

6190-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water
(originally sponsored by Senators Mulliken, Honeyford, Sheahan,
Hewitt, Morton and Hale)

Brief Description: Concerning water policy in regions with
regulated reductions in aquifer levels.

SB 6190-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Finds that conserved water from the developed portions of the federal Columbia basin project can provide an immediate source of surface water to offset a limited portion of ground water depletions within the undeveloped portions of the federal project extending the availability of ground water for domestic, municipal, industrial, and agricultural uses.

Finds that recent studies have documented water conservation in areas served by project irrigation districts as a result of distribution system lining and piping and use of more efficient on-farm irrigation technology.

Declares an intent that the department of ecology enter into agreements with the United States and Columbia basin project irrigation districts regarding the allocation of water conserved from within areas currently served by project waters to deep well irrigated lands within the federal Columbia basin project and for other authorized project beneficial uses. The department may provide the irrigation districts data identifying areas with the most serious ground water depletions. The irrigation districts shall consider the department's data and recommendations in making allocation decisions consistent with the operational constraints of the distribution system.

Directs the department to issue a superseding water right permit or certificate for a ground water right where the source of water is an aquifer for which the department adopts rules establishing a ground water management subarea and water from the federal Columbia basin project is delivered for use by a person who holds such a ground water right.