
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

SSB 5318

Brief Description: Participating in the management of Washington's portion of the Yukon to Yellowstone Rocky mountain ecosystem.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senators Poulsen and Jacobsen).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to participate in the cooperative programs of the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative and actively seek to involve local governments, landowners, and local conservation organizations in the Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative.

Hearing Date: 2/27/08

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

Background:

The Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative is a joint Canadian-United States project that was conceptualized in 1993. The Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) region is part of the western mountain system of North America. The Y2Y region ranges from 125 to 500 miles wide, and extends northwest for 1,990 miles from west central Wyoming to the Peel River in the northern Yukon, 37 miles south of the Arctic Circle.

The Y2Y Initiative, based in Canmore, Alberta and Bozeman, Montana, is connected with Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations, businesses, foundations, and individuals. These groups are working toward conserving the natural heritage of the Y2Y region, which includes five U.S. states, two Canadian provinces, and two northern territories.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is required to participate with wildlife management agencies and conservation organizations in other states and provinces comprising the Canadian Rocky Mountains ecoregional area in the cooperative programs of the Yellowstone to Yukon conservation initiative. As the largest city in the part of the Y2Y ecoregion located within the United States, Spokane, Washington is recognized as the United States' capital of Y2Y.

The WDFW is also directed to actively seek to involve local governments, landowners, and local conservation organizations in the initiative, when the Yellowstone to Yukon conservation initiative has identified priority species, habitats, or landscapes lying within Washington. The WDFW is authorized to integrate these activities with other cooperative work the WDFW undertakes with other states and provinces that share ecoregional areas with Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.