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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5173**

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**State of Washington**

**56th Legislature**

**1999 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation  
(originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen, Oke and Fraser)

Read first time 02/12/1999.

1 AN ACT Relating to a Cascade foothills recreational area study; and  
2 creating new sections.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the population of  
5 the Puget Sound region will grow by more than one million by the year  
6 2010, and that current and new residents will seek greater  
7 opportunities for outdoor recreation within a reasonable distance from  
8 their homes. Changing demographics, healthier and more active  
9 lifestyles, and improvements in recreation technology will all lead to  
10 growing public demand for areas and facilities in which to recreate.  
11 The western slope Cascade foothills from the international border south  
12 through Thurston county provides a wealth of existing and potential  
13 outdoor recreation areas that are close to the great majority of the  
14 urbanized areas of Puget Sound. Within this area are many public  
15 lands, including state park units, that may provide the nucleus for a  
16 network of lands accessible for dispersed recreational uses by people  
17 of all ages, physical capacities, and recreational preferences.

18 The legislature further finds that the Cascade foothills are home  
19 to many permanent residents who benefit from the natural resource and

1 lifestyle amenities of the foothills, and that expanding recreational  
2 opportunities in the foothills must be consistent with the long-term  
3 sustainability of the local economies. The west slope foothills also  
4 are an integral part of the "mountains to sound" region and provide  
5 significant benefits to the entire region, including watershed  
6 protection, wildlife habitat, flood damage reduction, and scenic  
7 values. A review of outdoor recreational needs and opportunities in  
8 the foothills should include consideration of these benefits and the  
9 need for protection of these functions and values.

10 This act has two purposes. The first is to recognize the  
11 significant outdoor recreation potential of this area by designating  
12 the Cascade foothills recreation area as an area of state-wide  
13 importance for its recreational, scenic, natural, and cultural values.  
14 The second is to create the Cascade foothills task force to study and  
15 make recommendations for creating greater recreational opportunities on  
16 public lands within this area, and to promote greater intergovernmental  
17 and public and private coordination among managers of outdoor  
18 recreation lands and facilities.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply  
20 throughout sections 3 through 5 of this act unless the context clearly  
21 requires otherwise.

22 (1) "Cascade foothills" means generally the nonurbanized within the  
23 Cascade range and drainages lying between three hundred and three  
24 thousand feet above mean sea level, and located within the counties of  
25 Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, and Thurston. Lands lying at  
26 lower elevations that are in the immediate vicinity of the foothills  
27 area, such as lower drainages, are also included within this term.  
28 These lands include public lands that are devoted to developed,  
29 nonrecreational uses. This definition is provided solely to guide the  
30 Cascade foothills task force in the geographic definition of its study  
31 responsibilities and confers no authority upon any entity other than  
32 the task force for the study purposes of this chapter.

33 (2) "Task force" means the Cascade foothills task force.

34 (3) "Counties" includes the counties of Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish,  
35 King, Pierce, and Thurston.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The legislature designates the "Cascade  
37 foothills recreation area," which shall encompass generally the

1 nonurbanized, nondeveloped lands lying within the Cascade foothills.  
2 The area is designated solely to guide the study responsibilities of  
3 the Cascade foothills task force.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) There is created the Cascade foothills  
5 task force. The task force shall be composed of nineteen members as  
6 follows:

7 (a) A total of six members, one being appointed by each of the  
8 governing bodies of the six counties comprising the conservation area;

9 (b) The chair of the Washington parks and recreation commission,  
10 serving ex officio;

11 (c) The commissioner of public lands, or the commissioner's  
12 designee, serving ex officio;

13 (d) The chair of the fish and wildlife commission, serving ex  
14 officio;

15 (e) The supervisor of the Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie national forest, or  
16 such other representative of federal land managing agencies within the  
17 foothills area designated by such agencies;

18 (f) Two members of the senate, one from each major caucus,  
19 appointed by the president of the senate;

20 (g) Two members of the house of representatives, one from each  
21 major caucus, appointed by the co-speakers; and

22 (h) Six members appointed by the governor from the public at large,  
23 to provide the task force with a diversity of experience and views  
24 regarding recreational uses of public lands in the Cascade foothills.

25 (2) The task force shall review and make recommendations on the  
26 existing and future outdoor recreational needs and opportunities in the  
27 Cascade foothills, recognizing the important functions and values that  
28 are provided by these lands. This shall include wildlife habitat,  
29 watershed protection, flood damage protection, scenic enjoyment, and  
30 economic uses, as well as the means by which more effective use of  
31 existing public lands in the foothills, assisted by willing private  
32 providers of outdoor recreation facilities, may serve to meet these  
33 needs. To this end the study should include:

34 (a) An assessment of the existing and the twenty-year growth  
35 projection for recreational demand of the population residing within  
36 one-hour driving time from the Cascade foothills. This assessment  
37 shall include the types of recreational uses anticipated, demographic

1 projects of recreational users, and developed facilities needed to  
2 serve such uses;

3 (b) An inventory of existing facilities and lands accessible for  
4 recreational use within the Cascade foothills;

5 (c) A review of existing local, regional, state, federal, private,  
6 and nongovernmental nonprofit entities providing outdoor recreation  
7 facilities within the Cascade foothills and their coordination in  
8 meeting public outdoor recreation demand, as well as the role of public  
9 education of recreational users to avoid land damage;

10 (d) A review of state lands within the Cascade foothills that may  
11 be managed principally or in part for outdoor recreation uses as a unit  
12 of a Cascade foothills state park, and recommendations for  
13 transitioning to such management;

14 (e) An assessment of existing wildlife and conservation functions  
15 and values to use in evaluating the potential compatibility of proposed  
16 recreational uses and activities, and planning techniques to avoid land  
17 damage in developing and using recreational facilities;

18 (f) Recommendations for a regional entity to promote expanded  
19 outdoor recreation opportunities within the Cascade foothills, in  
20 coordination with an expanded state park system within the Cascade  
21 foothills; and

22 (g) Methods to fund local, regional, and state outdoor recreation  
23 programs and facilities within the Cascade foothills.

24 (3) The governor, in consultation with the counties, shall provide  
25 for initial staffing for the task force, and the task force shall  
26 address ongoing staff and funding needs in the work plan and budget  
27 required under section 5 of this act.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) In conducting the study in section 4 of  
29 this act, the task force shall consult with the governing bodies of the  
30 counties and cities within the Cascade foothills area. The task force  
31 shall hold its meetings within or in the immediate vicinity of the  
32 Cascade foothills. Such meetings shall be open to the public and  
33 provide maximum opportunity for public participation.

34 (2) The commission's initial emphasis shall be upon scheduling its  
35 work and compiling the information needed to conduct the assessments  
36 and reviews specified in section 4 of this act. The task force shall  
37 provide an initial work plan and budget to the fiscal and parks  
38 committees of the senate and house of representatives by November 1,

1 1999. A final report and recommendations shall be provided no later  
2 than December 15, 2001.

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