

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## 2SSB 5536

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As Passed Senate, March 12, 1999

**Title:** An act relating to state forest lands and municipal drinking water protection.

**Brief Description:** Creating a pilot project for a municipal watershed on state trust lands.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Spanel and Gardner).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation: 2/4/99, 2/15/99 [DPS-WM].  
Ways & Means: 3/1/99, 3/8/99 [DP2S].  
Passed Senate, 3/12/99, 47-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & RECREATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5536 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; T. Sheldon, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Oke, Snyder and Spanel.

**Staff:** Victor Moon (786-7469)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5536 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Loveland, Chair; Bauer, Vice Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Fairley, Fraser, Honeyford, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, McDonald, Rasmussen, Roach, Rossi, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Thibaudeau, West, Winsley, Wojahn and Zarelli.

**Staff:** Kari Guy (786-7437)

**Background:** Local governments have expressed concern over the impact of timber harvest within municipal watersheds. Under existing law, a city or town may request that the Department of Natural Resources alter land management practices within a watershed to ensure that drinking water exceeds water quality standards.

**Summary of Bill:** The Department of Natural Resources must initiate a pilot project in the Lake Whatcom watershed to determine what management actions could be taken to achieve water quality standards beyond those required by state law. The department must establish an advisory committee with representatives of state agencies, local governments, and citizens.

The pilot project must be completed by June 30, 2000. All timber sales within the Lake Whatcom watershed must be deferred until the pilot project is complete.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For (Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation):** The effects of clear-cut logging on watersheds have not been studied fully. Clean drinking water and adequate water supply is required. The Department of Natural Resources needs to work with local governments and with private citizens more closely.

**Testimony Against (Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation):** The bill as introduced affected too many watersheds and would have a negative effect on trust land income.

**Testified (Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation):** PRO: Bill Black, Alabama Hill Assn.; Jeff Monsen, Whatcom County; Dick Little, Don Keenan, City of Bellingham; CON: Paul Silver, WA Dept. of Natural Resources.

**Testimony For (Ways & Means):** The Lake Whatcom watershed is the sole water supply for the City of Bellingham. This bill would ensure that harvest activities do not degrade water quality.

**Testimony Against (Ways & Means):** This will result in lost income to the counties.

**Testified (Ways & Means):** Dick Little, City of Bellingham (pro); Scott Merriman, Department of Natural Resources (concerns).

**House Amendment(s):** The advisory committee is required to attempt to resolve any differences of opinion through various means, including facilitation or mediation, and the department is required to report to the natural resources committees of the House of Representatives and of the Senate with study results.