

2 **2SHB 2054** - S AMD - 509  
3 By Senator Morton

4 ADOPTED AS AMENDED BY 491 & 508 4/18/97

5 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the  
6 following:

7 "PART I  
8 BASIN PLANS

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 101.** The purpose of this chapter is to develop  
10 a more thorough and cooperative method of determining what the current  
11 water resource situation is in each water resource inventory area of  
12 the state and to provide local citizens with the maximum possible input  
13 concerning their goals and objectives for water resource management and  
14 development.

15 It is necessary for the legislature to establish processes and  
16 policies that will result in providing state agencies with more  
17 specific guidance to manage the water resources of the state consistent  
18 with current law and direction provided by local entities and citizens  
19 through the process established in accordance with this chapter.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 102.** The legislature finds that the local  
21 development of watershed plans for managing water resources and for  
22 protecting existing water rights is vital to both state and local  
23 interests. The local development of these plans serves vital local  
24 interests by placing it in the hands of people: Who have the greatest  
25 knowledge of both the resources and the aspirations of those who live  
26 and work in the watershed; and who have the greatest stake in the  
27 proper, long-term management of the resources. The development of such  
28 plans serves the state's vital interests by ensuring that the state's  
29 water resources are used wisely, by protecting existing water rights,  
30 by protecting instream flows for fish, and by providing for the  
31 economic well-being of the state's citizenry and communities.  
32 Therefore, the legislature believes it necessary for units of local  
33 government throughout the state to engage in the orderly development of  
34 these watershed plans.

1        NEW SECTION.     **Sec. 103.**     When considering applications to  
2 appropriate public waters or the perfection, transfer, change, or  
3 cancellation of water right permits, the department shall not have  
4 discretion to take any action except in a manner consistent with the  
5 standards set forth in chapters 90.03, 90.22, 90.44, and 90.54 RCW.

6        NEW SECTION.     **Sec. 104.**     Unless the context clearly requires  
7 otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this  
8 chapter.

9        (1) "Department" means the department of ecology.

10       (2) "WRIA" means a water resource inventory area established in  
11 chapter 173-500 WAC as it existed on January 1, 1997.

12       (3) "Water supply utility" means a water, combined water-sewer,  
13 irrigation, reclamation, or public utility district that provides water  
14 to persons or other water users within the district or a division or  
15 unit responsible for administering a publicly governed water supply  
16 system on behalf of a city, town, or county.

17       (4) "WRIA plan" or "plan" means the product of the planning unit  
18 including any rules adopted in conjunction with the product of the  
19 planning unit.

20       NEW SECTION.     **Sec. 105.**     In order to have the best possible program  
21 for appropriating and administering water use in the state, the  
22 legislature establishes the following principles and criteria to carry  
23 out the purpose and intent of chapter . . . , Laws of 1997 (this act).

24       (1) All WRIA planning units established under this chapter shall  
25 develop a process to assure that water resource user interests and  
26 directly involved interest groups at the local level have the  
27 opportunity, in a fair and equitable manner, to give input and  
28 direction to the process.

29       (2) State agencies with major water resource management  
30 responsibilities shall be available to share information on state-wide  
31 statutorily designated interests.

32       (3) Plans developed under chapter . . . , Laws of 1997 (this act)  
33 shall be consistent with and not duplicative of efforts already under  
34 way in a WRIA, including but not limited to watershed analysis  
35 conducted under state forest practices statutes and rules.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 106.**    (1) Once a WRIA planning unit has been  
2 organized and designated a lead agency, it shall notify the department  
3 and may apply to the department for funding assistance for conducting  
4 the planning.    Funds shall be provided from and to the extent of  
5 appropriations made by the legislature to the department expressly for  
6 this purpose.

7        (2) Each planning unit that has complied with subsection (1) of  
8 this section is eligible to receive fifty thousand dollars for each  
9 WRIA to initiate the planning process.    The department shall allocate  
10 additional funds to WRIA planning units based on demonstrated need.  
11 Each WRIA planning unit may receive up to two hundred fifty thousand  
12 dollars for each WRIA during the first two-year period of planning,  
13 with a maximum allocation of five hundred thousand dollars for each  
14 WRIA.    Funding provided under this section shall be considered a  
15 contractual obligation against the moneys appropriated for this  
16 purpose.

17        (3) Preference shall be given to planning units requesting funding  
18 for conducting multi-WRIA planning under section 109 of this act.  
19 Preference shall also be given to planning projects that are clearly  
20 intended to respond to endangered species act listings or to attempt to  
21 resolve problems that may lead to such listings or to address water  
22 availability to meet projected growth based on office of financial  
23 management twenty-year population projections.

24        (4) The department may retain up to one percent of funds allocated  
25 under this section to defray administrative costs.

26        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 107.**    (1) This chapter shall not be construed as  
27 creating a new cause of action against the state or any county, city,  
28 town, water supply utility, conservation district, or planning unit.

29        (2) Notwithstanding RCW 4.92.090, 4.96.010, and 64.40.020, no claim  
30 for damages may be filed against the state or any county, city, town,  
31 water supply utility, Indian tribes, conservation district, or planning  
32 unit that or member of a planning unit who participates in a WRIA  
33 planning unit for performing responsibilities under this chapter.    The  
34 exclusion from liability contained in this subsection does not apply to  
35 a county, city, town, or water supply utility that votes to adopt  
36 provisions in a WRIA plan that have been identified by the superior  
37 court as being in conflict with state statute or federal law with

1 regard to those provisions if advice regarding the conflict was  
2 provided under section 113(2) of this act.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 108.** (1)(a) Except as provided in section 109 of  
4 this act for multi-WRIA planning, the county with the largest area  
5 within the boundaries of a WRIA or a municipal corporation obtaining  
6 its water supply from the WRIA may choose to initiate water resource  
7 planning for the WRIA under this chapter. If it does so choose, it  
8 shall make application to the department of ecology to declare its  
9 intent to conduct watershed planning. Upon making application to the  
10 department, the county with the largest area within the WRIA shall  
11 convene meetings of the members of the legislative authorities of the  
12 counties with territory within a WRIA for the appointment of a WRIA  
13 planning unit. The county or municipal corporation shall also notify  
14 the cities, water supply utilities, Indian tribes, and conservation  
15 districts with territory within the WRIA that these groups are to meet  
16 to appoint their members of the WRIA planning unit. For the purposes  
17 of this section and sections 109 and 113 of this act, a county is  
18 considered to have territory within a WRIA only if the territory of the  
19 county located in the WRIA constitutes at least fifteen percent of the  
20 area of the WRIA. For conducting planning under this chapter, the  
21 county with the largest area within the boundaries of the WRIA is the  
22 lead agency for the WRIA planning, except as provided in section 109 of  
23 this act for multi-WRIA planning. When the counties of a WRIA have  
24 convened jointly to make appointments to the planning unit, they may,  
25 by a majority vote, choose as the lead agency for WRIA planning any  
26 governmental entity in the WRIA. Such a governmental entity shall act  
27 as the lead agency for this purpose if it agrees in writing to accept  
28 the designation.

29 (b) For a WRIA located within Pierce, King, or Snohomish county,  
30 the lead agency shall be the water supply utility that is using the  
31 largest amount of water from the WRIA.

32 (2) In a WRIA where water resource planning efforts have commenced  
33 before the effective date of this section, such as but not limited to  
34 the Kettle river WRIA, the county legislative authorities with  
35 territory within the WRIA in accordance with subsection (1) of this  
36 section may, by majority vote, choose to adopt the existing planning  
37 unit membership for purposes of planning under chapter . . . , Laws of  
38 1997 (this act).

1        Nothing in this act shall affect ongoing efforts to develop new  
2 resources and the sharing of existing resources. No moratorium may be  
3 imposed on water resource decision making by the department solely  
4 because of ongoing planning efforts or the absence of a plan or  
5 planning effort. Any new planning units formed under this act shall  
6 recognize efforts already in progress.

7        (3)(a) One WRIA planning unit shall be appointed for the WRIA as  
8 provided by this section or for a multi-WRIA area as provided by  
9 section 109 of this act for multi-WRIA planning. The planning unit  
10 shall be composed of: (i) One member from each county with territory  
11 in the WRIA representing the county and appointed by the county; (ii)  
12 one member for each county with territory in the WRIA, but not less  
13 than two members, representing cities with territory in the WRIA and  
14 appointed jointly by those cities and incorporated towns; (iii) two  
15 members representing water supply utilities other than those of a city  
16 or town with territory within the WRIA and appointed jointly by those  
17 districts; (iv) one member representing all conservation districts with  
18 territory within the WRIA and appointed jointly by those districts; (v)  
19 three members representing various special interest groups appointed  
20 jointly by the cities with territory within the WRIA; and six members  
21 representing various special interest groups appointed jointly by the  
22 counties with territory within the WRIA; (vi) one member representing  
23 the general citizenry appointed jointly by the cities with territory  
24 within the WRIA; (vii) three members representing the general citizenry  
25 appointed jointly by the counties with territory in the WRIA, of which  
26 at least one shall be a holder of a water right certificate and at  
27 least one shall be a holder of a water right for which a statement of  
28 claim was in the state's water rights claims registry before January 1,  
29 1997; (viii) if one or more federal Indian reservations are located in  
30 whole or in part within the boundaries of the WRIA, the planning unit  
31 shall extend an invitation to the tribal government of each reservation  
32 to appoint one member representing the tribal government; and (ix)  
33 three members representing state agencies including the secretary of  
34 the department of transportation or the secretary's designee, the  
35 director of the department of fish and wildlife or the director's  
36 designee, and the director of the department of ecology or the  
37 director's designee. The three members representing state government  
38 shall have a single vote representing state agency interests.

