

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6380

As of January 18, 2010

Title: An act relating to the purchase of wetland mitigation bank credits by the department of transportation.

Brief Description: Concerning the purchase of wetland mitigation bank credits by the department of transportation.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Jacobsen, Ranker and Swecker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/18/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: When the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) plans a construction project every effort is made to avoid impacting wetlands. If impacts are unavoidable WSDOT is required by state and federal law to mitigate for those impacts in one of a number of ways. This can include WSDOT adding this element to the project by creating, restoring, enhancing, or preserving a functioning wetland within the service area; using stored credits in one of their existing mitigation banks; or by purchasing mitigation banking credits from a private entrepreneurial mitigation bank that has been certified by the Department of Ecology's wetland banking program.

Summary of Bill: When purchasing mitigation bank credits, the WSDOT must work with the Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine which bank provides the most benefit or multiple benefits to the impacted fish habitats.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2009.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: OTHER: This is already a lengthy process where WSDOT coordinates with many other agencies. Each wetland bank must already go through a certification process. This bill could cause the cost of projects to go up.

Persons Testifying: OTHER: Paul Wagner, WSDOT; Gordon White, Department of Ecology.