

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5104

As Passed Senate, February 13, 2002

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, Parks & Shorelines: 2/5/01, 3/5/01 [DPS-WM]; 1/28/02, 1/31/02 [DP2S, DNP].

Passed Senate: 3/13/01, 28-20; 2/13/02, 33-16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5104 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Poulsen, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Oke, Snyder and Spanel.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators McDonald and Stevens.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

Background: The conservation futures tax is a local option property tax assessed at the county level, at a maximum rate of 6.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. Revenue from the tax may be used to purchase or acquire development rights for open space, agricultural, and timber lands. Thirteen counties currently levy the conservation futures tax.

Conservation futures tax could be a useful tool to preserve salmon habitat.

Summary of Bill: Counties are authorized to levy an additional conservation futures tax of up to 10 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Counties are encouraged to use conservation futures as a tool for salmon restoration. Funds must be spent on land located within the assessing county. Up to 10 percent of conservation futures funds may be used for operation and maintenance of property acquired through the program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: A number of counties are continuing to grow at extremely high rates. Counties have unmet needs to protect conservation areas. Conservation futures funding is the most equitable source of funds for property acquisition.

Testimony Against: Each county needs to engage in a process to determine equitable distribution of conservation futures revenues between the county and cities within the county.

Testified: PRO: Sharon Wylie, Clark County; Vern Veysey, Association of Washington Realtors; Doug Levy, Cities of Everett, Federal Way; Dick Little, City of Bellingham.