

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1314

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Trade & Economic Development
Appropriations*

Title: An act relating to a fish and wildlife work force.

Brief Description: Creating the natural resource worker project.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Haugen, Spanel, Wilson, R. Johnson, Kremen, Braddock, H. Sommers, Morris, R. King, Sheldon, Hargrove, Belcher, Basich and Jacobsen.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Trade & Economic Development, February 26, 1991, DPS;
Appropriations, March 10, 1991, DPS(TED)-A.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
TRADE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Majority Report: *That Substitute House Bill No. 1314 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*
Signed by 10 members: Representatives Cantwell, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Forner, Ranking Minority Member; Betrozoff, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ferguson; Ludwig; Moyer; Rasmussen; Riley; and Roland.

Staff: Bill Watterson (786-7349).

Background: Timber harvest levels, particularly on federal lands, are expected to decrease significantly. This will adversely impact the State generally and timber communities specifically.

The estimated job losses resulting from the reduced harvest level vary significantly. The Governor's Office estimates the direct and indirect job losses at 20,000; the House Timber Task Force estimated the job losses at 26,000.

Training and retraining programs, most of which are administered by the state Department of Employment Security and funded through the federal Job Training Partnership Act, can benefit timber-dependent communities. An example of this is job dislocation assistance.

Skagit County is one of seven counties that the Governor's Office has listed as being most dependent on timber for their economic livelihood.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Natural Resource Worker Project is established to provide jobs for dislocated timber workers in Skagit County. The project is administered by the state Employment Security Department. The Department of Personnel shall approve the project.

The project is designed to establish training and employment opportunities for dislocated timber workers to obtain entry level jobs in the state departments of Ecology, Fisheries, Natural Resources, Wildlife, and the state Parks and Recreation Commission. The project is contingent upon the availability of federal funding, or an appropriation from the state general fund.

The agencies participating in the project shall provide an annual report to the state Legislature.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute does not require that the Natural Resource Worker Project be established unless funds are acquired.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect July 15, 1991.

Testimony For: The bill redresses the lack of training and employment opportunities for dislocated timber workers in Skagit and northern Snohomish counties.

Testimony Against: Training should be for employment in jobs which guarantee adequate wages to support a family, rather than entry level jobs.

Witnesses: Ted W. Anderson, Forest Families Action Committee Task Force (in favor of bill); Theresa Deschene, Washington Workers Resource Committee (supports bill, but opposed to entry level nature of job preparation); Karlene Collins, Washington Workers Resource Committee (supports bill, but favors training for family wage jobs and more community involvement); Robin Sherman, Economic Development Association of Skagit County (in favor of bill); Bert Williamson, Skagit Valley College (in favor of bill); Don Wick, Economic Development Association of Skagit County (in favor of bill); Jim Pissot, National Audubon Society (in favor of bill); Roger Reidel, Washington State Labor Council (supports bill's intent, but against bill without provisions for establishing family wage jobs); Susan Markey, Washington

Department of Fisheries (in favor of bill); Pam Madson, Washington Department of Wildlife (in favor of bill); Tim Strege, Job Training Executives of Washington (in favor of bill); and Larry Malo, Employment Security Department (supports bill, but concerned that: federal funding cannot be guaranteed for five years; spouses will not be eligible for federal funding of education and training; and restrictions on federal funds do not allow contracting with Economic Development Association of Skagit County).

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill by Committee on Trade and Economic Development be substituted therefor and the substitute bill as amended by Committee on Appropriations do pass.* Signed by 25 members: Representatives Locke, Chair; Inslee, Vice Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; Silver, Ranking Minority Member; Morton, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Belcher; Bowman; Braddock; Brekke; Dorn; Ebersole; Ferguson; Fuhrman; Hine; Lisk; McLean; Nealey; Peery; Pruitt; Rust; H. Sommers; Sprenkle; Wang; and Wineberry.

Minority Report: *Do not pass.* Signed by 1 member: Representative Fuhrman.

Staff: Susan Nakagawa (786-7145).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee on Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee on Trade & Economic Development: The definition of a dislocated timber worker is narrowed. A dislocated timber worker is defined to be any person: (1) employed in a specific industrial code used by the Employment Security Department which includes lumber and wood products workers; or (2) who was employed in or resided in a timber-dependent community at the time of previous job termination. The provision locating this program in Skagit County is deleted.

Fiscal Note: Requested March 10, 1991.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill as Amended: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The legislation will provide a pool of trained entry-level employees for natural resource agency employment. Additional workers in these fields are necessary due to flood damage and needed trail construction and restoration in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

The program is a good opportunity to assist dislocated workers while meeting these needs.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Mary Margaret Haugen (prime sponsor); and Susan Markey, Department of Fisheries (in support).