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**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

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**SB 6481**

**Brief Description:** Clarifying which local governments have jurisdiction over conversion-related forest practices.

**Sponsors:** Senators Morton, Schoesler, Holmquist, Hewitt, King, Delvin and Swecker.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Changes the test that determines whether a county is required to adopt local forest practices ordinances so that instead of all counties that plan under the Growth Management Act being required to adopt local forest practices ordinances, all counties with a population greater than 100,000 are required to adopt local ordinances.

**Hearing Date:** 2/18/10

**Staff:** Jason Callahan (786-7117).

**Background:**

Counties planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA), and the cities located in those counties, are required to adopt and enforce ordinances or regulations relating to forest practices if forest landowners located within the county filed at least 25 class IV forest practices applications between the years of 2003 and 2005. Generally, class IV forest practices consist of activities where conversion to non-forestry use is at issue or that have the potential for substantial impact on the environment.

The regulations that these counties are required to adopt and enforce relate to all forest practices taking place within an urban growth area on parcels less than 20 contiguous acres or on parcels greater than 20 acres if the owner does state an intent to not convert the land to non-forestry uses.

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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.*

Outside of the urban growth area, the affected counties are required to adopt and enforce regulations relating to class IV forest practices only.

Counties that do not plan under the GMA, and counties that plan under the GMA but that did not have enough forest practices applications to trigger the requirement to adopt forest practices regulations, may adopt local regulations but are not required to do so.

All counties must ensure that the critical area and development regulations for that county are updated prior to adopting local forest practices regulations. The Forest Practices Board maintains jurisdiction over all forest practices occurring in a county that do not have compliant critical area ordinances.

**Summary of Bill:**

The test to determine whether a county is required to adopt local forest practices ordinances is changed. Instead of all counties that plan under the GMA being required to adopt local forest practices ordinances, all counties with a population greater than 100,000 are required to adopt local ordinances.

The counties that plan under the GMA and have a population of less than 100,000 are as follows: Clallam, Jefferson, Mason, Pacific, Wahkiakum, Lewis, Kittitas, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille. These are the counties potentially affected by the changed determination method.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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