
SENATE BILL 6400

State of Washington 57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By Senators Jacobsen, Oke, Kohl-Welles and Kline

Read first time 01/16/2002. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines.

1 AN ACT Relating to biodiversity conservation; creating new
2 sections; and making an appropriation.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the state of
5 Washington possesses a diversity of plants and animals in a diverse
6 array of ecologically distinct regions. This biological diversity and
7 its role in forming the diverse landscapes of the state are an
8 important part of the high quality of life shared by all of the state's
9 citizens and its visitors. By better understanding the variety and
10 status of living organisms and the communities and ecosystems in which
11 they occur, conservation efforts can be more effective in ensuring that
12 this wealth of biological diversity is enjoyed by current and future
13 generations.

14 The legislature further finds that extensive scientific work has
15 been completed by both public and private entities to map the state's
16 ecoregions and address ecoregional planning issues, by academic
17 institutions, by state agencies such as the departments of natural
18 resources and fish and wildlife, and by nongovernmental organizations
19 such as the nature conservancy. However, these existing information

1 sources are not complete, and this information may not be sufficiently
2 coordinated or accessible and useful to the public or policymakers.
3 Similarly, there is no single entity responsible for development and
4 implementation of a coordinated state strategy to conserve remaining
5 functioning ecosystems and restore habitats needed to maintain
6 Washington's biodiversity. There should be a comprehensive review to
7 identify the state's needs for biodiversity data and conservation, and
8 to coordinate development, dissemination, and use of existing
9 information.

10 Therefore, the purpose of this act is to create a temporary
11 committee to develop recommendations to the governor and the
12 legislature to establish the framework for the development and
13 implementation of a statewide biodiversity conservation strategy.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The interagency committee for outdoor
15 recreation is authorized to grant up to forty-five thousand dollars, on
16 a competitive basis, to conduct the review of biodiversity programs as
17 described in this section.

18 (2) The successful grantee must convene and facilitate a
19 biodiversity conservation committee that will review existing
20 biodiversity mapping and research programs in Washington conducted by
21 state and federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other
22 entities, as well as reviewing programs and projects in other states.

23 (3) The biodiversity conservation committee must develop
24 recommendations for a state biodiversity program that includes:

25 (a) Creation and composition of a standing public/private council
26 to oversee design, development, and implementation of the program;

27 (b) Identification of a lead agency to support and facilitate
28 development and implementation of a state biodiversity conservation
29 plan;

30 (c) Methods to improve state agency and nongovernmental
31 organization coordination and cooperation;

32 (d) Consistent definitions of the state's ecoregions and an
33 integrated system of data management and mapping of the state's
34 biodiversity;

35 (e) The state role for housing and administering biodiversity data
36 and making the data accessible to local governments and others;

37 (f) A public education and outreach component that includes the
38 production of a visual overview of Washington's ecoregions;

- 1 (g) Methods to ensure continuing stakeholder involvement;
- 2 (h) Identification and development of methods to preserve
3 biodiversity, including incentives to conserve land with important
4 biodiversity values;
- 5 (i) Methods to provide technical assistance to support state and
6 local government land management; and
- 7 (j) Identification of the timeframes and funding needed to
8 implement the program.

9 (4) The purpose of the state biodiversity program is to develop and
10 implement a conservation plan to maintain Washington's biodiversity in
11 perpetuity, within the context of human activities on the landscape, to
12 prevent additional species from being listed as endangered or
13 threatened, and to create a more predictable environment in which to
14 conduct economic activities.

15 (5) The successful grantee must invite representatives of the
16 following groups to participate on the biodiversity conservation
17 committee:

- 18 (a) State agencies, including the departments of fish and wildlife,
19 natural resources, and ecology, the Puget Sound action team, and the
20 state salmon recovery office;
- 21 (b) Federal land management and natural resource agencies;
- 22 (c) Local governments;
- 23 (d) Tribes;
- 24 (e) Property owners, including forestry and agriculture;
- 25 (f) Business, including land development;
- 26 (g) Academia and research institutions; and
- 27 (h) Conservation nongovernmental organizations.

28 (6) The biodiversity conservation committee must choose a chair
29 from among its members and adopt operating procedures.

30 (7) The grant agreement must be conditioned to require that at
31 least an amount of funding equal to the state grant be applied to the
32 project from nonstate sources.

33 (8) The grantee must provide a final report describing its review
34 and recommendations to the governor and the appropriate standing
35 committees of the senate and the house of representatives by October 1,
36 2003.

37 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of forty-nine thousand dollars, or
38 as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal

1 year ending June 30, 2003, from the general fund to the interagency
2 committee for outdoor recreation for the purposes of this act.

--- END ---