1 (b) In addition, for a WRIA located within Pierce, King, or  
2 Snohomish county, one representative of the water supply utility that  
3 is the water purveyor using the largest amount of water from the WRIA  
4 shall be a voting member of the planning unit whether the principal  
5 offices of the purveyor are or are not located within the WRIA.

6 (4) Except for a person appointed under subsection (3)(a)(ix) or  
7 (b) of this section, each person appointed to a WRIA planning unit  
8 shall have been a resident and a property owner of the WRIA for at  
9 least three years. State employees or state officials other than  
10 members appointed under subsection (3)(a)(ix) or (b) of this section  
11 may be appointed to the planning unit unless they have state water  
12 resource-related duties. In appointing persons to the WRIA planning  
13 unit representing special interest groups, the counties shall consider  
14 industrial water users, general businesses, hydroelectric and thermal  
15 power producers, and irrigated agriculture, nonirrigated agriculture,  
16 forestry, recreation, environmental, and fisheries interest groups and  
17 other groups with interests in the WRIA. Counties shall attempt to  
18 provide for a balanced group of interests on the planning unit, with  
19 emphasis given to local interests and concerns.

20 (5)(a) In voting to appoint the members of a WRIA planning unit, to  
21 select a lead agency for water resource planning under section 108 or  
22 109 of this act, to approve a WRIA plan under section 113 of this act,  
23 or to request or concur with a request for multi-WRIA planning under  
24 section 109 of this act, each county with territory within the WRIA  
25 shall have three votes, divided equally among the members of the  
26 county's legislative authority and these actions shall be made by  
27 majority vote based on the votes allocated under this section. In  
28 voting to appoint members of a WRIA planning unit: Each city with  
29 territory within the WRIA shall have one vote and appointments shall be  
30 made by majority vote of such cities; each water supply utility other  
31 than those of a city or town with territory within the WRIA shall have  
32 one vote and appointments shall be made by majority vote of such  
33 districts; and each conservation district with territory within the  
34 WRIA shall have one vote and appointments shall be made by majority  
35 vote of such districts. All appointments shall be made within sixty  
36 days of the date the appointing authorities other than the counties are  
37 notified to convene to make appointments or the appointments shall be  
38 made by the counties with territory in the WRIA in the same manner the  
39 counties make other appointments.

1 (b) The local governments of the WRIA planning unit may, by  
2 majority vote, add up to two additional members representing interests  
3 that are not included in the planning unit.

4 (c) A vacancy on the planning unit shall be filled by appointment  
5 in the same manner prescribed for appointing the position that has  
6 become vacant. The planning unit shall convene and begin work as soon  
7 as two-thirds of the number of persons eligible to be members of the  
8 planning unit have been appointed. All positions must be filled within  
9 thirty days of the convening of the planning unit. The unit shall not  
10 interrupt its work to await additional original appointments or  
11 appointments to fill any vacancies that may occur in its membership.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 109.** (1) The counties with territory in a WRIA  
13 may elect to conduct multi-WRIA planning with the counties with  
14 territory in one or more other WRIAs. If the counties with territory  
15 in these other WRIAs concur, all of the counties with territory in  
16 these WRIAs shall convene and shall appoint one planning unit to  
17 conduct the water resource planning for the multi-WRIA area.

18 (a) The planning unit shall be composed of: (i) Up to one member,  
19 as that number is determined by the counties jointly, for each county  
20 with territory in the multi-WRIA area representing the counties and  
21 appointed by the counties jointly; (ii) up to one member, as that  
22 number is determined by the cities jointly, for each county with  
23 territory in the multi-WRIA area, representing cities with territory in  
24 the multi-WRIA area and appointed jointly by those cities; (iii) up to  
25 three members, as that number is determined by the districts,  
26 representing water supply utilities other than those of a city or town  
27 with territory within the multi-WRIA area and appointed jointly by  
28 those districts; (iv) up to two members, as that number is determined  
29 by the districts, representing all conservation districts with  
30 territory within the multi-WRIA area and appointed jointly by those  
31 districts; (v) three members representing various special interest  
32 groups appointed jointly by the cities with territory within the multi-  
33 WRIA area; and six members representing various special interest groups  
34 appointed jointly by the counties with territory within the multi-WRIA  
35 area; (vi) one member representing the general citizenry appointed  
36 jointly by the cities with territory within the multi-WRIA area; (vii)  
37 three members representing the general citizenry appointed jointly by  
38 the counties with territory in the multi-WRIA area, of which at least

1 one shall be a holder of a water right certificate and at least one  
2 shall be a holder of a water right for which a statement of claim was  
3 in the state's water rights claims registry before January 1, 1997;  
4 (viii) if one or more federal Indian reservations are located in whole  
5 or in part within the boundaries of the multi-WRIA area, the planning  
6 unit shall extend an invitation to the tribal government of each  
7 reservation to appoint one member representing the tribal government;  
8 and (ix) three members representing state agencies including the  
9 secretary of the department of transportation or the secretary's  
10 designee, the director of the department of fish and wildlife or the  
11 director's designee, and the director of the department of ecology or  
12 the director's designee. The three members representing state  
13 government shall have a single vote representing state agency  
14 interests.

15 (b) In addition, for a multi-WRIA planning unit located within  
16 Pierce, King, or Snohomish county, one representative of the water  
17 purveyor using the largest amount of water from the multi-WRIA area  
18 shall be a voting member of the planning unit whether the principal  
19 offices of the purveyor are or are not located within the multi-WRIA  
20 area.

21 (c) Except for a person appointed under (a)(ix) or (b) of this  
22 subsection, each person appointed to a multi-WRIA planning unit shall  
23 have been a resident and property owner within the multi-WRIA area for  
24 at least three years. State employees or state officials other than  
25 members appointed under subsection (a)(ix) or (b) of this subsection  
26 may be appointed to the planning unit unless they have state water  
27 resource-related duties. In appointing persons to the multi-WRIA  
28 planning unit representing special interest groups the counties shall  
29 consider industrial water users, general businesses, hydroelectric and  
30 thermal power producers, and irrigated agriculture, nonirrigated  
31 agriculture, forestry, recreation, environmental, and fisheries  
32 interest groups and other groups with interests in the multi-WRIA area.  
33 Counties shall attempt to provide for a balanced group of interests on  
34 the planning unit, with emphasis given to local interests and concerns.

35 (2) In a multi-WRIA area where water resource planning efforts have  
36 commenced before the effective date of this section, such as but not  
37 limited to the Kettle river WRIA, the county legislative authorities  
38 with territory within the WRIA in accordance with subsection (1) of  
39 this section may, by majority vote, choose to adopt the existing



1 planning unit membership for purposes of planning under chapter . . . ,  
2 Laws of 1997 (this act).

3 Nothing in this act shall affect ongoing efforts to develop new  
4 resources and the sharing of existing resources. No moratorium may be  
5 imposed on water resource decision making by the department solely  
6 because of ongoing planning efforts or the absence of a plan or  
7 planning effort. Any new planning units formed under this act shall  
8 recognize efforts already in progress.

9 (3)(a) The counties in the multi-WRIA area shall select, by a  
10 majority vote, a governmental entity in the multi-WRIA area to act as  
11 lead agency for water resource planning in the multi-WRIA area under  
12 this chapter. Such an entity shall serve as the lead agency if it  
13 agrees in writing to do so. All appointments shall be made within  
14 sixty days of the date the lead agency in the multi-WRIA area notifies  
15 the other appointing authorities to convene to make appointments or the  
16 appointments shall be made by the counties with territory in the multi-  
17 WRIA area in the same manner the counties make other appointments.

18 (b) The local governments of the WRIA planning unit may, by  
19 majority vote, add up to two additional members representing interests  
20 that are not included in the planning unit.

21 (c) A vacancy on the planning unit shall be filled by appointment  
22 in the same manner prescribed for appointing the position that has  
23 become vacant. The planning unit shall convene and begin work as soon  
24 as two-thirds of the number of persons eligible to be members of the  
25 planning unit have been appointed. All positions must be filled within  
26 thirty days of the convening of the planning unit. The unit shall not  
27 interrupt its work to await additional original appointments or  
28 appointments to fill any vacancies that may occur in its membership.

29 (4) A planning unit for a multi-WRIA area shall perform all of the  
30 functions assigned by this chapter to a WRIA planning unit and is  
31 subject to all of the provisions of this chapter that apply to a WRIA  
32 planning unit.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 110.** The lead agency shall provide staff  
34 support from resources provided for planning under chapter . . . , Laws  
35 of 1997 (this act) for the work of the WRIA planning unit. Each WRIA  
36 planning unit may establish its own methods of operation that are  
37 consistent with this chapter and may establish methods for reviewing  
38 the operations of its lead agency. No planning unit appointed or

1 selected under this chapter may possess or exercise the power of  
2 eminent domain. No planning unit appointed or selected under this  
3 chapter may take any action that affects in any manner a general  
4 adjudication proceeding for water rights, completed or ongoing. Each  
5 WRIA planning unit is encouraged to: Consider information and plans  
6 that may have been previously developed by other entities in  
7 establishing water resource management plans for the WRIA; consider  
8 existing data regarding water resources in the WRIA; and, for a WRIA  
9 that borders another state, cooperate with local government  
10 counterparts in the adjacent state regarding water resource planning.  
11 Water resource plans developed under this chapter for a WRIA may not  
12 interfere in any manner with a general adjudication of water rights,  
13 completed or ongoing. Such a WRIA plan may not in any manner impair,  
14 diminish, or interfere with a water right that exists before the  
15 adoption of the plan by the department under section 113 of this act.

16 All meetings of a WRIA planning unit shall be conducted as public  
17 meetings as required for such meetings by the open public meetings act,  
18 chapter 42.30 RCW. Some time shall be set aside at the end of each  
19 meeting of a WRIA planning unit for public comments. Each planning  
20 unit shall establish procedures to be followed by the unit in making  
21 decisions. The objective to be sought by the planning unit in making  
22 decisions is to reach consensus among its members on the decisions.  
23 Decisions by a two-thirds majority vote may be used if the unit has  
24 found that attempts at achieving consensus have not been successful.

