

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6690

As of February 2, 2010

Title: An act relating to accessing land for outdoor recreation.

Brief Description: Regarding access to information for outdoor recreation and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Sponsors: Senator Pridemore.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 2/01/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Staff: Sherry McNamara (786-7402)

Background: A license from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is generally required prior to taking any game or fish species in the state. Revenue from the sale of recreational licenses are deposited, in most cases, into the State Wildlife Account.

In addition to issuing licenses, the WDFW manages nearly a million acres of wildlife habitat and more than 150 water access sites. The lands provide wildlife protection while also allowing wildlife viewing, hiking, water sports, hunting, fishing, and other compatible recreation.

A Vehicle Use Permit (permit) is required to be displayed when entering land managed by WDFW that has been improved for public access. Currently, a permit costs \$10 per year. One permit is issued free of charge with certain recreational fishing and hunting licenses and with the WDFW's watchable wildlife decal. Revenue from the sale of permits must be used by WDFW for the stewardship and maintenance of improved access facilities.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) offers three different versions of state license plates that feature wildlife species native to Washington and personalized licensed plates. Revenue generated by the sale of the DOL's license plates from the wildlife theme plates and personalized license plates is provided to WDFW.

Summary of Bill: Vehicle Use Permit. Individuals who purchase a wildlife-themed or a personalized license plate may park at a land access site managed by WDFW without having

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to display a permit. The cost of the permit is increased from \$10 to \$20 until July 1, 2011, then it will increase to \$25 until July 1, 2013, when the cost becomes \$30.

WDFW may use the revenues from the permits for land maintenance and other tangible improvements. The revenue cannot be used by WDFW for administrative, scientific, or enforcement purposes.

Web-based Information. WDFW may develop web-based information that promotes outdoor recreational and wildlife viewing opportunities that include:

- WDFW areas and access sites;
- public and private lands open to the public for recreational access; and
- information promoting watchable wildlife and nature-based tourism activities.

WDFW may require the purchase of certain recreational licenses as a condition of accessing the web-based information. The Fish and Wildlife Commission may adopt rules to identify which recreational licenses provide access to the information.

Information relating to hunting and fishing regulations, as well as general departmental information, must be accessible to the general public without having to first purchase a license from WDFW.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960.]

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The department supports this bill.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Michael O'Malley, WDFW.