

6144-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water
(originally sponsored by Senators Morton and Deccio)

Brief Description: Developing a statewide plan to address forest health.

SB 6144-S - DIGEST

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 2ND SUB)

Requires that the commissioner and the department develop and pursue cooperative agreements with the United States forest service and the United States bureau of land management using Title 1 of the national environmental policy act of 1969, as amended, specifically using sections 101, 102, 103, 104, and 105.

Declares that the purpose of these agreements is to enable the department to effectively participate in land management plans that could affect the department's strategic plan for healthy forests and effective fire prevention and suppression. Such government-to-government cooperation is vital if the condition of the state's public and private forest lands are to be protected.

Directs the commissioner to report to the chairs of the house of representatives and senate natural resources committees every year on progress under this act.

Designates the commissioner as the state of Washington's lead for all forest health issues.

Requires the commissioner of public lands, as the legislatively designated lead for forest health issues, to develop a statewide plan to address forest health on both public and private lands.

Directs the department of natural resources, working with the forest practices board, to develop statutory and policy recommendations for the legislature by November 1, 2004.

Finds that Washington faces serious forest health problems where forest land is overcrowded with trees infested with or susceptible to insects, diseases, wind, and fire.

Creates a work group to study opportunities to improve the forest health issues enumerated in this act and to develop a strategic plan.

Makes appropriations to carry out the purposes of the act.