

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6779

As of January 31, 2000

Title: An act relating to wetlands mitigation.

Brief Description: Establishing standards for wetlands mitigation.

Sponsors: Senators Patterson, Swecker, Rasmussen, Spanel, Kline and Jacobsen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environmental Quality & Water Resources: 2/3/2000.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & WATER RESOURCES

Staff: Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

Background: Current law authorizes the mitigation of development impacts to wetlands. Off-site compensation for impacts to wetlands is allowed only after the impacts can be neither avoided nor minimized. In evaluating a proposal for off-site mitigation, state agencies are directed to consider but not document the overall biological functions of the watershed or bay. A mitigation plan must include provisions guaranteeing the long-term viability of the mitigation site and long-term monitoring of the site.

Summary of Bill: State agencies approving off-site mitigation must document that wetland impacts are unavoidable and that the compensation site meets financial assurance, maintenance and monitoring requirements. These limitations apply to state permits made on or after January 1, 2000.

The Department of Natural Resources is directed to conduct an assessment of off-site compensatory mitigation projects and submit its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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