25 No person who is a member of a WRIA planning unit may designate  
26 another to act on behalf of the person as a member or to attend as a  
27 member a meeting of the unit on behalf of the person. If a member of  
28 a WRIA planning unit is absent from more than five meetings of the WRIA  
29 planning unit that constitute twenty percent or more of the meetings  
30 that have been conducted by the planning unit while the person is a  
31 member of the unit and these absences have not been excused as provided  
32 by this section, the member's position on the WRIA planning unit is to  
33 be considered vacant. A person's absence from a meeting may be  
34 excused: By the chair of the planning unit if a written request to do  
35 so is received by the chair before the meeting from which the member is  
36 to be absent; or by a majority vote of the members of the planning unit  
37 at the meeting during which the member is absent.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 111.**    (1) Each WRIA planning unit shall develop  
2 a water resource plan. The plan must address the elements listed in  
3 subsection (2) of this section and may include other elements added by  
4 the planning unit. Once organized, the first task of the planning unit  
5 is to prioritize these elements regarding their importance in the WRIA  
6 and in developing a water resource plan for the WRIA. A plan shall not  
7 be developed such that its provisions are in conflict with state  
8 statute or federal law or impair, diminish, or interfere in any manner  
9 with a water right existing prior to its adoption or with the  
10 construction, operation, or maintenance of a federal reclamation  
11 project or an instream flow requirement or condition established for  
12 hydroelectric power project licensed under the federal power act. No  
13 aspect of the plan may establish standards for water quality or  
14 regulate water quality in any manner whatsoever.

15        (2) The plan must include the following:

16        (a) An assessment of water supply and use in the WRIA, including:

17        (i) A quantitative estimation of the amount of surface and ground  
18 water present in the planning unit, using United States geological  
19 survey information and other existing sources of information;

20        (ii) A quantitative estimation using existing sources of  
21 information, of the amount of precipitation and surface and ground  
22 water available, using currently available or likely available  
23 technologies, collectively for both current and future water uses,  
24 including for instream purposes and for withdrawal or diversion;

25        (iii) A quantitative estimation using existing sources of  
26 information, of the amount of surface and ground water actually being  
27 used, and the months of peak and minimum use, both in-stream and by  
28 withdrawal, for agricultural, industrial, fisheries, recreational,  
29 environmental, municipal, and residential purposes, and including  
30 amounts claimed, permitted, or certificated for future municipal needs;  
31 and

32        (iv) A quantitative estimation of the amount of water,  
33 approximately, that is represented by amounts in claims in the water  
34 rights claims registry, in water use permits, in certificated rights,  
35 and in rules establishing instream flows;

36        (b) A quantitative description of future water-based instream and  
37 out-of-stream needs in the planning unit, based on projected population  
38 and agricultural and other economic growth. That is, an identification  
39 of the water needed collectively for use for agricultural, fisheries,

1 recreational, environmental, industrial, municipal, and residential  
2 purposes. If a federal reclamation project is providing water for  
3 reclamation purposes within the WRIA or multi-WRIA area, federal  
4 reclamation water use requirements shall be those for project lands  
5 within the WRIA or multi-WRIA area;

6 (c) Instream flows.

7 (i) Except for the main stem of the Columbia river or the main stem  
8 of the Snake river, a planning unit may propose instream flow levels as  
9 part of its plan for other rivers and streams in its WRIA or multi-WRIA  
10 area.

11 (ii) The planning unit, by unanimous recorded vote of all voting  
12 members, may set specific instream flow levels, and such flow levels  
13 shall be adopted by rule of the department.

14 (iii) If the planning unit is unable to approve specific instream  
15 flow levels unanimously, such levels may be submitted as a recommended  
16 instream flow in the WRIA plan for consideration by the department.  
17 Such recommendations must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of  
18 the voting members of the planning unit.

19 (iv) Instream flow levels proposed under this subsection may not  
20 conflict with flow requirements or conditions in effect under a license  
21 issued under the federal power act.

22 (v) The planning unit may propose adjustments to instream flow  
23 levels that have been set by the state before the adoption of the  
24 planning unit's plan and will propose instream flow levels as part of  
25 the plan for the other rivers, streams, and lakes for which it  
26 determines the establishment of flows or levels to be appropriate in  
27 the WRIA, or in the multi-WRIA area for multi-WRIA planning under  
28 section 109 of this act.

29 (vi) The planning unit, by unanimous recorded vote of all voting  
30 members, may adjust established instream flow levels, and such flow  
31 levels shall be adopted by rule of the department.

32 (vii) If the planning unit is unable to approve such adjustments  
33 unanimously, such levels may be submitted as a recommended adjustment  
34 to established instream flows in the WRIA plan for consideration by the  
35 department. Such recommendations must be approved by a two-thirds  
36 majority vote of the voting members of the planning unit.

37 (viii) An instream flow or base flow or level set for a body of  
38 water in a WRIA plan adopted by the department under section 113 of

1 this act supersedes any other such flow or level previously established  
2 for the body of water;

3 (d) A quantitative description of the ground water and of the  
4 surface water available for further appropriation including water that  
5 may be obtained through reuse. As used in this subsection (2)(d),  
6 "available" means available on the date the plan takes effect as a rule  
7 under section 113 of this act;

8 (e) An identification of known areas that provide for the recharge  
9 of aquifers from the surface and areas where aquifers recharge surface  
10 bodies of water;

11 (f) Strategies for increasing water supplies in the WRIA,  
12 including:

13 (i) Water conservation and reuse measures; and

14 (ii) Storage enhancements, including modifications to existing  
15 reservoirs, new reservoirs, and underground storage. Any quantity of  
16 water made available under these strategies is a quantity that is in  
17 addition to the water declared available for appropriation under (d) of  
18 this subsection; and

19 (g) An identification of areas where voluntary water-related  
20 habitat improvement projects or voluntary transactions providing for  
21 the purchase of water-related habitat or water-related habitat  
22 easements would provide the greatest benefit to habitat in the WRIA,  
23 and a prioritization of the areas based on their potential for  
24 providing such benefits. The purpose of this element of the plan is to  
25 provide a means of coordinating nonregulatory, voluntary efforts for  
26 improving water-related habitat in the WRIA.

27 (3) Upon request the department shall assist the planning unit in  
28 drafting proposed implementing rules for the elements of the plan over  
29 which the department has authority. The draft rules shall accompany  
30 the plan as it is reviewed under the provisions of this chapter.

31 (4) A plan shall not be developed under this chapter to require  
32 directly or indirectly the implementation of laws, rules, or programs  
33 that are designed primarily to control water pollution or discharges of  
34 pollutants to water, to regulate effluent discharges or wastewater  
35 treatment systems or facilities, or to establish or require the  
36 achievement of water quality standards, including but not limited to  
37 chapter 90.48 RCW and rules adopted under chapter 90.48 RCW, the  
38 national pollutant discharge elimination system permit program, and the  
39 state waste discharge permit program.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 112.**    (1) Water resource management plans  
2 developed pursuant to the process in this chapter and subsequently  
3 adopted by the department under section 113 of this act are presumed  
4 valid. This presumption shall apply in any petition or action filed  
5 against a plan.

6        (2) Any action taken by a state agency regarding or affecting water  
7 resources within a WRIA for which a plan has been adopted under section  
8 113 of this act and any planning conducted by a state agency regarding  
9 or affecting water resources within a WRIA for which a plan has been  
10 adopted under section 113 of this act shall be taken or conducted in a  
11 manner that is consistent with the plan. All actions and decisions of  
12 the department regarding water resources in the WRIA shall be  
13 consistent with and based upon such an adopted plan for the WRIA. Any  
14 other authority of the department exercised within the WRIA regarding  
15 or affecting water resources shall be exercised in a manner that is  
16 consistent with such an adopted plan.

17        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 113.**    (1) Upon completing a proposed water  
18 resource plan for the WRIA, the WRIA planning unit shall publish notice  
19 of and conduct at least one public hearing in the WRIA on the proposed  
20 plan. The planning unit shall take care to provide notice of the  
21 hearing throughout the WRIA or multi-WRIA area. As a minimum, it shall  
22 publish a notice of the hearing in one or more newspapers of general  
23 circulation in the WRIA or multi-WRIA area. After considering the  
24 public comments presented at the hearing or hearings, the planning unit  
25 shall submit a copy of its proposed plan to the department and to the  
26 tribal council of each reservation with territory within the WRIA.

27        (2)(a) The department shall provide advice as to any specific  
28 subsections or sections of the plan that the department believes to be  
29 in conflict with state statute or federal law and may provide other  
30 recommendations regarding the plan. The department shall transmit its  
31 advice and recommendations regarding the plan to the WRIA planning unit  
32 within sixty days of receiving it for review.

33        (b) The tribal council may review and provide comments and  
34 recommendations to the planning unit within sixty days of the receipt  
35 of the plan.

36        (3) The WRIA planning unit shall consider each recommendation  
37 provided under subsection (2) of this section. The planning unit may  
38 adopt such a recommendation or provide changes to respond to the advice

1 of the department and the tribal council by a two-thirds majority vote  
2 of the members of the planning unit.

3 The WRIA planning unit shall approve a water resource plan for the  
4 WRIA by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the planning unit.  
5 An approved plan shall be submitted to the counties with territory  
6 within the WRIA for adoption. If a WRIA planning unit receives funding  
7 for WRIA or multi-WRIA planning under section 106 of this act and does  
8 not approve a plan for submission to the counties within four years of  
9 the date the planning unit receives the first of that funding from the  
10 department for the planning, the department shall develop and adopt a  
11 water resource plan for the WRIA or multi-WRIA area.

