

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 1785

PARTIAL VETO

Synopsis as Enacted

C 516 L 93

Brief Description: Creating jobs to restore and enhance Washington's estuaries, waterways, forests, and watersheds.

By House Committee on Environmental Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Locke, J. Kohl, Rust, Jacobsen, Wineberry, Shin, Dunshee, Holm, Pruitt, Jones, Finkbeiner, King, Basich, Quall, Orr, Johanson, Leonard and Anderson).

House Committee on Environmental Affairs

House Committee on Appropriations

Senate Committee on Trade, Technology & Economic Development

Background: State and local governments are required to develop several types of water-related plans. Examples include: The Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan, shoreline management plans, stormwater plans, drinking water plans, flood plans, and watershed action plans. These plans often identify actions necessary to improve existing problems. Financing for these actions is often difficult to obtain.

Natural resource based industries are, and have historically been, an important part of the state's economy. These industries are in relative decline as compared to other sectors of the state's economy, such as aerospace and agriculture.

Water quality and habitat degradation are negatively affecting many natural resource based industries.

There are efforts at the state and national level to find creative ways to finance ready-to-go projects that create jobs and improve water quality and habitats.

Summary: The environment and forest restoration account is established in the state treasury. Money in the account is subject to legislative appropriation. State and local agencies, tribes, and private non-profit organizations are eligible for grants and loans from the account. For fiscal years 1994 through 1998, 50 percent of the funds must be awarded to rural communities to employ displaced timber workers. After 1998, 50 percent of the funds must be awarded to counties with unemployment rates greater than the

state average. At least 10 percent of annual revenues are to be used for the Washington Conservation Corps. At least 5 percent of the funds must be awarded to non-profit organizations. No more than 3 percent can be used for administration. The account may not be used to hire permanent state employees except for essential administration and supervisory positions.

An environmental enhancement and job creation task force is created within the Office of the Governor. The eight member task force consists of state agencies responsible for natural resource management or economic development. The task force has four principal duties: (1) to assist state and local agencies in implementing effective restoration projects; (2) to evaluate unemployment profile data; (3) to make recommendations to streamline grant administration for restoration programs; and (4) to make funding decisions on environmental and forest restoration projects. Projects funded must meet specified criteria. The task force is directed to avoid funding projects that include rule-making, planning, or public education activities.

Funding for fiscal year 1994 projects is to be provided through the operating and capital budgets. Legislative priorities for 1994 are specified. The governor is directed to consider using unanticipated federal funds for environmental restoration and job creation.

A process is established to make it easier for workers who have completed a job funded under this law to qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. Workers who are successfully participating in an environmental restoration training program under this law are eligible for unemployment insurance benefits while in training.

The expiration date for the Washington Conservation Corps program is extended from July 1, 1995 to June 30, 1999 and is made subject to sunset review.

The Legislative Budget Committee is required to evaluate the implementation of this act by June 30, 1998.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	85	13	
Senate	39	6	(Senate amended)
House			(House refused to concur)

Conference Committee

Senate	47	0
House	81	17

Effective: July 1, 1993

Partial Veto Summary: The provision directing funding for fiscal year 1994 to be included in the biennial budget is vetoed. Also vetoed is a provision directing the governor to consider using unanticipated federal receipts to fund forest and environmental restoration projects. (See VETO MESSAGE)