed to determine the date of an annual meeting.

### **CONTENT**

The bill would amend Part 93 (Soil Conservation Districts) of the NREPA to specify that the annual meeting of a conservation district board would have to be held at a date determined by the board of directors of the district.

The bill also would require the directors of a conservation district board to determine the fiscal year of the district.

MCL 324.9307

### **ARGUMENTS**

*(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)*

### **Supporting Argument**

Conservation districts engage in a variety of activities including conducting research; carrying out prevention and control measures; furnishing fertilizer, seeds, and seedlings for conservation of the soil and prevention of soil erosion; developing soil conservation plans; administering soil conservation programs; engaging in land management programs; improving wildlife habitat; creating wetlands; and, protecting groundwater. These activities involve cooperation and communication between the board, the conservation district staff, and the members of the district. By allowing a conservation district's board of directors to determine the date of an annual meeting, the bill would offer more flexibility and could increase participation in the process.

Legislative Analyst: Nobuko Nagata

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Craig Thiel

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.