12 (4) The legislative authority of each of the counties with  
13 territory within the WRIA shall provide public notice for and conduct  
14 at least one public hearing on the WRIA plan submitted to the county  
15 under this section. The counties shall take care to provide notice of  
16 the hearings throughout the WRIA or multi-WRIA area. As a minimum,  
17 they shall publish a notice of the hearings in one or more newspapers  
18 of general circulation in the WRIA or multi-WRIA area. After the  
19 public hearings, the legislative authorities of these counties shall  
20 convene in joint session to consider the plan. The counties may  
21 approve or reject the plan, but may not amend the plan. Approval of a  
22 plan, or of recommendations for a plan that is not approved, shall be  
23 made by a majority vote of the members of the various legislative  
24 authorities of the counties with territory in the WRIA based on the  
25 votes allocated under section 108 of this act.

26 If the plan is not approved, it shall be returned to the WRIA  
27 planning unit with recommendations for revisions. Any revised plan and  
28 implementing rules prepared by the planning unit shall be submitted to  
29 the department and to the counties as provided by this section for WRIA  
30 water resource plans generally.

31 (5) If the plan is approved by the members of the legislative  
32 authorities, the plan shall be transmitted to the department for  
33 adoption. The department shall adopt such an approved WRIA water  
34 resource plan by rule. The department has no discretion to amend or  
35 reject the plan except as provided in section 111(2)(c) (iii) or (vii)  
36 of this act. A copy of the plan and notice of its adoption as rules  
37 shall be published in the state register under chapter 34.05 RCW. The  
38 public hearing required by chapter 34.05 RCW shall be deemed to have

1 been satisfied by public hearings held by county legislative  
2 authorities.

3 (6) If the department finds that an element of a WRIA plan is in  
4 conflict with state statute or federal law and the unit does not remove  
5 the conflict created by the element from its plan, the state is not  
6 liable for any judgment that may be awarded regarding the conflict.  
7 The department may file a petition for declaratory judgment in the  
8 superior court to determine whether the element is or is not in  
9 conflict with state statute or federal law. The petition shall be  
10 filed in the superior court in the county with the largest area in the  
11 WRIA or multi-WRIA area governed by the plan. The counties that  
12 approved the plan shall be named as parties to the proceeding. The  
13 superior court shall review the potential conflict under the error of  
14 law standard. If the superior court finds that an element of the plan  
15 is in conflict with state statute or federal law, that element of the  
16 plan shall be invalid. Decisions on such petitions are reviewable as  
17 in other civil cases. This subsection shall not be construed as  
18 establishing such state liability for any other element of the plan  
19 adopted as rules.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 114.** The WRIA planning units may accept grants,  
21 funds, and other financing, as well as enter into cooperative  
22 agreements with private and public entities for planning assistance and  
23 funding.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 115.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 (1) The department shall rule in a timely manner upon complete  
27 applications to appropriate public surface and ground water. For  
28 complete applications that seek to appropriate water from within a WRIA  
29 for which a WRIA plan has been adopted, the department shall grant or  
30 deny the application within one hundred eighty days of the date the  
31 properly completed application is filed with the department, except as  
32 provided in subsection (2) of this section. For applications filed  
33 after July 1, 1999, that seek to appropriate water from within a WRIA  
34 for which no WRIA plan has been adopted, the department shall grant or  
35 deny the application within one year of the date the properly completed  
36 application is filed with the department, except as provided in  
37 subsection (2) of this section. The times allowed in this section to



1 rule upon an application shall not include the time it takes the  
2 applicant to respond to an explicit request for additional information  
3 reasonably required to make a determination on the application. The  
4 department shall be allowed only one such request for additional  
5 information. The cost of obtaining such information shall be  
6 reasonable in relation to the quantity and value of the water right  
7 applied for. Once the applicant responds to an information request,  
8 the stay of the time allowed for the permit decision shall end.

9 (2) If a detailed statement, generally referred to as an  
10 environmental impact statement, must be prepared under chapter 43.21C  
11 RCW for or in regard to an application to appropriate water, the  
12 department shall grant or deny the application within ninety days of  
13 the date the final environmental impact statement is available from the  
14 official responsible for it under chapter 43.21C RCW.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 116.** A new section is added to chapter 34.05  
16 RCW to read as follows:

17 (1) Once the department of ecology receives a water resource plan  
18 submitted by a WRIA planning unit for advice and recommendations under  
19 section 113 of this act, the department shall conduct at least one  
20 public hearing on the plan and shall provide notice of the hearing and  
21 proposed plan as provided in RCW 34.05.320 for the proposal of a rule.  
22 The department shall maintain a file for the plan. Once the plan has  
23 been adopted by the counties in the WRIA under section 113 of this act  
24 and the plan has been submitted to the department of ecology, the  
25 department shall file the plan with the code reviser along with an  
26 order adopting the plan as rules. The code reviser shall cause the  
27 order and the water resource plan to be published in the Washington  
28 state register in the manner provided for the adoption of final rules  
29 and shall incorporate the plan into the Washington Administrative Code.  
30 No other aspect of this chapter that establishes procedures for the  
31 adoption of rules applies to the adoption of the plan by the  
32 department.

33 (2) For the purposes of this section, "WRIA" has the meaning  
34 established in section 104 of this act.

35 (3) Sections 101 through 116 of this act are null and void if any  
36 of sections 401, 402, or 501 of this act is vetoed by June 30, 1997.



1 mining, fish and wildlife maintenance and enhancement, recreational,  
2 and thermal power production purposes, and preservation of  
3 environmental and aesthetic values, and all other uses compatible with  
4 the enjoyment of the public waters of the state, are declared to be  
5 beneficial.

6 (2) Allocation of waters among potential uses and users shall be  
7 based generally on the securing of the maximum net benefits for the  
8 people of the state. Maximum net benefits shall constitute total  
9 benefits less costs including opportunities lost.

10 (3) The quality of the natural environment shall be protected and,  
11 where possible, enhanced as follows:

12 (a) Perennial rivers and streams of the state shall be retained  
13 with base flows necessary to provide for preservation of wildlife,  
14 fish, scenic, aesthetic and other environmental values, and  
15 navigational values. Lakes and ponds shall be retained substantially  
16 in their natural condition. Withdrawals of water which would conflict  
17 therewith shall be authorized only in those situations where it is  
18 clear that overriding considerations of the public interest will be  
19 served.

20 (b) Waters of the state shall be of high quality. Regardless of  
21 the quality of the waters of the state, all wastes and other materials  
22 and substances proposed for entry into said waters shall be provided  
23 with all known, available, and reasonable methods of treatment prior to  
24 entry. Notwithstanding that standards of quality established for the  
25 waters of the state would not be violated, wastes and other materials  
26 and substances shall not be allowed to enter such waters which will  
27 reduce the existing quality thereof, except in those situations where  
28 it is clear that overriding considerations of the public interest will  
29 be served. Technology-based effluent limitations or standards for  
30 discharges for municipal water treatment plants located on the  
31 Chehalis, Columbia, Cowlitz, Lewis, or Skagit river shall be adjusted  
32 to reflect credit for substances removed from the plant intake water  
33 if:

34 (i) The municipality demonstrates that the intake water is drawn  
35 from the same body of water into which the discharge is made; and

36 (ii) The municipality demonstrates that no violation of receiving  
37 water quality standards or appreciable environmental degradation will  
38 result.

1       (4) The development of multipurpose water storage facilities shall  
2 be a high priority for programs of water allocation, planning,  
3 management, and efficiency. The department, other state agencies,  
4 local governments, and planning units formed under section 108 or 109  
5 of this act shall evaluate the potential for the development of new  
6 storage projects and the benefits and effects of storage in reducing  
7 damage to stream banks and property, increasing the use of land,  
8 providing water for municipal, industrial, agricultural, power  
9 generation, and other beneficial uses, and improving stream flow  
10 regimes for fisheries and other instream uses.

11       (5) Adequate and safe supplies of water shall be preserved and  
12 protected in potable condition to satisfy human domestic needs.

13       (~~(5)~~) (6) Multiple-purpose impoundment structures are to be  
14 preferred over single-purpose structures. Due regard shall be given to  
15 means and methods for protection of fishery resources in the planning  
16 for and construction of water impoundment structures and other  
17 artificial obstructions.

18       (~~(6)~~) (7) Federal, state, and local governments, individuals,  
19 corporations, groups and other entities shall be encouraged to carry  
20 out practices of conservation as they relate to the use of the waters  
21 of the state. In addition to traditional development approaches,  
22 improved water use efficiency and conservation shall be emphasized in  
23 the management of the state's water resources and in some cases will be  
24 a potential new source of water with which to meet future needs  
25 throughout the state.

26       (~~(7)~~) (8) Development of water supply systems, whether publicly  
27 or privately owned, which provide water to the public generally in  
28 regional areas within the state shall be encouraged. Development of  
29 water supply systems for multiple domestic use which will not serve the  
30 public generally shall be discouraged where water supplies are  
31 available from water systems serving the public.

32       (~~(8)~~) (9) Full recognition shall be given in the administration  
33 of water allocation and use programs to the natural interrelationships  
34 of surface and ground waters.

35       (~~(9)~~) (10) Expressions of the public interest will be sought at  
36 all stages of water planning and allocation discussions.

37       (~~(10)~~) (11) Water management programs, including but not limited  
38 to, water quality, flood control, drainage, erosion control and storm  
39 runoff are deemed to be in the public interest.

1       **Sec. 202.** RCW 90.54.180 and 1989 c 348 s 5 are each amended to  
2 read as follows:

3       Consistent with the fundamentals of water resource policy set forth  
4 in this chapter, state and local governments, individuals,  
5 corporations, groups and other entities shall be encouraged to carry  
6 out water use efficiency and conservation programs and practices  
7 consistent with the following:

8       (1) Water efficiency and conservation programs should utilize an  
9 appropriate mix of economic incentives, cost share programs, regulatory  
10 programs, and technical and public information efforts. Programs which  
11 encourage voluntary participation are preferred.

