

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2399

As Reported by House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to Class IV forest practices in urbanizing areas.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions concerning Class IV forest practices.

Sponsors: Representatives Rockefeller, Doumit, Jackley, Chase, McDermott and Haigh; by request of Department of Natural Resources.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 1/22/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the deadline to December 31, 2005 for cities and counties to adopt provisions setting standards for Class IV forest practices.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Doumit, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Sump, Ranking Minority Member; Buck, Eickmeyer, Ericksen, Jackley, McDermott, Orcutt, Pearson and Upthegrove.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background:

The Board of Natural Resources is required to establish rules to govern different classes of forest practices. Class IV forest practices apply to lands that have been or are being converted to another use, lands that are not going to be reforested because of the likelihood that they will be converted to urban development in the future, lands contained within urban growth areas under certain circumstances, and forest practices which have a potential for substantial impact on the environment and required an environmental impact statement under the State Environmental Policy Act. In 1997 the Legislature granted cities and counties more authority over lands that are being converted out of forestry uses.

Each city and county is required to adopt ordinances or regulations setting standards for Class IV forest practices regulated by local government. They must include minimum standards for Class IV forest practices, necessary administrative provisions, and procedures for collection and administration of the necessary fees. The Class IV forest practices regulations are administered and enforced by the cities and counties that adopt the regulations.

The Department of Natural Resources continues to administer Class IV forest practices permits within a jurisdiction until it has determined that a city or county's forest practices meet or exceed the requirements of the state's Forest Practices Act and the administration of the rules under that act.

Cities and counties are required to adopt the ordinances or regulations pertaining to Class IV forest practices by December 31, 2001. Only three counties have been able to comply with this deadline.

Summary of Bill:

The deadline for each county and city to adopt ordinances or regulations which set standards for Class IV forest practices regulated by local government is extended from December 31, 2001 to December 31, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: When the Legislature gave cities and counties more control over general Class IV forest practices in 1997, it did not provide detail on the format or content regarding what the local ordinances should contain. The Department of Natural Resources is working with counties and cities on developing model ordinances that they can use for adoption. A work plan is in place for working with these local governments, and some work shops have been held. Extending this deadline will not jeopardize resource protection because DNR manages these practices until local governments can adopt the implementing ordinances.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Leonard Young, Department of Natural Resources; and Paul Parker, Washington State Association of Counties.