

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5438

As Passed House - Amended:

April 12, 2001

Title: An act relating to fish and wildlife lands vehicle use permits.

Brief Description: Giving the fish and wildlife commission rule-making authority over the fish and wildlife vehicle use permit program.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen, Regala and Oke; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife).

Brief History:

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 4/12/01, 95-1.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House)

- Eliminates requirement that a Department of Fish and Wildlife vehicle lands use permit be issued in the form of a permanently affixed decal and specifies that the permit be issued in a form that allows for it to be temporarily displayed from the interior of a vehicle.
- Clarifies a vehicle use decal is only provided free of charge with the initial purchase of a hunting or fishing license, not with subsequent purchases.
- Allows for the purchase of additional vehicle use permits without having to provide proof of multiple vehicle ownership.
- Provided the Department of Fish and Wildlife with express rulemaking authority for the vehicle use permit program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority/Minority Report: None.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (department) manages over 800,000 acres of wildlife habitat. Many areas have improved access areas for parking, and there are over 600 boating and fishing access sites on Washington's lakes, rivers, and streams. These lands are open to the public for such activities as hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation. Prior to April 1999, a person wishing to use these lands that did not purchase a hunting or fishing license was required to purchase a \$10 conservation license. In 1998 the Legislature eliminated the requirement for a personally held conservation license, and replaced it with a vehicle specific lands access permit.

All persons using one of the department's 249 approved access facilities, such as a parking area or a boat launch, is required to have a vehicle lands access permit (or "decal") displayed on their vehicle. The permit is issued by the department, and is in the form of a permanently affixed decal. The decal must then be displayed in the rear window of the user's vehicle.

Any person purchasing a hunting, fishing, trapping, or combination license is issued one decal at no additional cost. If a person wishes to access department land without purchasing a hunting, fishing, trapping, or combination license, he or she may purchase a decal from any of the department's authorized license dealers for the cost of \$10. Decals are not transferable between different vehicles. Any person who has received a decal with their sporting license, or has purchased a decal individually, may purchase additional decals at a reduced price for each vehicle they can prove to the department they own. The cost of additional decals is five dollars each.

Failure to display the vehicle lands access permit while on department-managed land is punishable by a fine of \$66.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The department will no longer issue its vehicle lands use permit in the form of a permanently affixed decal. Instead, the permit will be issued in a form allowing it to be temporarily displayed from the interior of a motor vehicle. A vehicle use decal is only provided free of charge with the initial purchase of a hunting or fishing license, not with subsequent purchases. Persons wishing to purchase additional vehicle use permits will no longer have to provide proof of multiple vehicle ownership. The department is given express rulemaking authority for the vehicle use permit program.

Appropriation: None.**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: None.