

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5116

As of January 15, 1997

Title: An act relating to natural area preserves.

Brief Description: Requiring that natural area preserves be accessible for public hunting, fishing, and trapping.

Sponsors: Senators Snyder, Hargrove, Bauer and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 1/21/97.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: The Natural Area Preserve Act was enacted in 1972. The purpose of the act was to establish a system of natural area preserves and a means to preserve the aquatic and land areas. Natural area preserves were defined to mean public or private areas of land or water which have retained their natural character, although not necessarily completely natural and undisturbed, which are important to preserve rare species of flora, fauna, geological or natural historic items.

The authority was given to the Department of Natural Resources and the Commissioner of Public Lands to administer the Natural Area Preserve Act. The department was given specific authority to protect natural areas within the state. The department establishes the land and water management policies by rule and regulation.

There is a Natural Area Heritage Advisory Council which has specific duties as required by law and its primary duty is to advise the Department of Natural Resources and the Office of the Commissioner of Public Lands.

In the last five years, there has been a significant number of new natural area preserves created through funding of the state Legislature working with the Department of Natural Resources trust land holdings.

Hunting is not an authorized activity in a natural area preserve.

Summary of Bill: Natural area preserves must be accessible to the public for hunting, fishing and trapping. The activities of hunting, fishing and trapping are regulated by the Washington State Fish and Wildlife Commission and managed for those purposes by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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