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## Natural Resources Committee

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### SSB 6474

**Brief Description:** Reviewing certain state agency land purchases.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines (originally sponsored by Senators Morton, Hargrove, Hewitt, Honeyford, T. Sheldon, Hochstatter, Benton, Stevens, McCaslin, Long, Hale and Sheahan).

#### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee to conduct a review of state land purchasing practices.

**Hearing Date:** 2/26/02

**Staff:** Jason Callahan (786-7117).

#### Background:

In 1997 the Legislature directed the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) to develop a statewide inventory of the amount, specific ownership, general location, and principal use of lands owned by federal, state, local, and tribal governments. In 1999 the IAC completed an inventory of publicly-owned lands in each county of the state. According to that report, the six counties with the highest proportion of publicly-owned acres are Chelan, Jefferson, Pend Oreille, Skagit, Skamania, and Whatcom. The counties with the highest proportion of tribal land are Yakima, Ferry, Grays Harbor, and Okanogan.

#### Summary of Bill:

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee must conduct, by December 1, 2003, a review of state agency land purchases for wildlife habitat and related purposes for the past five years in the six counties with the highest proportion of public land ownership. The review must include an assessment of:

- The cumulative effect of land purchases on local government property tax revenues.
- The process used to select properties.
- The method used for appraising properties.
- The difference between the appraised value and the final purchase price.

- Whether land purchases have had an impact on the property value of nearby land.
- The maintenance and management of state lands, specifically in regards to weed management.
- The effects on the local economy from the changes in use of property purchased by the state.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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