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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6552**

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**State of Washington**

**56th Legislature**

**2000 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen, Oke, Kohl-Welles, Fraser and Spanel)

Read first time 02/08/2000.

1       AN ACT Relating to parks and recreation in the west slope of the  
2 Cascade foothills; creating new sections; providing an effective date;  
3 and declaring an emergency.

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

5       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the population of  
6 the Puget Sound region will grow by more than a million and a half by  
7 2020, and that current and new residents will seek greater  
8 opportunities for outdoor recreation within a reasonable distance from  
9 their homes. Changing demographics, healthier and more active  
10 lifestyles, and improvements in recreation technology will all lead to  
11 growing public demand for areas and facilities in which to recreate.  
12 The west slope Cascade foothills, from the international border south  
13 through Thurston county, provide a wealth of existing and potential  
14 outdoor recreation areas that are close to the great majority of the  
15 urbanized areas of Puget Sound. Within this area are many public  
16 lands, including state park units, that may provide the nucleus for a  
17 network of lands accessible for diverse recreational uses by people of  
18 all ages, physical capacities, and recreational preferences.

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

12       NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. (1) As used in this section and section 1 of  
13 this act, "Cascade foothills," "west slope Cascade foothills," and  
14 "Cascade foothills area" means the generally nonurbanized area within  
15 the Cascade mountain range and drainages lying between three hundred  
16 and three thousand feet above mean sea level, and located within the  
17 counties of Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, and Thurston.  
18 Lands lying at lower elevations that are in the immediate vicinity of  
19 the foothills area, such as lower drainages, are also included within  
20 this term. These lands include public lands that are devoted to  
21 developed, nonrecreational uses. This definition is provided solely to  
22 guide the parks and recreation commission in the geographic scope of  
23 its study responsibilities and confers no authority upon any entity  
24 other than the commission for the study purposes of this section.

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

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

1 projections 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 opportunities 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) A compilation of materials, obtained at no cost by the  
15 commission from other government agencies and private entities, of  
16 existing wildlife and conservation functions and values, which could be  
17 used in future evaluations of the compatibility of proposed  
18 recreational uses and activities;

19 (f) Recommendations for regional coordination among public and  
20 private outdoor recreation providers to promote expanded outdoor  
21 recreation opportunities within the Cascade foothills; and

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

24 (3) In conducting the study, the Washington state parks and  
25 recreation commission should consult with the counties and cities  
26 within the Cascade foothills area, with other public and private land  
27 managers providing outdoor recreation opportunities to the public, and  
28 with organizations having an interest in the management, conservation,  
29 and use of public lands in the Cascade foothills.

30 (4) The Washington state parks and recreation commission may accept  
31 contributions of funds or services to assist in conducting the study.

32 (5) The Washington state parks and recreation commission shall  
33 provide its report and recommendations to the governor and the parks  
34 committees of the senate and house of representatives no later than  
35 December 15, 2000.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
37 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the

1 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect  
2 April 15, 2000.

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