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Groundwater ownership agreement reached

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AUSTIN - An agreement was reached in the Senate Natural Resources Committee today recognizing a landowner's vested ownership interest in the groundwater below the surface.

"This agreement is the product of a collaborative effort between senators, the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, the Texas Farm Bureau and various other stakeholders from across Texas," said Sen. Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock. "This bill reaffirms that property owners have a vested ownership right in the groundwater beneath their land."

A committee substitute for SB 332 passed unanimously out of committee. The bill was filed by Senate Natural Resources Committee Chairman, Sen. Troy Fraser, R-Horseshoe Bay.

"This bill reaffirms that landowners have a vested ownership interest in the groundwater below their land and recognizes the current authority of groundwater conservation districts," said Dave Scott, rancher and TSCRA president. "We appreciate the hard work of Chairman Fraser, Senator Duncan and the rest of the committee and look forward to getting this bill out of the Senate soon."

The committee substitute for SB 332 now heads to the full Senate for deliberations.

"The Texas Farm Bureau was very pleased to work with Senator Fraser and Senator Duncan to produce a bill that recognizes the rights of landowners with regard to groundwater," said Texas Farm Bureau President Kenneth Dierschke. "The senators showed leadership in developing a substitute bill that also recognizes the important role of underground water districts in preserving this vital resource for future generations."

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