

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1331

Title: An act relating to the use of volunteers by the State Parks and Recreation Commission.

Brief Description: Using volunteers by the State Parks and Recreation Commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Buck, Sump, Regala, Anderson, Lantz, Doumit, G. Chandler, Pennington, Hatfield, Rockefeller, D. Sommers, Koster, Benson, Wolfe and Mulliken; by request of Parks and Recreation Commission.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Meeting Date: February 2, 1999.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Josh Weiss, Counsel (786-7129)

Background: The State Parks and Recreation Commission does not have explicit statutory authority to utilize volunteers in a generalized manner. The commission is allowed to grant permits to individual volunteers or volunteer organizations, who wish to undertake specific projects to improve state parks. In these circumstances, the commission is liable for certain expenses relating to these activities, including: insurance premiums, compensation of staff who assist volunteers, use of natural resources contained within the park, paint, incidental materials, and equipment. Prior to granting a permit for these activities, the commission is required to determine that the individuals are persons of good standing in the community in which they reside.

Summary of Bill: Language relating to the use of volunteers and related expenses is provided under the commission's general duties. Expenses relating to the use of volunteers is limited to insurance premiums, compensation of staff who assist with volunteers, materials and equipment, training, reimbursement of authorized travel expense, and reasonable expenses relating to the recognition of such volunteers. The commission is allowed to waive fees, such as camping fees, which would otherwise be applicable to volunteers. Volunteers may not be used to replace or supplant parks employees, and may not lead to the elimination of permanent positions.

The commission continues to have the authority to grant permits to individuals and organizations who wish to undertake projects to improve state parks. Language relating to expenses is removed, and is addressed as with general volunteers. The commission is not required to determine whether permitted volunteers are persons of good standing in the community in which they reside.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of the legislative session in which the measure is passed.

Rulemaking Authority: None.