12       (2) Increased water use efficiency should receive consideration as  
13 a potential source of water in state and local water resource planning  
14 processes. In determining the cost-effectiveness of alternative water  
15 sources, consideration should be given to the benefits of conservation,  
16 including waste water recycling, and (~~(impoundment)~~) storage of waters.

17       (3) In determining the cost-effectiveness of alternative water  
18 sources, full consideration should be given to the benefits of storage  
19 which can reduce the damage to stream banks and property, increase the  
20 utilization of land, provide water for municipal, industrial,  
21 agricultural, and other beneficial uses, provide for the generation of  
22 electric power from renewable resources, and improve stream flow  
23 regimes for fishery and other instream uses.

24       (4) Entities receiving state financial assistance for construction  
25 of water source expansion or acquisition of new sources shall develop,  
26 and implement if cost-effective, a water use efficiency and  
27 conservation element of a water supply plan pursuant to RCW  
28 43.20.230(1).

29       (5) State programs to improve water use efficiency should focus on  
30 those areas of the state in which water is overappropriated; areas that  
31 experience diminished streamflows or aquifer levels; and areas where  
32 projected water needs, including those for instream flows, exceed  
33 available supplies.

34       (6) Existing and future generations of citizens of the state of  
35 Washington should be made aware of the importance of the state's water  
36 resources and the need for wise and efficient use and development of  
37 this vital resource. In order to increase this awareness, state  
38 agencies should integrate public education on increasing water use  
39 efficiency into existing public information efforts. This effort shall

1 be coordinated with other levels of government, including local  
2 governments and Indian tribes.

3 **PART III**

4 **GENERAL ADJUDICATIONS**

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 301.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 The legislature finds that the lack of certainty regarding water  
8 rights within a water resource basin may impede management and planning  
9 for water resources. The legislature further finds that planning units  
10 conducting water resource planning under chapter 90.-- RCW (sections  
11 101 through 114 of this act) may find that the certainty provided by a  
12 general adjudication of water rights under this chapter is required for  
13 water planning or water management in a water resource inventory area  
14 or in a portion of the area. Therefore, such planning units may  
15 petition the department to conduct such a general adjudication and the  
16 department shall give high priority to such a request in initiating any  
17 such general adjudications under this chapter.

18 **PART IV**

19 **WATER PURVEYORS**

20 **Sec. 401.** RCW 90.03.383 and 1991 c 350 s 1 are each amended to  
21 read as follows:

22 (1) The legislature recognizes the value of interties for improving  
23 the reliability of public water systems, enhancing their management,  
24 and more efficiently utilizing the increasingly limited resource.  
25 Given the continued growth in the most populous areas of the state, the  
26 increased complexity of public water supply management, and the trend  
27 toward regional planning and regional solutions to resource issues,  
28 interconnections of public water systems through interties provide a  
29 valuable tool to ensure reliable public water supplies for the citizens  
30 of the state. Public water systems have been encouraged in the past to  
31 utilize interties to achieve public health and resource management  
32 objectives. The legislature finds that it is in the public interest to  
33 recognize interties existing and in use as of January 1, 1991, and to  
34 have associated water rights modified by the department of ecology to  
35 reflect current use of water through those interties, pursuant to

1 subsection (3) of this section. The legislature further finds it in  
2 the public interest to develop a coordinated process to review  
3 proposals for interties commencing use after January 1, 1991.

4 (2) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions  
5 shall apply:

6 (a) "Interties" are interconnections between public water systems  
7 permitting exchange, acquisition, or delivery of wholesale and/or  
8 retail water between those systems for other than emergency supply  
9 purposes, where such exchange, acquisition, or delivery is within  
10 established instantaneous and annual withdrawal rates specified in the  
11 systems' existing water right permits or certificates, or contained in  
12 claims filed pursuant to chapter 90.14 RCW, and which results in better  
13 management of public water supply consistent with existing rights and  
14 obligations. Interties include interconnections between public water  
15 systems permitting exchange, acquisition, or delivery of water to serve  
16 as primary or secondary sources of supply(~~(, but do not include~~  
17 ~~development of new sources of supply to meet future demand)) and the  
18 development of new sources of supply to meet future demands if the  
19 water system or systems receiving water through such an intertie make  
20 efficient use of existing sources of water supply and the provision of  
21 water through such an intertie is consistent with local land use plans.  
22 For this purpose, a system's full compliance with the state department  
23 of health's conservation guidelines for such systems is deemed  
24 efficient use.~~

25 (b) "Service area" is the area designated as the wholesale and/or  
26 retail area in a water system plan or a coordinated water system plan  
27 pursuant to chapter 43.20 or 70.116 RCW respectively. When a public  
28 water system does not have a designated service area subject to the  
29 approval process of those chapters, the service area shall be the  
30 designated place of use contained in the water right permit or  
31 certificate, or contained in the claim filed pursuant to chapter 90.14  
32 RCW.

33 (3)(a) Public water systems with interties existing and in use as  
34 of January 1, 1991, or that have received written approval from the  
35 department of health prior to that date, shall file written notice of  
36 those interties with the department of health and the department of  
37 ecology. The notice may be incorporated into the public water system's  
38 five-year update of its water system plan, but shall be filed no later  
39 than June 30, 1996. The notice shall identify the location of the

1 intertie; the dates of its first use; the purpose, capacity, and  
2 current use; the intertie agreement of the parties and the service  
3 areas assigned; and other information reasonably necessary to modify  
4 the public water system's water right (~~(permit)~~). Notwithstanding the  
5 provisions of RCW 90.03.380 and 90.44.100, for public water systems  
6 with interties existing and in use or with written approval as of  
7 January 1, 1991, the department of ecology, upon receipt of notice  
8 meeting the requirements of this subsection, shall, as soon as  
9 practicable, modify the place of use descriptions in the water right  
10 permits, certificates, or claims to reflect the actual use through such  
11 interties, provided that the place of use is within service area  
12 designations established in a water system plan approved pursuant to  
13 chapter 43.20 RCW, or a coordinated water system plan approved pursuant  
14 to chapter 70.116 RCW, and further provided that the water used is  
15 within the instantaneous and annual withdrawal rates specified in the  
16 water rights (~~(permit)~~) and that no outstanding complaints of  
17 impairment to existing water rights have been filed with the department  
18 of ecology prior to September 1, 1991. Where such complaints of  
19 impairment have been received, the department of ecology shall make all  
20 reasonable efforts to resolve them in a timely manner through agreement  
21 of the parties or through available administrative remedies.

22 (b) An intertie meeting the requirements of this subsection (3) for  
23 modifying the place of use description in a water right permit,  
24 certificate, or claim may be used to its full design or built capacity  
25 within the most recently approved retail or wholesale or retail and  
26 wholesale service area, without further approval under this section and  
27 without regard to the capacity actually used before January 1, 1991.

28 (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of RCW 90.03.380 and 90.44.100,  
29 exchange, acquisition, or delivery of water through interties approved  
30 by the department of health commencing use after January 1, 1991, shall  
31 be permitted when the intertie improves overall system reliability,  
32 enhances the manageability of the systems, provides opportunities for  
33 conjunctive use, or delays or avoids the need to develop new water  
34 sources, and otherwise meets the requirements of this section, provided  
35 that each public water system's water use shall not exceed the  
36 instantaneous or annual withdrawal rate specified in its water right  
37 authorization, shall not adversely affect existing water rights, and  
38 shall not be inconsistent with state-approved plans such as water  
39 system plans or other plans which include specific proposals for



1 construction of interties. Interties approved and commencing use after  
2 January 1, 1991, shall not be inconsistent with regional water resource  
3 plans developed pursuant to chapter 90.54 RCW or chapter 90.-- RCW  
4 (sections 101 through 114 of this act).

5 (5) For public water systems subject to the approval process of  
6 chapter 43.20 RCW or chapter 70.116 RCW, proposals for interties  
7 commencing use after January 1, 1991, shall be incorporated into water  
8 system plans pursuant to chapter 43.20 RCW or coordinated water system  
9 plans pursuant to chapter 70.116 RCW and submitted to the department of  
10 health and the department of ecology for review and approval as  
11 provided for in subsections (5) through (9) of this section. The plan  
12 shall state how the proposed intertie will improve overall system  
13 reliability, enhance the manageability of the systems, provide  
14 opportunities for conjunctive use, or delay or avoid the need to  
15 develop new water sources.

16 (6) The department of health shall be responsible for review and  
17 approval of proposals for new interties. In its review the department  
18 of health shall determine whether the intertie satisfies the criteria  
19 of subsection (4) of this section, with the exception of water rights  
20 considerations, which are the responsibility of the department of  
21 ecology, and shall determine whether the intertie is necessary to  
22 address emergent public health or safety concerns associated with  
23 public water supply.

24 (7) If the intertie is determined by the department of health to be  
25 necessary to address emergent public health or safety concerns  
26 associated with public water supply, the public water system shall  
27 amend its water system plan as required and shall file an application  
28 with the department of ecology to change its existing water right to  
29 reflect the proposed use of the water as described in the approved  
30 water system plan. The department of ecology shall process the  
31 application for change pursuant to RCW 90.03.380 or 90.44.100 as  
32 appropriate, except that, notwithstanding the requirements of those  
33 sections regarding notice and protest periods, applicants shall be  
34 required to publish notice one time, and the comment period shall be  
35 fifteen days from the date of publication of the notice. Within sixty  
36 days of receiving the application, the department of ecology shall  
37 issue findings and advise the department of health if existing water  
38 rights are determined to be adversely affected. If no determination is  
39 provided by the department of ecology within the sixty-day period, the

1 department of health shall proceed as if existing rights are not  
2 adversely affected by the proposed intertie. The department of ecology  
3 may obtain an extension of the sixty-day period by submitting written  
4 notice to the department of health and to the applicant indicating a  
5 definite date by which its determination will be made. No additional  
6 extensions shall be granted, and in no event shall the total review  
7 period for the department of ecology exceed one hundred eighty days.

