

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2826

As Reported By House Committee On:

Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to distribution of nonhighway vehicle funds.

Brief Description: Authorizing distribution of nonhighway vehicle funds to nonprofit off-road vehicle organizations.

Sponsors: Representatives Schoesler, Hatfield, Buck, Butler, Kessler and Robertson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/4/98, 2/5/98 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Butler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Anderson; Chandler; Hatfield and Pennington.

Staff: Linda Byers (786-7129).

Background: The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) administers a nonhighway and off-road vehicle (ORV) activities program. Funds for this program come from the portion the IAC receives from registration of off-road vehicles and motor vehicle fuel tax revenues. The IAC distributes a portion of these funds to state agencies, counties, municipalities, federal agencies, and Indian tribes through a competitive grants program. These public agencies use the grants they receive for planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, and management of nonhighway and off-road recreational opportunities.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Non-profit off-road vehicle organizations are also eligible to receive IAC funds through the nonhighway and off-road vehicle activities program competitive grants process if the funds are spent for projects or activities that benefit ORV recreation on lands once publicly owned that come into private ownership in a federally-approved land exchange completed between January 1, 1998, and January 1, 2005.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill allowed nonprofit ORV organizations to compete for these funds if the projects were located on lands acquired in a land exchange with a federal or state agency on or after December 3, 1964. The substitute bill allows these groups to compete for these funds for projects or activities on lands once publicly owned that come into private ownership in a federally-approved land exchange completed between January 1, 1998, and January 1, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Plum Creek Timber Company is working on a land exchange with the U.S. Forest Service. The lands that Plum Creek would acquire in the exchange include a parcel where the Forest Service already has an ORV trail partially paid for with these IAC funds. Groups want to continue to have access to the site, and the company plans to allow them access. The company can't apply for these funds as a private company; this bill would let a nonprofit ORV organization apply for the funds and maintain the trails. These are some of our favorite trails. It would be good to be able to apply for the IAC funds to keep working on these trails.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Steve Gano, Plum Creek Timber Company; and Jim Putman, Pacific Northwest 4-Wheel Drive Association (both in favor).