

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

S. J. R. No. 12.]

Proposing to amend Article 16 of the Constitution of the State of Texas by adding thereto at the end thereof another section to be known as Section 59, declaring the conservation and preservation of all the natural resources of the State of Texas are public rights and duties; providing for the creation of conservation districts, declaring such districts bodies politic and corporate, defining the authority of such districts, and conferring upon the Legislature authority to pass laws with reference thereto; declaring that the Legislature shall have authority generally to legislate for the purpose of conserving the natural resources of the State; fixing the time for the election for the adoption or rejection of said proposed constitutional amendment; making certain provisions for said election and the ballots thereof and the method thereof; directing the issuance of the proclamation therefor, prescribing certain duties of the Governor of the State and making an appropriation to defray the expenses of said election.

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the State of Texas:

SECTION 1—That Article 16 of the constitution of the State of Texas be amended by adding thereto at the end thereof another section to be known as Section 59, and which shall read as follows:

Section 59a—The conservation and development of all of the natural resources of this State, including the control, storing, preservation and distribution of its storm and flood waters, the waters of its rivers and streams, for irrigation, power and all other useful purposes, the reclamation and irrigation of its arid, semi-arid and other lands needing irrigation, the reclamation and drainage of its overflowed lands, and other lands needing drainage, the conservation and development of its forest, water and hydro-electric power, the navigation of its inland and coastal waters, and the preservation and conservation of all such natural resources of the State are each and all hereby declared public rights and duties; and the Legislature shall pass all such laws as may be appropriate thereto.

(b) There may be created within the State of Texas, or the State may be divided into, such number of conservation and reclamation districts as may be determined to be essential to the accomplishment of the purposes of this amendment to the constitution, which districts shall be governmental agencies and bodies politic and corporate with such powers of government and with the authority to exercise such rights, privileges and functions concerning the subject matter of this amendment as may be conferred by law.

(c) The Legislature shall authorize all such indebtedness as may be necessary to provide all improvements and the maintenance thereof requisite to the achievement of the purposes of this amendment, and all such indebtedness may be evidenced by bonds of such con-

servation and reclamation districts, to be issued under such regulations as may be prescribed by law and shall also, authorize the levy and collection within such districts of all such taxes, equitably distributed, as may be necessary for the payment of the interest and the creation of a sinking fund for the payment of such bonds; and also for the maintenance of such districts and improvements, and such indebtedness shall be a lien upon the property assessed for the payment thereof; provided the Legislature shall not authorize the issuance of any bonds or provide for any indebtedness against any reclamation district unless such proposition shall first be submitted to the qualified property tax-paying voters of such district and the proposition adopted.

SECTION 2—The foregoing constitutional amendment shall be submitted to a vote of the qualified electors for members of the Legislature at an election to be held for such purpose on the third Tuesday in August A. D. 1917, the same being the 21st day of August A. D. 1917; At said election the vote shall be by official ballot which shall have printed or written thereon the words "For the amendment to Article 16 of the constitution of the State of Texas providing for conservation districts, the creation of such districts and their government and regulation", and also the words "Against the amendment to Article 16 of the constitution of the State of Texas providing for conservation districts, the creation of such districts and their government and regulation". All the voters favoring this proposed constitutional amendment shall erase the words "Against the amendment to Article 16 of the constitution of the State of Texas providing for conservation districts, the creation of such districts and their government regulation," and those opposing it shall erase the words "For the amendment to Article 16 of the constitution of the State of Texas providing for conservation districts, the creation of such districts and their government and regulation," which said erasures shall be made by making a mark with pencil or pen through said words. All ballots cast as above provided shall be counted as cast for or against this proposed amendment, and if a majority of the votes cast shall be for the amendment it shall be declared adopted; if a majority of the votes cast shall be against the amendment said amendment shall be lost. All the provisions of the general election laws as amended and in force at the time said election is held shall govern in all respects as to the qualifications of electors, the method of holding such election and in all other respects as far as such election laws can be made applicable.

SECTION 3—The Governor of this State is hereby directed to issue the necessary proclamation for said election and to have the same published as required by the constitution and laws of this State.

SECTION 4—The sum of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars or so much thereof as may be necessary is hereby appropriated out of any funds in the State Treasury not otherwise appropriated to defray the expenses of such proclamation, publication and election.

[NOTE.—S. J. R. No. 12 passed the Senate by a two-thirds vote, yeas 28, nays 0; and passed the House of Representatives by a two-thirds vote, yeas 122, nays 4.]

Approved February 23, 1917.