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SENATE BILL 5076

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State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By Senators Oke, Owen and Drew

Read first time 01/09/95. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to wildlife habitat corridors; adding new sections  
2 to chapter 77.12 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the abundance and  
5 distribution of wildlife are limited by the lack of suitable routes of  
6 travel for wildlife between areas of habitat that would otherwise be  
7 colonized. Wildlife corridors would allow a more free movement of  
8 wildlife resulting in less incidence of winterkill, greater  
9 distribution of populations, less agricultural crop damage, less  
10 mortality due to vehicle collisions, and greater wildlife abundance.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The director, in consultation with the state  
12 conservation commission, shall institute a program to link wildlife  
13 habitat areas with corridors that will facilitate the movement of  
14 wildlife species between areas of suitable habitat. The intent of the  
15 program is to foster the dispersal of wildlife and the full utilization  
16 of suitable habitat. The program must involve local, state, and  
17 federal government agencies, native American tribes, private  
18 landowners, and cooperative groups. The department shall be the lead

1 agency for the program and shall utilize a cooperative approach rather  
2 than a regulatory approach to achieve the goals of the program. The  
3 director shall utilize existing staff and resources to conduct the  
4 program.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The director shall develop a program for  
6 private landowners to institute wildlife corridors by utilizing a  
7 system of incentives. The director shall work with private landowners'  
8 groups including, but not limited to, agricultural groups, private  
9 property rights groups, and forest landowners in order to develop a  
10 system of workable incentives for establishment of wildlife corridors.  
11 The director shall suggest proposed legislation to the senate and house  
12 of representatives natural resources committees as may be required to  
13 implement the program. The program must be totally cooperative and  
14 voluntary on the part of the private landowners. The department shall  
15 work with private landowners to assure that the program meets the needs  
16 of the private landowners. The department may not take private  
17 property or restrict the property's value.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The director shall develop an interagency  
19 program for the establishment of wildlife corridors. The director  
20 shall contact all local, state, and federal government agencies that  
21 manage lands that are suitable for wildlife habitat and shall make them  
22 aware of the program and its benefits. The department shall work with  
23 other governmental agencies in a good faith effort to develop wildlife  
24 corridors in a cooperative manner.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The director shall contact native American  
26 tribes to request their assistance in the development of wildlife  
27 corridors on tribal lands and between tribal lands and adjacent public  
28 and private lands. The state fish and wildlife commission shall  
29 explore ways of modifying hunting regulations to achieve a free  
30 movement of wildlife in wildlife corridors, and shall work with the  
31 treaty tribes to achieve the same effect with tribal hunting  
32 regulations.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The director shall place particular emphasis  
34 upon the development of wildlife corridors for threatened and  
35 endangered species in order to prevent additional listings or to

1 stabilize the population. Wildlife corridors may not be established  
2 for species that could harm humans, such as grizzly bears or timber  
3 wolves.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The director shall establish a program for  
5 public contributions to the wildlife corridor program in order to  
6 maximize the opportunity for the concerned public to participate. The  
7 director shall make personal appeals to the major environmental groups  
8 to allow them to participate in the wildlife corridor program. The  
9 director shall work with the nature conservancy to advance the  
10 accomplishment of the wildlife corridor program in conjunction with the  
11 nature conservancy. The director shall give major outdoor equipment  
12 manufacturers and retail outlets a chance to participate in the  
13 wildlife corridor program.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Sections 2 through 7 of this act are each  
15 added to chapter 77.12 RCW.

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