8 (8) If the department of health determines the proposed intertie  
9 appears to meet the requirements of subsection (4) of this section but  
10 is not necessary to address emergent public health or safety concerns  
11 associated with public water supply, the department of health shall  
12 instruct the applicant to submit to the department of ecology an  
13 application for change to the underlying water right or claim as  
14 necessary to reflect the new place of use. The department of ecology  
15 shall consider the applications pursuant to the provisions of RCW  
16 90.03.380 and 90.44.100 as appropriate. The department of ecology  
17 shall not deny or limit a change of place of use for an intertie on the  
18 grounds that the holder of a permit has not yet put all of the water  
19 authorized in the permit to beneficial use. If in its review of  
20 proposed interties and associated water rights the department of  
21 ecology determines that additional information is required to act on  
22 the application, the department may request applicants to provide  
23 information necessary for its decision, consistent with agency rules  
24 and written guidelines. Parties disagreeing with the decision of the  
25 department of ecology ((øæ)) to approve or deny the application for  
26 change in place of use may appeal the decision to the pollution control  
27 hearings board.

28 (9) The department of health may approve plans containing intertie  
29 proposals prior to the department of ecology's decision on the water  
30 right application for change in place of use. However, notwithstanding  
31 such approval, construction work on the intertie shall not begin until  
32 the department of ecology issues the appropriate water right document  
33 to the applicant consistent with the approved plan.

34 (10) The 1997 amendments to this section in this act are null and  
35 void if any one of sections 101 through 116 of this act is vetoed by  
36 June 30, 1997.

37 **Sec. 402.** RCW 90.03.330 and 1987 c 109 s 89 are each amended to  
38 read as follows:



1 (b) Active service in the armed forces of the United States during  
2 military crisis;

3 (c) Nonvoluntary service in the armed forces of the United States;

4 (d) The operation of legal proceedings;

5 (e) Federal laws imposing land or water use restrictions either  
6 directly or through the voluntary enrollment of a landowner in a  
7 federal program implementing those laws, or acreage limitations, or  
8 production quotas;

9 (f) An elapse of time occurring while a request or application is  
10 processed for transferring or changing a water right to use by a public  
11 water supplier for municipal purposes;

12 (g) The implementation of practices or technologies or the  
13 installation or repair of facilities, including but not limited to  
14 water conveyance practices, technologies, or facilities, that are more  
15 efficient or more water use efficient than practices, technologies, or  
16 facilities previously used under the water right.

17 (2) Notwithstanding any other provisions of RCW 90.14.130 through  
18 90.14.180, there shall be no relinquishment of any water right:

19 (a) If such right is claimed for power development purposes under  
20 chapter 90.16 RCW and annual license fees are paid in accordance with  
21 chapter 90.16 RCW, or

22 (b) If such right is used for a standby or reserve water supply to  
23 be used in time of drought or other low flow period so long as  
24 withdrawal or diversion facilities are maintained in good operating  
25 condition for the use of such reserve or standby water supply, or

26 (c) If such right is claimed for a determined future development to  
27 take place ((either)) at any time within fifteen years of either July  
28 1, 1967, or the most recent beneficial use of the water right,  
29 whichever date is later, or

30 (d) If such right is claimed for municipal water supply purposes  
31 under chapter 90.03 RCW, or

32 (e) If such waters are not subject to appropriation under the  
33 applicable provisions of RCW 90.40.030 as now or hereafter amended.

34

## PART VI

35

### GENERAL PERMITS

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 601.** The legislature finds that the present  
37 delay in the processing of water right applications is not beneficial

1 to the citizens of the state nor is it in keeping with the goal of  
2 managing the resource to the highest possible standard and maximum net  
3 benefit.

4 The legislature further finds that water conservation efforts would  
5 be greatly enhanced by a permit system that encourages water right  
6 applicants to use only the amount of water actually necessary to meet  
7 their needs.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 602.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 (1) The department shall develop a general permit system for  
11 appropriating water for nonconsumptive, nonbypass uses. This system  
12 must be designed and used to accurately identify and register any water  
13 right application that qualifies for the streamlined process of  
14 appropriation of water by meeting the requirements in this section and  
15 registering the use. The general permit system must be applicable  
16 state-wide, and all waters of the state shall be eligible for coverage  
17 under the system. The evaluation and report required for an  
18 application under RCW 90.03.290 are not required for applications  
19 processed under the general permit system. For the purposes of this  
20 section:

21 (a) "Nonconsumptive, nonbypass use" means a use of water in which  
22 water is diverted from a stream or drawn from an aquifer and following  
23 its use is discharged back into or near the point of diversion or  
24 withdrawal without diminishment in quality and less than five thousand  
25 gallons of net consumption per day; and

26 (b) "Without diminishment of quality" means that, before being  
27 discharged back to its source, the water being discharged meets state  
28 water quality standards adopted under chapter 90.48 RCW.

29 (2) The department shall, by January 1, 1998, establish the general  
30 permit system by adopting rules in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW.  
31 Before the adoption of rules for a system, the department shall consult  
32 with representatives of the following interest groups: Agriculture;  
33 aquaculture; home construction and development; county government; city  
34 government; surface mining; and the environmental community. At least  
35 four public hearings must be held at various locations around the  
36 state, not less than two of which shall be east of the crest of the  
37 Cascade mountains. The rules must identify criteria for proposed uses  
38 of water for which applications might be processed under the system and

1 must establish procedures for filing and processing applications and  
2 issuing water rights certificates under the general permit system.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 603.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 An application for registration as a nonconsumptive, nonbypass  
6 water user under the general permit system established under section  
7 602 of this act must be made on a form adopted and provided by the  
8 department. Within sixty days of receipt of a properly completed  
9 application, the department shall determine whether the proposed use is  
10 eligible to be processed under the general permit system. If the  
11 department determines that the proposed use is eligible to be processed  
12 under the system, the application must be processed under the system  
13 within the next sixty days. The priority date of the water right  
14 established pursuant to this section shall be the date that the  
15 properly completed application is submitted. If the department  
16 determines that the proposed use is not eligible for the processing,  
17 the department shall explain to the applicant in writing the reasons  
18 for its determination. For a proposed use determined ineligible for  
19 the processing, if the department finds that the information contained  
20 on the application form substantially satisfies the information  
21 requirements for an application for a use that would normally be filed  
22 for processing the application outside of the general permit system,  
23 the department shall notify the applicant of its finding and shall  
24 process the application as if it were filed for processing outside of  
25 the system. If the department finds that the information does not  
26 substantially satisfy the requirements, the application must be  
27 considered to be incomplete for the processing and the applicant must  
28 be notified of this consideration.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 604.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
30 RCW to read as follows:

31 Nothing in sections 602 and 603 of this act authorizes the  
32 impairment or operates to impair any existing water rights. A water  
33 right holder under sections 602 and 603 of this act shall not make  
34 withdrawals that impair a senior water right. A holder of a senior  
35 water right who believes his or her water right is impaired may file a  
36 complaint with the department of ecology. Where such complaints of  
37 impairment have been received, the department of ecology shall make all

1 reasonable efforts to resolve them in a timely manner through agreement  
2 of the parties. Nothing in section 602 or 603 of this act may be  
3 construed as waiving any requirement established under chapter 90.48  
4 RCW or federal law that a permittee secure a discharge permit regarding  
5 water quality.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 605.** If specific funding for the purposes of  
7 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not  
8 provided by June 30, 1997, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act  
9 is null and void.

10 **PART VII**

11 **APPEALS**

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 701.** The legislature recognizes that in many  
13 cases the value of real property directly depends upon the amount of  
14 water that is available for use on that property. The legislature also  
15 recognizes that water rights are a type of property right in which many  
16 different parties may assert an interest. Current statutes require  
17 many property rights actions in which different parties assert  
18 interests, such as actions for partition or eminent domain, to be filed  
19 in superior court. The legislature further finds that informal  
20 procedures such as mediation and fact finding have been employed  
21 successfully in other areas of the law, and may produce positive  
22 results in certain types of water disputes. The legislature therefore  
23 finds that property owners should have a choice to select informal or  
24 formal hearings before the pollution control hearings board, and that  
25 relinquishment proceedings should be appealed to the local superior  
26 courts.

27 **Sec. 702.** RCW 34.05.514 and 1995 c 347 s 113 and 1995 c 292 s 9  
28 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

29 (1) Except as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section,  
30 proceedings for review under this chapter shall be instituted by paying  
31 the fee required under RCW 36.18.020 and filing a petition in the  
32 superior court, at the petitioner's option, for (a) Thurston county,  
33 (b) the county of the petitioner's residence or principal place of  
34 business, or (c) in any county where the property owned by the  
35 petitioner and affected by the contested decision is located.

1 (2) For proceedings involving institutions of higher education, the  
2 petition shall be filed either in the county in which the principal  
3 office of the institution involved is located or in the county of a  
4 branch campus if the action involves such branch.

5 (3) For proceedings involving the relinquishment of a water right  
6 and appeals of informal hearings of the pollution control hearings  
7 board, the petition shall be filed in the superior court for the county  
8 in which is located the land upon which the water was used.

