

5331

Sponsor(s): Senators Honeyford, B. Sheldon, Parlette, Regala, Hewitt and Hale; by request of Governor Locke

Brief Description: Providing additional certainty for municipal water rights.

SB 5331 - DIGEST

Declares an intent to provide additional certainty for municipal water rights, in conjunction with establishing clear requirements for the efficient use of the state's water resources.

Intends that municipal water suppliers with water rights, the sources of which are located within watershed planning areas, be allowed under certain conditions to: (1) Change or transfer unperfected amounts of water under such rights;

(2) Develop new rights or change or transfer existing rights that would impact stream flows if appropriate mitigation is provided; and

(3) Enter into contracts with the department of ecology to assist in implementing the objectives of watershed plans, basin plans, or regional water management plans.

Declares an intent that: (1) Water resources be managed to ensure the safe supply of water for drinking and sanitation needs for all citizens of the state;

(2) Valid rights to the use of water, both for instream and out-of-stream purposes be protected;

(3) Water resources be managed to ensure preservation of environmental values, including instream resources;

(4) Water supplies be managed to meet planned growth, and growth must be planned to responsibly address water supplies;

(5) Water resources be managed to ensure both efficient use of water and efficient use of financial resources to secure affordable supplies; and

(6) Water resource management decisions be made within a broad context of local community and state interests.