

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2837

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to improving wildlife resources and air transportation.

Brief Description: Identifying property abandoned by the department of fish and wildlife.

Sponsors: Representatives Clements, Skinner and Buck.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/3/98, 2/5/98 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/98, 95-0.

Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: 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 Department of Fish and Wildlife owns and manages a number of different properties in the state. These properties include land and facilities devoted to fish hatchery operations and lands managed for the benefit of wildlife species.

Summary of Bill: The Legislature finds that the Department of Fish and Wildlife manages property in the state where the department no longer uses the property for fish hatchery operations and where the location of the property impedes further development of air transportation facilities. The department is directed to identify all such properties in the state and to work with local governments in the counties where there are such properties to explore land exchanges to benefit wildlife and to facilitate improved air transportation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: In Yakima, the city needs to use property that is no longer used for a fish hatchery for expansion of the airport. We have tried to have dialogue with the department about this, but we haven't been successful so far. Any efforts to accelerate the process would be helpful. The hatchery is already encroaching on the airport safety zone. The city is willing to consider a trade of a wildlife feeding area. The department is supportive of working with local governments, but needs to insure that the state receives equal value for the property in any exchange.

Testimony Against: The Yakama tribe has an interest in working with the department to revitalize the hatchery for sturgeon.

Testified: Representative Jim Clements, prime sponsor; Senator Alex Deccio; Glenn Rice, city of Yakima; Bob Clem, Yakima airport (all in favor); Dawn Vyvyan, Yakama Nation (opposed); and Larry Peck, Department of Fish and Wildlife.