
**Fisheries, Ecology & Parks
Committee**

HB 1142

Brief Description: Funding capital improvements and maintenance of state parks and outdoor recreation lands.

Sponsors: Representatives McIntire, Armstrong, Dunshee, Cooper, O'Brien, Kenney, Linville, Kagi and Chase.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Lands Investment Account for capital improvements and maintenance of state parks and outdoor recreation lands.
- Imposes a 0.5% excise tax on motor homes, travel trailers and campers and dedicates revenues to the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Lands Investment Account.

Hearing Date: 1/28/03

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

Background:

The State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Funding Task Force was created in the 2002 Supplemental Operating Budget, Chapter 371, Laws of 2002. The budget directed the Task Force to prepare recommendations for improving the operation of state parks and outdoor recreation programs and to secure adequate funding on a permanent basis to support the needs of state parks and outdoor recreation programs. The Task Force developed several recommendations for the legislature's consideration, including a majority of the members supporting a proposal to extend the 0.5% watercraft excise tax to motor homes and travel trailers.

Currently there is an annual watercraft excise tax of 0.5 percent on most non-commercial boats over 16 feet in length based on the fair market value. The Washington State Tax Structure Committee report released in December 2002 recommended extending the watercraft excise tax to motor homes and travel trailers, in addition to boats. The Committee estimated that the tax increase would generate \$16.8 million per calendar year.

Summary of Bill:

The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Lands Investment Account is created. Two-thirds of the expenditures from the account must be used for capital improvements of state parks and outdoor recreation lands and the remainder is available for maintenance.

An excise tax of 0.5 percent is imposed on motor homes, travel trailers or campers. Several categories of motor homes, travel trailers, and campers are exempt from the tax including unoccupied inventory held for sale by a manufacturer or dealer, government property, nonresident property, and those eligible for use under a dealer's license plate.

The excise tax may be paid to the Department of Licensing at time of registration. If the excise tax is not paid at the time of registration it must be paid to the Department of Revenue (DOR). The excise tax is due on motor homes, travel trailers or campers whether they are registered or not. The DOR must prepare a depreciation schedule at least once a year for motor homes, travel trailers, and campers. The DOR is required to conduct appraisals of motor homes, travel trailers, and campers under certain circumstances to determine true fair market value.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2003.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on October 1, 2003.