

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6331

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines, February 6, 2002

**Title:** An act relating to the use of revenues under the county conservation futures levy.

**Brief Description:** Specifying additional purposes for the use of revenues under the county conservation futures levy.

**Sponsors:** Senators Poulsen, Jacobsen, Regala, Oke and Swecker.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines: 1/24/02, 2/6/02 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6331 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

The Legislative Task Force on Local Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Operations recommended that counties be given the option of using a portion of the conservation futures tax revenue for operation and maintenance of properties acquired.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** A county may use up to 25 percent of the revenues from the conservation futures tax for development, operation, and maintenance of properties acquired with conservation futures tax revenues. Conservation futures funds must be spent within the assessing county.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Conservation futures funds must be spent within the assessing county.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Counties have used conservation futures revenues to purchase hundreds of acres of land. These publicly owned lands are rarely accessible to the public because local governments cannot afford to develop basic infrastructure on site or do basic maintenance. This bill provides an option for local governments to develop and maintain properties that are purchased.

**Testimony Against:** The 25 percent proposed far exceeds the needs for maintenance of what is supposed to be open space. Site development was never proposed as a use of these funds by the Legislative Task Force on Local Parks Operation and Maintenance. The conservation futures program was developed strictly for the acquisition of rights and interests in real property, not for day-to-day maintenance of open space.

**Testified:** PRO: Judy Wilson; Dave Veley, Yakima County Parks; Brit Kramer, City of Lacey; Daryl Faber, City of Burien; Rick Bemm, City of Longview; Debra Moonan Churchill, Redmond; Patrice Thorell, Des Moines; Bruce Fletcher, City of Tukwila; John Hodgson, City of Kent; Jane Boubel, City of Olympia; Larry Otos, City of Mt. Vernon; Bob Vaux, Skagit County; CON: Mike Flynn, Realtors; Vern Veysey, Assn. of Realtors; Sharon Wylie, Clark County BOCC (concerns).