

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 1252

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Energy & Water, March 21, 2003

Title: An act relating to the recodification of Title 79 RCW and related public land statutes.

Brief Description: Making technical, nonsubstantive, corrections to and recodifying various department of natural resources' public land statutes.

Sponsors: Representatives Linville, Schoesler, Rockefeller, Sump and Upthegrove; by request of Commissioner of Public Lands.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Energy & Water: 3/21/03 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY & WATER

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Doumit, Fraser, Hargrove and Regala.

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages more than five million acres of state-owned land, including aquatic lands and uplands.

Much of the statutory law governing DNR's land management duties was enacted in the Public Lands Act of 1927. Statutes governing DNR's land management and other duties are primarily codified in three titles of the Revised Code of Washington: Title 43 (State Government-Executive), Title 76 (Forests and Forest Products), and Title 79 (Public Lands). It has been suggested that statutes governing DNR land management duties "particularly provisions governing management of uplands" be reorganized, updated and clarified.

Summary of Bill: Statutes governing DNR management of state uplands are reorganized without substantive change. Nonsubstantive revisions eliminate outdated terms.

Specifically, the legislation:

- Consolidates, in Title 79, all provisions concerning management of uplands belonging to or held in trust by the state and administered by DNR.
- Creates individual chapters limited to one major subject "e.g., land management policies, land sales, land leases, and sale of valuable materials.
- Groups provisions concerning certain discrete subjects into subchapters within chapters.

- Consolidates provisions relating to overall responsibilities of the Commissioner of Public Lands and DNR in Title 43.
- Consolidates provisions concerning trust funds and other funds.
- Moves provisions concerning marine plastic debris to join other provisions concerning aquatic lands.
- Rewrites provisions in gender-neutral terms and groups commonly-used definitions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The bill makes the law easier to find, understand, and use. It makes no policy changes and was reviewed by many stakeholders to be sure that there were no unintended changes. A House amendment made minor technical revisions.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Doug Sutherland, Commissioner of Public Lands (pro).