9 **Sec. 703.** RCW 43.21B.110 and 1993 c 387 s 22 are each amended to  
10 read as follows:

11 (1) The pollution control hearings board shall only have  
12 jurisdiction to hear and decide appeals from the following decisions of  
13 the department, the director, the administrator of the office of marine  
14 safety, and the air pollution control boards or authorities as  
15 established pursuant to chapter 70.94 RCW, or local health departments:

16 (a) Civil penalties imposed pursuant to RCW 18.104.155, 70.94.431,  
17 70.105.080, 70.107.050, 88.46.090, 90.03.600, 90.48.144, 90.56.310, and  
18 90.56.330.

19 (b) Orders issued pursuant to RCW 18.104.043, 18.104.060,  
20 43.27A.190, 70.94.211, 70.94.332, 70.105.095, 86.16.020, 88.46.070,  
21 (~~90.14.130~~) and 90.48.120.

22 (c) The issuance, modification, or termination of any permit,  
23 certificate, or license by the department or any air authority in the  
24 exercise of its jurisdiction, including the issuance or termination of  
25 a waste disposal permit, the denial of an application for a waste  
26 disposal permit, or the modification of the conditions or the terms of  
27 a waste disposal permit.

28 (d) Decisions of local health departments regarding the grant or  
29 denial of solid waste permits pursuant to chapter 70.95 RCW.

30 (e) Decisions of local health departments regarding the issuance  
31 and enforcement of permits to use or dispose of biosolids under RCW  
32 70.95J.080.

33 (f) Any other decision by the department, the administrator of the  
34 office of marine safety, or an air authority which pursuant to law must  
35 be decided as an adjudicative proceeding under chapter 34.05 RCW.

36 (2) The jurisdiction of the pollution control hearings board is  
37 further limited as follows:



1        (a) The hearings board has no jurisdiction to review orders  
2 pertaining to the relinquishment of a water right under RCW 90.14.130,  
3 or to review proceedings regarding general adjudications of water  
4 rights conducted pursuant to chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW.

5        (b) The following hearings shall not be conducted by the hearings  
6 board:

7        ~~((a))~~ (i) Hearings required by law to be conducted by the  
8 shorelines hearings board pursuant to chapter 90.58 RCW.

9        ~~((b))~~ (ii) Hearings conducted by the department pursuant to RCW  
10 70.94.332, 70.94.390, 70.94.395, 70.94.400, 70.94.405, 70.94.410, and  
11 90.44.180.

12        ~~((c) Proceedings by the department relating to general~~  
13 ~~adjudications of water rights pursuant to chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW.~~

14        ~~(d))~~ (iii) Hearings conducted by the department to adopt, modify,  
15 or repeal rules.

16        (3) ~~((Review of))~~ Rules and regulations adopted by the hearings  
17 board shall be subject to review in accordance with the provisions of  
18 the Administrative Procedure Act, chapter 34.05 RCW.

19        **Sec. 704.** RCW 43.21B.130 and 1990 c 65 s 3 are each amended to  
20 read as follows:

21        The administrative procedure act, chapter 34.05 RCW, shall apply to  
22 the appeal of rules and regulations adopted by the board to the same  
23 extent as it applied to the review of rules and regulations adopted by  
24 the directors and/or boards or commissions of the various departments  
25 whose powers, duties and functions were transferred by section 6,  
26 chapter 62, Laws of 1970 ex. sess. to the department. ~~((All other~~  
27 ~~decisions and orders of the director and all decisions of air pollution~~  
28 ~~control boards or authorities established pursuant to chapter 70.94 RCW~~  
29 ~~shall be subject to review by the hearings board as provided in this~~  
30 ~~chapter.))~~

31        **Sec. 705.** RCW 43.21B.240 and 1989 c 175 s 105 are each amended to  
32 read as follows:

33        The department and air authorities shall not have authority to hold  
34 adjudicative proceedings pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act,  
35 chapter 34.05 RCW. Such hearings, except those involving water  
36 quantity decisions, as defined in section 713 of this act, that are  
37 appealed directly to a superior court, and appeals of orders pertaining

1 to the relinquishment of a water right issued pursuant to RCW  
2 90.14.130, shall be held by the pollution control hearings board.

3 **Sec. 706.** RCW 43.21B.305 and 1994 c 253 s 5 are each amended to  
4 read as follows:

5 In an appeal that involves a penalty of five thousand dollars or  
6 less, and in an informal hearing appeal relating to a water quantity  
7 decision as defined in section 713 of this act, the appeal may be heard  
8 by one member of the board, whose decision shall be the final decision  
9 of the board. The board shall define by rule alternative procedures to  
10 expedite small appeals. These alternatives may include: Mediation,  
11 upon agreement of all parties unless initiated as provided in section  
12 713 of this act; submission of testimony by affidavit; conducting  
13 hearing by telephone; or other forms that may lead to less formal and  
14 faster resolution of appeals.

15 **Sec. 707.** RCW 43.21B.310 and 1992 c 73 s 3 are each amended to  
16 read as follows:

17 (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, any order  
18 issued by the department(~~(, the administrator of the office of marine~~  
19 ~~safety,))~~ or authority pursuant to RCW 70.94.211, 70.94.332,  
20 70.105.095, 43.27A.190, 86.16.020, 88.46.070, or 90.48.120(2) or any  
21 provision enacted after July 26, 1987, or any permit, certificate, or  
22 license issued by the department may be appealed to the pollution  
23 control hearings board if the appeal is filed with the board and served  
24 on the department or authority within thirty days after receipt of the  
25 order. Except as provided under chapter 70.105D RCW, (~~this is~~) these  
26 are the exclusive means of appeal of such an order.

27 (~~(2)~~) (a) The department, the administrator, or the authority in  
28 its discretion may stay the effectiveness of an order during the  
29 pendency of such an appeal.

30 (~~(3)~~) (b) At any time during the pendency of an appeal of such an  
31 order to the board, the appellant may apply pursuant to RCW 43.21B.320  
32 to the hearings board for a stay of the order or for the removal  
33 thereof.

34 (~~(4)~~) (c) Any appeal before the hearings board must contain the  
35 following in accordance with the rules of the hearings board:

36 (~~(a)~~) (i) The appellant's name and address;

1       (~~(b)~~) (ii) The date and docket number of the order, permit, or  
2 license appealed;

3       (~~(c)~~) (iii) A description of the substance of the order, permit,  
4 or license that is the subject of the appeal;

5       (~~(d)~~) (iv) A clear, separate, and concise statement of every  
6 error alleged to have been committed;

7       (~~(e)~~) (v) A clear and concise statement of facts upon which the  
8 requester relies to sustain his or her statements of error; and

9       (~~(f)~~) (vi) A statement setting forth the relief sought.

10       (~~(5)~~) (d) Upon failure to comply with any final order of the  
11 department or the administrator, the attorney general, on request of  
12 the department or the administrator, may bring an action in the  
13 superior court of the county where the violation occurred or the  
14 potential violation is about to occur to obtain such relief as  
15 necessary, including injunctive relief, to insure compliance with the  
16 order. The air authorities may bring similar actions to enforce their  
17 orders.

18       (~~(6)~~) (e) An appealable decision or order shall be identified as  
19 such and shall contain a conspicuous notice to the recipient that it  
20 may be appealed only by filing an appeal with the hearings board and  
21 serving it on the department within thirty days of receipt.

22       (2) Water quantity decisions of the department, as defined in  
23 section 713 of this act, may be appealed either to the pollution  
24 control hearings board or directly to a superior court as provided in  
25 section 713 of this act. Appeals of orders pertaining to the  
26 relinquishment of a water right are filed in superior court as provided  
27 by RCW 90.14.130.

28       **Sec. 708.** RCW 43.27A.190 and 1987 c 109 s 11 are each amended to  
29 read as follows:

30       Notwithstanding and in addition to any other powers granted to the  
31 department of ecology, whenever it appears to the department that a  
32 person is violating or is about to violate any of the provisions of the  
33 following:

- 34       (1) Chapter 90.03 RCW; or
- 35       (2) Chapter 90.44 RCW; or
- 36       (3) Chapter 86.16 RCW; or
- 37       (4) Chapter 43.37 RCW; or
- 38       (5) Chapter 43.27A RCW; or

1 (6) Any other law relating to water resources administered by the  
2 department; or

3 (7) A rule or regulation adopted, or a directive or order issued by  
4 the department relating to subsections (1) through (6) of this section;  
5 the department may cause a written regulatory order to be served upon  
6 (~~said~~) the person either personally, or by registered or certified  
7 mail delivered to addressee only with return receipt requested and  
8 acknowledged by him or her. The order shall specify the provision of  
9 the statute, rule, regulation, directive or order alleged to be or  
10 about to be violated, and the facts upon which the conclusion of  
11 violating or potential violation is based, and shall order the act  
12 constituting the violation or the potential violation to cease and  
13 desist or, in appropriate cases, shall order necessary corrective  
14 action to be taken with regard to such acts within a specific and  
15 reasonable time. The regulation of a headgate or controlling works as  
16 provided in RCW 90.03.070, by a watermaster, stream patrolman, or other  
17 person so authorized by the department shall constitute a regulatory  
18 order within the meaning of this section. A regulatory order issued  
19 hereunder shall become effective immediately upon receipt by the person  
20 to whom the order is directed, except for regulations under RCW  
21 90.03.070 which shall become effective when a written notice is  
22 attached as provided therein. Any person aggrieved by such order may  
23 appeal the order pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310, except that appeals of  
24 orders pertaining to the relinquishment of a water right shall be filed  
25 in superior court pursuant to RCW 90.14.130.

