
SENATE BILL 5179

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senators Morton, Jacobsen, Sheldon and Stevens

Read first time 01/17/2005. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation.

1 AN ACT Relating to forest health; amending 2004 c 218 s 4
2 (uncodified); and providing an expiration date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** 2004 c 218 s 4 (uncodified) is amended to read as follows:

5 (1) A work group is created to study opportunities to improve the
6 forest health issues enumerated in section 1 of this act that are
7 facing forest land in Washington and to help the commissioner of public
8 lands develop a strategic plan under section 3 of this act. The work
9 group may, if deemed necessary, identify and focus on regions of the
10 state where forest health issues enumerated in section 1 of this act
11 are the most critical.

12 (2)(a) The work group is comprised of individuals selected on the
13 basis of their knowledge of forests, forest ecology, or forest health
14 issues and, if determined by the commissioner of public lands to be
15 necessary, should represent a mix of individuals with knowledge
16 regarding specific regions of the state. Members of the work group
17 shall be appointed by the commissioner of public lands, unless
18 otherwise specified, and shall include:

1 (i) The commissioner of public lands or the commissioner's
2 designee, who shall serve as chair;

3 (ii) A representative of a statewide industrial timber landowner's
4 group;

5 (iii) A landowner representative from the small forest landowner
6 advisory committee established in RCW 76.13.110;

7 (iv) A representative of a college within a state university that
8 specializes in forestry or natural resources science;

9 (v) A representative of an environmental organization;

10 (vi) A representative of a county that has within its borders
11 state-owned forest lands that are known to suffer from the forest
12 health deficiencies enumerated in section 1 of this act;

13 (vii) A representative of the Washington state department of fish
14 and wildlife;

15 (viii) A forest hydrologist, an entomologist, and a fire ecologist,
16 if available;

17 (ix) A representative of the governor appointed by the governor;
18 and

19 (x) A representative of a professional forestry organization.

20 (b) In addition to the membership of the work group outlined in
21 this section, the commissioner of public lands shall also invite the
22 full and equal participation of:

23 (i) A representative of a tribal government located in a region of
24 the state where the forest health issues enumerated in section 1 of
25 this act are present; and

26 (ii) A representative of both the United States forest service and
27 the United States fish and wildlife service stationed to work primarily
28 in Washington.

29 (3) The work group shall:

30 (a) Determine whether the goals and requirements of chapter 76.06
31 RCW are being met with regard to the identification, designation, and
32 reduction of significant forest insect and disease threats to public
33 and private forest resources, and whether the provisions of chapter
34 76.06 RCW are the most effective and appropriate way to address forest
35 health issues;

36 (b) Study what incentives could be used to assist landowners with
37 the costs of creating and maintaining forest health;

1 (c) Identify opportunities and barriers for improved prevention of
2 losses of public and private resources to forest insects, diseases,
3 wind, and fire;

4 (d) Assist the commissioner in developing a strategic plan under
5 section 3 of this act for increasing forest resistance and resilience
6 to forest insects, disease, wind, and fire in Washington;

7 (e) Develop funding alternatives for consideration by the
8 legislature;

9 (f) Explore possible opportunities for the state to enter into
10 cooperative agreements with the federal government, or other avenues
11 for the state to provide input on the management of federally owned
12 land in Washington;

13 (g) Develop recommendations for the proper treatment of infested
14 and fire and wind damaged forests on public and private lands within
15 the context of working with interdisciplinary teams under the forest
16 practices act to ensure that forest health is achieved with the
17 protection of fish, wildlife, and other public resources;

18 (h) Analyze the state noxious weed control statutes and procedures
19 (chapter 17.10 RCW) and the extreme hazard regulations adopted under
20 the forest protection laws, to determine if the policies and procedures
21 of these laws are applicable, or could serve as a model to support
22 improved forest health; and

23 (i) Recommend whether the work group should be extended beyond the
24 time that the required report has been submitted.

25 (4) The work group shall submit to the department of natural
26 resources and the appropriate standing committees of the legislature,
27 no later than December 30, 2004, its findings and recommendations for
28 legislation that is necessary to implement the findings.

29 (5) The department of natural resources shall provide technical and
30 staff support from existing staff for the work group created by this
31 section.

32 (6) The work group is required to hold a minimum of five meetings,
33 at diverse locations throughout the state, to gather public input
34 regarding the group's proposed legislation.

35 (7) This section expires June 30, ((2005)) 2006.

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