

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5104

As Reported by House Committee On:

Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to using revenues under the county conservation futures levy.

Brief Description: Using revenues under the county conservation futures levy.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines (originally sponsored by Senator Carlson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/27/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Increases the existing levy for county conservation futures from 6.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation to 10 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.
- Authorizes a county to use up to 10 percent of the funds collected from the county conservation futures levy for maintaining and operating property acquired from funds received from this levy.
- Prohibits revenues raised from county conservation futures levies from supplanting existing maintenance and operation funding.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Doumit, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Eickmeyer, Jackley, McDermott and Upthegrove.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Sump, Ranking Minority Member; Buck, Ericksen, Orcutt and Pearson.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background:

Counties are authorized to impose a levy up to 6.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed

valuation upon all taxable property in the county to acquire conservation futures. Conservation futures are the future development rights to property designated as open space, farm and agricultural land, and timberland. Thirteen counties currently use this levy authority. The decision to impose the county conservation futures levy is made by the county legislative authority. There is no authority to use the proceeds from this levy for the maintenance and operation of property acquired through this levy.

The Legislative Task Force on Local Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Operations recommended in its 2001 report to the Legislature that a portion of the funds from the county conservation futures levy be authorized for maintaining and operating property acquired through these levies.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill:

The existing levy for county conservation futures is increased from 6.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation to 10 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Counties are encouraged to use conservation futures as a tool for salmon recovery. Any rights or interest acquired in real property through conservation futures must be located within the assessing county. Up to 10 percent of conservation futures funds may be used for maintenance and operation of property acquired through the program. Revenue acquired from this levy may not be used to supplant existing maintenance and operation funding.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This bill was modified since it was introduced and is supported by the realtors, the Nature Conservancy, and local government. Clark County has a successful program that it coordinates with the cities. The bill provides needed flexibility and is one of the recommendations that came out of the interim task force. This is local option and is not mandatory. This program works and helps to preserve habitat for fish. The county has extensive public meetings and public input before it implements the levy authority.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Carlson, prime sponsor; Sharon Wylie, Clark County; Mark Brown, cities of Vancouver and Camas; Vern Veysey, Washington Association of Realtors; and Joe LaTourrette, Washington Recreation and Parks Association.