

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1977

Synopsis as Enacted

C 99 L 93

Brief Description: Clarifying authorization for water right certificate holders to participate in acreage expansion programs.

By House Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives Schoesler, Sheahan, Rayburn, Chappell, Vance, Morton, Dyer, Fuhrman, Long, Chandler, Brumsickle, Foreman and Mastin).

House Committee on Natural Resources & Parks
Senate Committee on Energy & Utilities

Background: The Department of Ecology, local governments, or ground water users in an area may initiate development of a ground water management program for that specific area. State law identifies a number of components that must be included in a ground water management program.

The Department of Ecology adopts rules for implementation of a ground water area or sub-area management program. One such rule addresses the procedure for water right certificate holders to follow if they desire to participate in an acreage expansion program. Under an acreage expansion program, a water right certificate holder is allowed to apply the average of the quantity of water beneficially used during the past three consecutive years to acreage greater than the certificate holder's normal authorized irrigated acreage. In order to participate in an acreage expansion program, the certificate holder must submit a written request to the Department of Ecology. If the acreage expansion program is to continue for more than one year, the Department of Ecology acknowledges continued participation with an annual letter of authorization.

Summary: For new participants in an acreage expansion program, authorization for participation shall be on an annual basis for the first two years. After the two-year period, the Department of Ecology may authorize participation for 10-year periods. For water right certificate holders who have already participated in an acreage expansion program for two years, the department may authorize participation for 10-year periods. The department may require annual certification that the certificate holder has complied with all of the requirements of the program.

The department may terminate participation in the program for one year if a certificate holder fails to comply with the requirements.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	98	0
Senate	47	0

Effective: July 25, 1993