

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1204

As of March 29, 1999

Title: An act relating to coordination of environmental restoration and land acquisition.

Brief Description: Coordinating land acquisition and environmental mitigation activities.

Sponsors: House Committee on Capital Budget (originally sponsored by Representatives K. Schmidt, Fisher, Romero, Mitchell, G. Chandler, Murray, Linville and Wood).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 4/1/99.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Ashley Probart (786-7319)

Background: The 1997-99 capital budget directed all state agencies receiving money in the capital budget or the transportation budget for land acquisition and environmental mitigation and restoration to coordinate those activities. The intent of the directive was to provide greater emphasis on shared resource management; improve ecological benefits gained from state expenditures; and increase mitigation credit opportunities for the Department of Transportation. The mitigation credits were not intended to reduce the Department of Transportation's mitigation obligations, but to reduce the cost of those obligations.

The Office of Financial Management was directed to report to the fiscal committees of the Legislature on the results of the coordination of these environmental activities and make recommendations to further improve the coordination among state agencies to achieve better cost-efficiencies and ecological benefits. The report was due on December 1, 1998.

Summary of Bill: An advisory committee to the Department of Transportation is created. The committee includes representatives from the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, the Conservation Commission, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Natural Resources, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Department of Ecology, and the Office of Financial Management. The Governor, or his designee, serves as chair of the committee.

The duties of the advisory committee are to:

- 1) coordinate state land acquisitions and environmental projects;
- 2) examine financial assistance programs to identify opportunities for improved coordination;
- 3) create a data base to enable coordination of environmental projects; and
- 4) recommend ways to better coordinate with other governmental and non-governmental entities.

The environmental affairs office of the Department of Transportation is the depository for the information collected by the committee. The coordination of state environmental projects is not interpreted to require additional permitting or compliance procedures for non-governmental entities.

State agencies that receive state appropriations for environmental projects must provide information to the environmental affairs office at the Department of Transportation. After July 2005, state agencies are also to identify and provide information on surplus real property to the office.

The Governor's Office must report to the Legislature on the progress of the coordination program by December 31, 1999, and make findings and recommendations for the program by December 31, 2000.

The bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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