

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 2140

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to reaffirming the role of the state conservation commission.

Brief Description: Reaffirming the role of the state conservation commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Grant and Linville.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/27/04 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Moves statutes relating to the establishment and operation of the Conservation Commission (Commission) from the conservation districts statutes to the statutory title related to state agencies.
- Includes numerous procedural and technical revisions in Commission and conservation districts statutes.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Linville, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Holmquist, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kristiansen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Eickmeyer, Grant, Hunt, McDermott, Orcutt and Sump.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Chandler.

Staff: Caroleen Dineen (786-7156).

Background:

The Conservation Commission (Commission) is a state agency created in 1939. The Commission is governed by a 10-member board. The Commission's duties include assisting and guiding conservation districts in preparing and implementing resource conservation programs. The Commission provides informational and technical assistance to conservation districts throughout Washington. The Commission also recommends and administers funding, distributes funds to conservation districts, and reviews conservation district budgets

and annual reports. In addition, the Commission appoints two of the five supervisors on each conservation district's board of supervisors.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Statutes relating to the establishment and operation of the Conservation Commission (Commission) are moved from the conservation districts statutes (chapter 89.08 RCW) to the general statutory title related to state agencies (Title 43 RCW). Numerous technical revisions, including reorganizing statutory sections and subsections and revising language in existing provisions, are made to these statutes and to the conservation district statutes as they relate to the Commission.

The Commission is directed to establish procedures to use when making the determination whether a district is warranted and practicable. The Commission also must designate the initial terms for elected supervisors when the conservation district is divided into zones for purposes of elections.

Legislative intent provisions regarding watershed restoration projects are amended to reference the participation of the Commission and conservation districts in these efforts.

Substitute Bill Compared to Engrossed Bill:

The substitute updates references and includes currently enacted versions of various statutory sections to reflect legislation enacted during the 2003 legislative session. The substitute removes various provisions requiring conservation districts to submit information to the Commission. The substitute also removes the requirement for the Commission to report on conservation district grants. Further, the substitute removes provisions for transfer of responsibility for payment of Commission travel expenses and includes some technical revisions.

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: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.