

2 **ESSB 6400** - H COMM AMD  
3 By Committee on Natural Resources

4

5 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the  
6 following:

7 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the state of  
8 Washington possesses a diversity of plants and animals in a diverse  
9 array of ecologically distinct regions. This biological diversity and  
10 its role in forming the diverse landscapes of the state are an  
11 important part of the high quality of life shared by all of the state's  
12 citizens and its visitors. By better understanding the variety and  
13 status of living organisms and the communities and ecosystems in which  
14 they occur, conservation efforts can be more effective in ensuring that  
15 this wealth of biological diversity is enjoyed by current and future  
16 generations.

17 The legislature further finds that extensive scientific work has  
18 been completed by both public and private entities to map the state's  
19 ecoregions and address ecoregional planning issues, by academic  
20 institutions, by state agencies such as the departments of natural  
21 resources and fish and wildlife, and by nongovernmental organizations  
22 such as the nature conservancy. However, these existing information  
23 sources are not complete, and this information may not be sufficiently  
24 coordinated or accessible and useful to the public or policymakers.  
25 Similarly, there is no single entity responsible for development and  
26 implementation of a coordinated state strategy to conserve remaining  
27 functioning ecosystems and restore habitats needed to maintain  
28 Washington's biodiversity. There should be a comprehensive review to  
29 identify the state's needs for biodiversity data and conservation, and  
30 to coordinate development, dissemination, and use of existing  
31 information.

32 There is also a need to strengthen the state's nonregulatory  
33 approaches to biodiversity conservation, including incentives for  
34 voluntary conservation efforts by private landowners. Incentives shall  
35 be a major element of the state's overall biodiversity conservation  
36 strategy.

1 The legislature further finds that resource management on a single-  
2 species or single-resource basis has proven to be costly, acrimonious,  
3 and ultimately ineffective at either preserving the state's  
4 biodiversity or allowing reasonable economic development.

5 Therefore, the purpose of this act is to create a temporary  
6 committee to develop recommendations to the governor and the  
7 legislature to establish the framework for the development and  
8 implementation of a statewide biodiversity conservation strategy, to  
9 replace existing single-species or single-resource protection programs.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The interagency committee for outdoor  
11 recreation is authorized to grant up to forty-five thousand dollars, on  
12 a competitive basis, to conduct the review of biodiversity programs as  
13 described in this section.

14 (2) The successful grantee must convene and facilitate a  
15 biodiversity conservation committee that will review existing  
16 biodiversity mapping and research programs in Washington conducted by  
17 state and federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other  
18 entities, as well as reviewing programs and projects in other states.

19 (3) The biodiversity conservation committee must develop  
20 recommendations for a state biodiversity strategy that includes:

21 (a) Creation and composition of a standing public/private council  
22 to oversee design, development, and implementation of the strategy;

23 (b) Identification of a lead agency to support and facilitate  
24 development and implementation of a state biodiversity conservation  
25 plan;

26 (c) Methods to improve state agency and nongovernmental  
27 organization coordination and cooperation;

28 (d) Consistent definitions of the state's ecoregions and an  
29 integrated system of data management and mapping of the state's  
30 biodiversity;

31 (e) A review of Oregon's forest sustainability project and  
32 incorporation of key processes and criteria that are applicable in  
33 Washington;

34 (f) The state role for housing and administering biodiversity data  
35 and making the data accessible to local governments and others;

36 (g) A public education and outreach component that includes the  
37 production of a visual overview of Washington's ecoregions;

38 (h) Methods to ensure continuing stakeholder involvement;

1 (i) Methods to provide technical assistance to support state and  
2 local government land management;

3 (j) Identification of the time frames and funding needed to  
4 implement the strategy;

5 (k) Identification and development of nonregulatory methods to  
6 preserve biodiversity, including incentives to conserve land with  
7 important biodiversity values. These methods shall focus on approaches  
8 such as landowner incentives and acquisition of conservation easements  
9 from willing landowners;

10 (l) Recognition of the forests and fish program and other  
11 public-private efforts to identify and protect important fish and  
12 wildlife habitat;

13 (m) Development of consistent, workable definitions for key terms  
14 that are currently undefined in this act, including the terms  
15 "biodiversity" and "ecosystem"; and

16 (n) Review state policies and legal mechanisms that may affect  
17 biodiversity.

18 (4) The purpose of the state biodiversity strategy is to develop  
19 and suggest implementation recommendations for an ongoing biodiversity  
20 conservation strategy to maintain Washington's biodiversity in  
21 perpetuity, within the context of human activities on the landscape, to  
22 prevent additional species from being listed as endangered or  
23 threatened, and to create a more predictable environment in which to  
24 conduct economic activities.

25 (5) In carrying out the duties assigned in this section, the  
26 biodiversity conservation committee must recognize existing  
27 conservation commitments, including approved habitat conservation plans  
28 and other similar methods initiated by the legislature or a regulatory  
29 board, and focus on addressing conservation needs that have not already  
30 been addressed.

31 (6) The successful grantee must invite representatives of the  
32 following groups to participate on the biodiversity conservation  
33 committee:

34 (a) State agencies, including the departments of fish and wildlife,  
35 natural resources, and ecology, the Puget Sound action team, and the  
36 state salmon recovery office;

37 (b) Federal land management and natural resource agencies;

38 (c) Local governments;

39 (d) Tribes;

1 (e) Property owners, including forestry and agriculture;

2 (f) Business, including land development;

3 (g) Academia and research institutions; and

4 (h) Conservation nongovernmental organizations.

5 (7) The biodiversity conservation committee must choose a chair  
6 from among its members and adopt operating procedures.

7 (8) The grant agreement must be conditioned to require that at  
8 least an amount of funding equal to the state grant be applied to the  
9 project from nonstate sources.

10 (9) The grantee must provide a final report describing its review  
11 and recommendations to the governor and the appropriate standing  
12 committees of the senate and the house of representatives by October 1,  
13 2003.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of forty-nine thousand dollars, or  
15 as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal  
16 year ending June 30, 2003, from the general fund to the interagency  
17 committee for outdoor recreation for the purposes of this act."

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