

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5865

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS, MARCH 3, 1993

**Brief Description:** Allowing counties to levy an additional one and three-fourths cent for maintenance and operation of lands acquired as conservation futures.

**SPONSORS:** Senator Fraser

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS**

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chairman; Moore, Sutherland, and Talmadge.

**Staff:** Cathy Baker (786-7708)

**Hearing Dates:** February 26, 1993; March 3, 1993

**BACKGROUND:**

Under existing law, a county may levy up to 6 1/4 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for the purposes of acquiring conservation futures. The conservation futures levy is to be used solely for the purchase of conservation easements, development rights, and fee simple interest in open space land, farm and agricultural land, and timber land as defined by statute.

Under the Growth Management Act (GMA), cities and counties planning under GMA are required to identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas. The corridors shall include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas. Identification of open space corridors shall not restrict the use or management of lands within the corridor for agricultural or forest purposes. Existing law states that restrictions on the use or management of these resource lands through the identification of open space corridors may occur only if the city or county acquires sufficient interest to prevent development of such lands.

**SUMMARY:**

A county may levy an additional 1 3/4 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for the sole purpose of funding maintenance and operation of real property that is owned in fee simple or less than fee simple and is either acquired or eligible to be acquired as conservation futures.

These funds may be placed in a locally established conservation futures fund and may be used only for maintenance

and operation needs of open space lands acquired as conservation futures.

Nonprofit conservancy corporations are authorized, along with cities and counties, to acquire interest in lands identified as open space corridors in comprehensive plans adopted under GMA.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** yes

**Fiscal Note:** available

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The additional levy will help fund maintenance and operation needs of lands acquired under conservation futures programs. The additional levy will not affect the prorationing schedule for other taxing districts, and would be imposed at the county's discretion.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Mike Ryherd, Kitsap County Open Space Council (pro)