

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SJM 8019

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As Passed Legislature

**Brief Description:** Petitioning the secretary of agriculture to review certain policies of the conservation reserve enhancement program.

**Sponsors:** Senators Rasmussen, Parlette, Spanel and Oke.

**Senate Committee on Agriculture & International Trade**  
**House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology**

**Background:** The federal Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program is administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). To offer this program, the USDA must enter into cost-share agreements with states or their political subdivisions to provide incentives to owners of agricultural lands to undertake specific conservation and environmental objectives of that state and the nation.

The state of Washington has entered into a memorandum of agreement with USDA whereby landowners may enter into contracts for 15 years to plant native trees and shrubs on agricultural lands adjacent to streams. The specific environmental objectives of the program are to restore and enhance salmon habitat and improve water quality. The memorandum of agreement provides for 100,000 acres of land to be enrolled in the program. Currently, 1400 acres have been enrolled in the program.

As a matter of policy of the USDA, the program can only be offered on agricultural lands upon which annual crops or pasture is grown. Lands upon which perennial horticultural crops are grown do not currently qualify for enrollment in the program. There are numerous areas in the state where perennial horticultural crops are grown adjacent to streams that contain listed species of salmonids.

**Summary:** The Washington State Legislature requests the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture to alter its policies to allow the inclusion into the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program lands that are currently being used to produce perennial horticultural crops.

Copies of the memorial are to be immediately transmitted to the President of the United States, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, the President of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, and to each member of Congress from the state of Washington.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	46	0	
House	95	0	(House amended)
Senate	46	0	(Senate concurred)

