

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5144

C 314 L 03
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Protecting forest land from exotic forest insects or diseases.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water (originally sponsored by Senators Morton and Oke).

Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: Numerous studies indicate that the health of Washington forests is declining, as is the health of forests in other western states. An increasing number of forest stands are becoming susceptible to insect and disease outbreaks. There is an increasing concern about present management practices and the growing risk of exotic and deleterious insects, diseases and plants. The Department of Agriculture has the responsibility concerning exotic insects and diseases, and the Department of Natural Resources has authority over most forest health issues. Sudden Oak Death Syndrome first appeared in California and there is increasing concern that it will affect Douglas fir and oak in Washington.

Summary: The Department of Natural Resources, under the control of the Commissioner of Public Lands, directs the control or eradication of exotic insects and diseases, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture. A forest practices permit is not required for this activity. A forest practices permit is not required when the Department of Agriculture operates under its authority to control exotic pests or when the Department of Natural Resources seeks to control exotic forest pests in a forest health emergency. The provisions for a forest health emergency are specified in the proposal. The departments will coordinate their responses to the problems of Sudden Oak Death Syndrome.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0	
House	94	3	(House amended)
Senate	48	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 27, 2003