26 **Sec. 709.** RCW 90.14.130 and 1987 c 109 s 13 are each amended to  
27 read as follows:

28 When it appears to the department of ecology that a person entitled  
29 to the use of water has not beneficially used his or her water right or  
30 some portion thereof, and it appears that (~~said~~) the person's right  
31 has or may have reverted to the state because of such nonuse, as  
32 provided by RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, or 90.14.180, the department of  
33 ecology shall notify such person by order: PROVIDED, That where a  
34 company, association, district, or the United States has filed a  
35 blanket claim under the provisions of RCW 90.14.060 for the total  
36 benefits of those served by it, the notice shall be served on such  
37 company, association, district or the United States and not upon any of  
38 its individual water users who may not have used the water or some

1 portion thereof which they were entitled to use. The order shall  
2 contain: (1) A description of the water right, including the  
3 approximate location of the point of diversion, the general description  
4 of the lands or places where such waters were used, the water source,  
5 the amount involved, the purpose of use, and the apparent authority  
6 upon which the right is based; (2) a statement that unless sufficient  
7 cause be shown on appeal the water right will be declared relinquished;  
8 and (3) a statement that such order may be appealed to the ((~~pollution~~  
9 ~~control hearings board~~)) superior court. Any person aggrieved by such  
10 an order may appeal it to the ((~~pollution control hearings board~~  
11 ~~pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310~~)) superior court for the county in which is  
12 located the land upon which the water was used. Any such appeal to  
13 superior court shall be heard de novo. The order shall be served by  
14 registered or certified mail to the last known address of the person  
15 and be posted at the point of division or withdrawal. The order by  
16 itself shall not alter the recipient's right to use water, if any.

17 **Sec. 710.** RCW 90.14.190 and 1987 c 109 s 14 are each amended to  
18 read as follows:

19 Any person feeling aggrieved by any decision of the department of  
20 ecology may have the same reviewed pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310.  
21 However, any order pertaining to the relinquishment of a water right  
22 shall be filed in superior court pursuant to RCW 90.14.130. In any such  
23 review, the findings of fact as set forth in the report of the  
24 department of ecology shall be prima facie evidence of the fact of any  
25 waiver or relinquishment of a water right or portion thereof. If the  
26 hearings board affirms the decision of the department, a party seeks  
27 review in superior court of that hearings board decision pursuant to  
28 chapter 34.05 RCW, and the court determines that the party was injured  
29 by an arbitrary, capricious, or erroneous order of the department, the  
30 court may award reasonable attorneys' fees.

31 **Sec. 711.** RCW 90.14.200 and 1989 c 175 s 180 are each amended to  
32 read as follows:

33 (1) All matters relating to the implementation and enforcement of  
34 this chapter by the department of ecology shall be carried out in  
35 accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW, the Administrative Procedure Act,  
36 except where the provisions of this chapter expressly conflict with  
37 chapter 34.05 RCW. Proceedings held pursuant to RCW 90.14.130 are

1 (~~adjudicative proceedings within the meaning of chapter 34.05 RCW.~~  
2 ~~Final decisions of the department of ecology in these proceedings~~)  
3 appealable to superior court as provided in that section. Other final  
4 decisions of the department of ecology under this chapter are subject  
5 to review by the pollution control hearings board in accordance with  
6 chapter 43.21B RCW.

7 (2) RCW 90.14.130 provides nonexclusive procedures for determining  
8 a relinquishment of water rights under RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, and  
9 90.14.180. RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, and 90.14.180 may be applied in,  
10 among other proceedings, general adjudication proceedings initiated  
11 under RCW 90.03.110 or 90.44.220: PROVIDED, That nothing herein shall  
12 apply to litigation involving determinations of the department of  
13 ecology under RCW 90.03.290 relating to the impairment of existing  
14 rights.

15 **Sec. 712.** RCW 90.66.080 and 1979 c 3 s 8 are each amended to read  
16 as follows:

17 The department is hereby empowered to promulgate such rules as may  
18 be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. Decisions of  
19 the department, other than rule making, shall be subject to review by  
20 the pollution control hearings board or a superior court in accordance  
21 with chapter 43.21B RCW.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 713.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21B  
23 RCW to read as follows:

24 (1) A water right claimant, or permit or certificate holder or  
25 applicant who is aggrieved or adversely affected by a water quantity  
26 decision may appeal the decision either to the pollution control  
27 hearings board pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310 or to the superior court for  
28 a county in which is located land on which the water is or was put to  
29 a beneficial use.

30 (2) At the request of any party, the board shall conduct an  
31 informal hearing, consisting of mediation and, if a settlement cannot  
32 be agreed upon, fact finding with recommendations. The hearings board  
33 shall adopt rules governing the election, practice, and procedures of  
34 informal hearings consistent with this section and section 714 of this  
35 act.

36 (3) For purposes of this chapter, a "water quantity decision"  
37 includes the following:

1 (a) A decision to grant or deny a permit or certificate for a right  
2 to the beneficial use of water or to amend, change, or transfer such a  
3 right; and

4 (b) A decision to enforce the conditions of a permit for, or right  
5 to, the beneficial use of water or to require any person to discontinue  
6 the use of water.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 714.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21B  
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) When one of the parties elects an informal hearing pursuant to  
10 section 713 of this act, a board member or an administrative law judge  
11 from the environmental hearings office shall be assigned as the  
12 mediator for the appeal.

13 (2) The parties involved in the informal hearing must provide the  
14 mediator and the other parties in advance with a clear, concise  
15 statement of the disputed issues and the parties' position in relation  
16 to the issues and supporting documentation. The mediator shall meet  
17 with the parties either jointly or separately, in the general area of  
18 the project under review or by telephone, at the discretion of the  
19 mediator, and shall take such steps as the mediator deems appropriate  
20 to resolve their differences and reach a settlement agreement. If a  
21 settlement agreement is reached, the mediator shall prepare and submit  
22 to the hearings board a written order of dismissal to which the  
23 settlement agreement is attached. The hearings board shall enter the  
24 order and dismiss the case unless the hearings board finds that the  
25 settlement agreement is contrary to law.

26 If the hearings board finds that the settlement agreement is  
27 contrary to law, it shall notify the parties and refer the dispute back  
28 to mediation.

29 (3) If the parties are unable to achieve a settlement agreement  
30 within ninety days after being appointed, the mediator shall issue a  
31 statement that a settlement agreement has not been reached. After  
32 issuance of the statement, the party filing the appeal may request the  
33 hearings board to submit the dispute to fact finding with  
34 recommendations. Notice of the request for fact finding must be sent  
35 to the other parties.

36 (4) Within five days of the receipt of the request for fact  
37 finding, the hearings board shall assign a board member or an  
38 administrative appeals judge from the environmental hearings office to

1 serve as fact finder. The person who served as the mediator to the  
2 dispute may serve as the fact finder with the consent of both parties.

3 (5) Within five days of being appointed, the fact finder shall  
4 establish a date, time, and place for the fact-finding hearing. The  
5 date of the hearing must be within thirty days of the appointment of  
6 the fact finder. The hearing shall be conducted in the general area  
7 where the project under review is located. At least seven days before  
8 the date of the hearing, each party must submit to the fact finder and  
9 to the other parties written proposals on all of the issues it intends  
10 to submit to fact finding. The fact finder has the power to issue  
11 subpoenas requiring the attendance and production of witnesses and the  
12 production of evidence. The order of presentation at the hearing shall  
13 be as agreed by the parties or as determined by the fact finder. Each  
14 documentary exhibit shall be filed with the fact finder and copies  
15 shall be provided to the other parties. The fact finder shall declare  
16 the hearing closed after the parties have completed presenting their  
17 testimony within agreed time limits.

18 (6) The fact finder shall, within thirty days following the  
19 conclusion of the hearing, make written findings of fact and written  
20 recommendations to the parties as to how the dispute should be  
21 resolved. The fact finder may not apply any presumption as part of the  
22 findings of fact or recommendations. A copy of the findings and  
23 recommendations shall be filed with the hearings board. The findings  
24 of fact and recommendations of the fact finder are advisory only, and  
25 are not subject to review by the hearings board.

26 (7) The time limits established in this section may be extended by  
27 mutual agreement of all the parties.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 715.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21B  
29 RCW to read as follows:

30 (1) Within thirty days after the fact finder has filed the findings  
31 of fact and recommendations pursuant to section 714 of this act, a  
32 party may request a formal hearing by the hearings board or appeal the  
33 water quantity decision directly to superior court. All parties must  
34 agree to a formal hearing before a formal hearing is granted.

35 (2) If a party elects to file an action in superior court following  
36 an informal hearing, it must be filed in the county in which is located  
37 the land upon which the water is or would be used.



1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 716.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21B  
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 In all appeals involving a water quantity decision by the  
4 department, as defined in section 713 of this act, the appeal to  
5 superior court shall be heard de novo. If an informal hearing on the  
6 decision or order had been completed by the pollution control hearings  
7 board, no issue may be raised in superior court that was not raised and  
8 discussed as part of the fact-finding hearing. No bond may be required  
9 on appeals to the superior court or on review by the supreme court  
10 unless specifically required by the judge of the superior court.

11 **PART VIII**  
12 **MISCELLANEOUS**

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 801.** As used in this act, part headings  
14 constitute no part of the law.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 802.** Sections 101 through 114 of this act  
16 constitute a new chapter in Title 90 RCW.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 803.** If any provision of this act or its  
18 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the  
19 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other  
20 persons or circumstances is not affected."

21 **2SHB 2054** - S AMD - 509  
22 By Senator Morton

23 ADOPTED 4/18/97

24 On page 1, line 1 of the title, after "management;" strike the  
25 remainder of the title and insert "amending RCW 90.54.040, 90.54.020,  
26 90.54.180, 90.03.383, 90.03.330, 90.14.140, 43.21B.110, 43.21B.130,  
27 43.21B.240, 43.21B.305, 43.21B.310, 43.27A.190, 90.14.130, 90.14.190,  
28 90.14.200, and 90.66.080; reenacting and amending RCW 34.05.514; adding  
29 new sections to chapter 90.03 RCW; adding a new section to chapter  
30 34.05 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 43.21B RCW; adding a new  
31 chapter to Title 90 RCW; and creating new sections."

--- END ---