

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5318

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As Passed Senate, February 13, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to wildlife conservation in Washington's portion of the Yukon to Yellowstone Rocky mountain ecosystem.

**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 History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 2/05/07, 2/22/07 [DPS, DNP, w/oRec].

Passed Senate: 3/13/07, 34-12 (3/14/07 notice to reconsider); 2/13/08, 30-19.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5318 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Fraser, Hargrove, Poulsen, Spanel and Swecker.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Stevens.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Morton, Ranking Minority Member.

**Staff:** Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

**Background:** The Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) ecoregion is part of the western mountain system of North America. From Cokeville in west-central Wyoming, Y2Y stretches northwest for 1,990 miles to the Peel River in the northern Yukon. The southeastern edge of the region is near Riverton, Wyoming, and the northwest tip touches the Yukon/Alaska boundary. The region ranges from 125-500 miles wide, corresponding with ecological boundaries along the eastern montane-foothills and the western inland-coastal watersheds. The boundaries of the study area fluctuate, changing with the species or process under consideration.

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*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 Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, which began in 1993, is a joint Canadian-U.S. network of over 800 organizations, institutions, foundations, and conservationists. The stated purpose of the Y2Y Conservation Initiative is to define and designate a life-sustaining network of wildlife cores, movement corridors and transition areas throughout the Y2Y ecoregion.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The Department of Fish and Wildlife 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 Yukon to Yellowstone 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 Department is also directed to actively seek to involve local governments, landowners, and local conservation organizations in the initiative, when the Yukon to Yellowstone conservation initiative has identified priority species, habitats, or landscapes lying within Washington State. The Department is authorized to integrate these activities with other cooperative work the Department undertakes with other state and provinces that share ecoregional areas with Washington State.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill:** OTHER: The Department would be pleased to participate with the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative. We are very supportive of this group's work. The Department is well positioned to work in collaboration with other states and provinces. Even without this bill we intend to work to participate in the ecoregional work Y2Y performs that involves Washington State.

**Persons Testifying:** OTHER: Rocky Beach, Department of Fish and Wildlife.