

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6480

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As of January 25, 2000

**Title:** An act relating to establishing a program to compensate for state trust lands with high recreational values.

**Brief Description:** Establishing a program to compensate for state trust lands with high recreational values.

**Sponsors:** Senators Jacobsen, Rasmussen, Kline, Fairley, Fraser, Haugen and Spanel; by request of Commissioner of Public Lands.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation: 1/26/2000.

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

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

**Background:** About two million acres of state trust lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources are forested lands, and since many of these lands are at lower elevations near rapidly growing urban areas, they represent a resource for public recreation. Under the state's multiple use act, the department manages trust lands for recreation when it is in the best interest of the public and is consistent with trust obligations.

Since the state's population is growing, there is an increased recreational use of public lands which means that the forest land roads are being used more intensively. In addition, there is competition between different recreational uses and more unauthorized uses such as vandalism, garbage dumping and other activities which damage the resource. As time goes on, there will be more wear on forest roads which are built and maintained by trust land timber sales. At some point, increased recreation use of public trust lands will mean that the lands have to be managed in a different way in order to maintain the requirements for trust obligations.

**Summary of Bill:** A trust land recreational lease program which authorizes the Department of Natural Resources to defer harvesting of timber in order to accommodate recreational uses is established. A program is established to compensate the trust for the value of deferred timber. The department establishes pilot leases for four areas: Tiger Mountain State Forest, Elbe Hills State Forest, the Yacolt State Forest, and Blanchard Hills.

An appropriation of \$11,285,000, effective July 1, 2000, is transferred from the general fund to the public land recreational conservation lease account, which is established. The appropriation is to cover ongoing land management costs and to cover road impacts from public use and recreation and operation. The department is authorized to establish a special recreation conservation lease for a period of up to 30 years for the purpose of enabling the department to better manage the lands for recreational use and ensure that the trusts are not

adversely affected. A public land recreational conservation lease program is created within the department under the Board of Natural Resources, which develops a process to implement the recreational lease program.

**Appropriation:** \$11,285,000 from the general fund.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 18, 2000.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except for Sections 10 and 11 which expire September 1, 2000; Section 11 which takes effect July 1, 2000; and Section 12 which takes effect September 1, 2000.