

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1490

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Local Government*

**Title:** An act relating to flood control management.

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions relating to flood control management.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives R. Johnson, Haugen, Roland, Kremen, Rayburn, Spanel, Rust, Braddock, Scott and Paris.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Local Government, February 26, 1991, DPS.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**Majority Report:** *That Substitute House Bill No. 1490 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*

Signed by 13 members: Representatives Haugen, Chair; Cooper, Vice Chair; Ferguson, Ranking Minority Member; Mitchell, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bray; Edmondson; Franklin; Horn; Nelson; Rayburn; Roland; Wood; and Wynne.

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

**Staff:** Steve Lundin (786-7127).

**Background:** A wide variety of laws have been enacted authorizing local governments to provide drainage and flood control facilities and improvements, including counties, cities, towns, diking districts, drainage districts, diking improvement districts, drainage improvement districts, flood control districts, and flood control zone districts.

A flood control zone district is a special district that can be created by the county legislative authority of a county on either a countywide basis or a drainage basin basis. The county legislative authority acts as the governing body of a flood control zone district. Flood control zone districts are authorized to provide drainage and flood control improvements and to finance these improvements by: (1) imposing special assessments; (2) imposing rates and charges in the same manner as a county imposes rates and charges in

a stormwater utility; (3) levying a regular property tax of up to 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation; and (4) levying excess, voter approved, property tax levies.

Each biennium \$4 million is placed into the flood control account. The Legislature can appropriate moneys in the flood control account to be used for grants to local governments to repair flood control facilities and to prepare comprehensive flood control management plans.

Various activities in a body of water are permitted only if a hydraulics permit for the activities has been issued by the Department of Fisheries or the Department of Wildlife.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Counties are permitted to adopt comprehensive flood control management plans for drainage basins that include designating areas susceptible to flooding, establishing a comprehensive scheme of flood control improvements, land use restrictions, construction restrictions, and restrictions on both removing vegetation and development activities that exacerbate flood problems. This plan is mandatory throughout the county. The portions of the plan relating to land use restrictions and construction standards are minimum standards that a city or town may exceed. A variety of officials are permitted to participate with the county in the preparation of a comprehensive flood control management plan.

Counties may establish advisory committees of various officials to participate in the preparation of comprehensive flood control management plans and provide general advice on flood problems.

The amount of money that is placed into the flood control account each biennium, for grants to local governments, is increased from \$4 million dollars to \$10 million. The purposes for which grants from the flood control account may be used are expanded to include cost sharing feasibility studies for new flood control projects and repairs of flood control facilities that include the enhancement of such facilities.

Flood control zone district laws are altered to remove the ability of the governing bodies of cities and towns to remove the city or town from inclusion in a newly created flood control zone district.

Within 30 days of application, the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife shall process hydraulic project applications for repair of legally constructed dikes, seawalls, and other flood control structures, that were damaged by floods or windstorms in November and December 1990.

Five million dollars is appropriated to the Department of Ecology this biennium to finance the repair and reconstruction of flood control improvements damaged during the November 1990 floods.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** (1) The variety of officials who may participate in developing the plans and sit on advisory groups is expanded. (2) The purposes are expanded for which grants from the flood control account may be used. (3) The new amount to be placed in the flood control account each biennium is increased from \$8 million to \$10 million. (4) The requirement for expeditious processing of hydraulics permits was added. (5) The appropriation was reduced from \$10 million to \$5 million for the department to finance the reconstruction of flood control improvements damaged in November of 1990, and the appropriation is made for this biennium.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested February 26, 1991.

**Appropriation:** Yes.

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

**Testimony For:** This will allow a comprehensive look at flood problems on a river basin-wide basis. We need to take a look at the big picture. The money is needed for damaged facilities.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Susan Markey, Dept. of Fisheries (pro with amendment); (Pro:) Dave Williams, Association of Washington Cities; Don Thomas, Marshland Flood Control; Rod Mack, Department of Ecology; Bob Hulbert, Skagit County Diking Dist. No. 8; Richard Smith, Skagit County Diking Dist. No. 3; Herb Walter, Skagit County Dist. No. 17; Ruth Wylie, David Brookings, Skagit County; Ward Lawler, Snohomish County Diking Commissioner; and Ed Larsen, Snohomish County.