

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6520

As of February 3, 1998

Title: An act relating to local funding of watershed plans.

Brief Description: Authorizing local coordinated water programs.

Sponsors: Senators Fraser, Fairley and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Environment: 2/4/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Staff: Paul Mabrey (786-7412)

Background: A challenge exists whereby the implementation of the Growth Management Act, ongoing water resources planning and management efforts, and salmonid recovery actions should strive to support each other and should strive to be logically consistent with each other. To meet this challenge as well as to accommodate new federal and state regulatory requirements for salmon recovery, managing storm water and protecting the drinking water supply, counties should integrate their planning and management activities involving both land use and water resources. Such planning and management integration could be done on a watershed basis.

Summary of Bill: Authority is granted to any county that is participating in the development of a comprehensive watershed plan or salmon recovery plan to create a coordinated water resources program. The program establishes funding from county sources within the watershed to assist in implementation of the watershed plan or fish recovery plan.

When the county proposes a coordinated water resources program, it consults with affected cities, tribes and special districts before scheduling the proposal for a hearing. After consultation, boundaries of the program operation are established. A hearing is held wherein the county considers public comments, after which the boundaries are described, as well as the amount and source of the funding that is to be committed to the program. However, the boundaries may not lie within territory located within a city without the approval of the city, nor may the boundaries lie within the unincorporated area of another county without that county's approval.

Funding for implementation of the program is provided by authorizing each county, city, and special district to collect up to 10 percent of existing fees, charges, or special assessments levied and collected within the boundaries of a proposed or established water resources program. A special coordinated water resources program account or fund is authorized for the purpose of receiving and expending funds collected.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 3, 1998.

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