

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5307

C 252 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning reclamation of underground mine tailings.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Swecker, Fraser and Kline; by request of Commissioner of Public Lands.

Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation

House Committee on Natural Resources

Background: The Department of Natural Resources employs geologists as part of the department's enforcement of reclamation laws for surface mining in Washington. Most of the mines in the state are open pit sand and gravel operations, and there are a few metal mines which are also regulated by the Department of Natural Resources.

In addition, there are a few underground metal mines, and in this case, the Department of Ecology regulates the reclamation of those sites. Since there are very few sites, the Department of Ecology uses the expertise of the Department of Natural Resources when preparing reclamation plans for the surface activities of these underground mines.

Summary: The surface mining definition of disturbed area— in the Department of Natural Resources' surface mining law is expanded to include aboveground waste rock sites and tailings for underground mines. The authority to regulate ongoing projects remains with the Department of Ecology until they are completed.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	0	
House	90	0	(House amended)
Senate	45	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 25, 1999