

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6449

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation, January 31, 2000

Title: An act relating to master wildlife-viewing guides.

Brief Description: Creating a program to recognize master wildlife-viewing guides.

Sponsors: Senator Jacobsen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation: 1/26/2000, 1/31/2000 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & RECREATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6449 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, Rossi, Snyder, Spanel and Stevens.

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Background: The wildlife viewing and ecotourism businesses are developing rapidly as new industries within Washington State.

There is a need to develop professional standards for wildlife guides and tour operators by fostering a working relationship between the industry and the Department of Fish and Wildlife in a nonregulatory atmosphere.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Department of Fish and Wildlife must work with wildlife guides, tour operators, and nonprofit entities to jointly develop best management practices and a code of ethics, wildlife guide professional competence standards, training materials, master guide decals, and other applicable publications. The department must develop a nature tourism enterprise training workshop, which will include providing opportunities for displaced timber workers to obtain information on becoming wildlife guides.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Nonprofit entities are allowed to help develop guide standards. Displaced timber workers are provided information on becoming wildlife viewing guides.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Wildlife viewing is a rapidly expanding business and professional standards and best management practices need to be developed for guides and tour operators.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Rocky Beard, WDFW; Ron Shultz, National Audubon Society; BJ Fandrich, GH Audubon Society; Katrina Weihs, National Audubon Society/Tahoma Chapter; Scott Morrison, Washington Ornithological Society.