

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5104

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines, March 5, 2001

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

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

Sponsors: Senator Carlson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines: 2/5/01, 3/5/01 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5104 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; Constantine, Morton, Oke and Stevens.

Staff: David Johnson (786-7754)

Background: Counties have the option of imposing a property tax levy to acquire interests in land in order to preserve that land. Twelve counties currently impose such a tax, often called a conservation futures levy. The tax may be up to 6.25 cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation.

Proper management of the land adjacent to salmon bearing streams plays an important role in preserving suitable habitat for salmon. It is felt that making more money available for salmon habitat preservation will assist in the recovery of endangered and threatened salmon.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Counties are authorized to levy an additional conservation futures tax of up to a total of 10 cents per thousand dollars 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.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute eliminated the requirement that revenue be used to acquire land. The substitute encourages counties to use conservation futures for salmon recovery. The substitute requires that money be spent within the assessing county.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This will provide needed funding for property that is difficult to otherwise acquire. This gives growing counties the needed ability to raise additional revenue for conservation. The program can be implemented at the local county's option. As more regulations are placed on land it is only fair for government to acquire property that is highly impacted.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Bill Dygert; Sharon Wylie, Clark County; Bryan Wahl, Vern Veysey, WAR Realtors.