

ANALYSIS OF ESSB 5290

***House Agriculture & Ecology Committee
1, 1999***

April

<p>Changing the freshwater aquatic weeds management program by clarifying funding and creating an advisory committee.</p>

BACKGROUND:

The freshwater weeds account is funded by a \$3 annual licensing surcharge on boat trailers. The Legislature may appropriate money from the freshwater aquatic weeds account to the Department of Ecology to: provide grants to cities, counties, and state agencies to address freshwater aquatic weeds in lakes, rivers, and streams with a public boat launch; develop public education programs relating to preventing the propagation and spread of freshwater aquatic weeds; provide technical assistance to local governments and citizen groups; fund demonstration or pilot projects; and fund hydrilla eradication activities.

There is no allocation formula in statute for how moneys from the account are spent. Special purpose districts and tribes are not eligible for grants.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Ecology must allocate funds from the freshwater aquatic account so that no more than one-third of the funds are used for public education programs and technical assistance. At least two-thirds of the funds must be awarded: (1) as grants to cities, counties, tribes, special purpose districts, and state agencies to prevent or control freshwater aquatic weeds; (2) to fund demonstration or pilot programs; or (3) to fund hydrilla eradication activities.

The department is required to appoint an advisory committee to oversee the freshwater aquatic weeds management program. The advisory committee must have representatives from recreational boaters; residents adjacent to lakes, river, or streams with public boat launch facilities; local governments; scientific specialists; pesticide registrants; certified pesticide applicators who specialize in aquatic pesticides; and the aquatic nuisance species coordinating committee if one is established by the Legislature. The advisory committee is responsible for reviewing and providing recommendations on freshwater aquatic weeds management program activities and budget, and establishing criteria for grants funded from the freshwater aquatic weeds account.

Fiscal Note: Requested.

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