

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1335

As Reported by House Committee On:
Fisheries, Ecology & Parks
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to the water trail recreation program.

Brief Description: Continuing the development of water trail sites in Washington state.

Sponsors: Representatives Cooper, Sump, Berkey and Hudgins; by request of Parks and Recreation Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Fisheries, Ecology & Parks: 2/7/03, 2/13/03 [DPS];
Appropriations: 2/26/03, 3/3/03 [DPS(FEP)].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Eliminates the water trail permit, Water Trail Advisory Committee, and Water Trail Program Account.
- Continues the State Parks and Recreation Commission's role to provide expertise in the development of water trail sites.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES, ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Cooper, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Sump, Ranking Minority Member; Hinkle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buck, O'Brien, Pearson and Upthegrove.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Hatfield.

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

Background:

The water trail recreation program was established in 1993 and is administered by the

State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission). The Commission is charged with planning, constructing, and maintaining facilities for water trail activities.

There is an annual permit required for camping at sites designated as water trail sites. All revenues from the annual permit and revenues from maps or publications are deposited in the water trail program account.

A 12 member advisory committee advises the Commission on the development of water trail facilities and programs. The advisory committee is required to meet at least twice annually.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The annual water trail permit, the water trail program account, and the water trail advisory committee are eliminated. Any unspent funds in the water trail program account are transferred to the Parks Renewal and Stewardship account and may only be used for water trail purposes.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The Commission's authority to issue water trail permits and adopt rules authorizing reciprocity of water trail permits with other states and Canada is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This agency request bill eliminates the 12 member water trail advisory committee and the \$20 annual water trail permit. The costs of administering the program and collecting the fee does not raise enough revenue to improve the water trail. The water trail goes from Vancouver, B.C. to Vancouver, WA and you can stay at campsites along the trail. The water trail permit raises around \$8,000 per year. The Commission still recognizes and supports the water trail association and its interest on the Boating Safety Council.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Fred Romero, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Fisheries, Ecology & Parks be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Sehlin, Ranking Minority Member; Pearson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Boldt, Buck, Clements, Cody, Conway, Cox, DeBolt, Dunshee, Grant, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, McDonald, McIntire, Miloscia, Pflug, Ruderman, Schual-Berke, Sump and Talcott.

Staff: Patricia Linehan (786-7178).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Fisheries, Ecology & Parks:

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: A water trails representative has been added to the Boating Advisory Committee. The sales of an annual permit and administrative costs are more costly than just collecting the traditional camping fee. Washington Water Trails Association members were surveyed in 2001, and 84 percent supported the elimination of the water trail permit.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Reed Waite, Washington Water Trails Association; James E. Horan and Fred Romero, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.