
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2600

Brief Description: Permitting recreation rock collecting, subject to certain restrictions.

Sponsors: Representatives Bailey, Blake, Chandler, Kelley, Goodman, Anderson and Reykdal.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes identical policies for non-permitted, recreational rock and petrified wood collecting on land managed by the three primary land managing agencies.

Hearing Date: 1/27/12

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The act of rock and mineral collecting is limited but allowed on most public lands managed by the state. The three primary managers of recreational lands in the state are the Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). Each of the three agencies has slightly different rock collecting policies.

The DNR and the DFW limit rock collecting through administrative actions based on their general administrative authority to limit acts on the land managed by the agencies. The rule applicable to the DFW simply states that it is unlawful to remove petrified wood, minerals, and fossils from DFW land unless a permit is granted from the DFW (WAC 232-12-251). The DNR has a similar rule; however, they make violation of the DNR rule a criminal misdemeanor (WAC 332-52-115). In contrast to the DNR and DFW, State Parks has a statute governing rock collection at parks. Under that statute, it is a misdemeanor to take "any tree, shrub, timber, plant, or *natural object* in any state park" (RCW 79A.05.165).

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.

Summary of Bill:

Identical policies for rock and petrified wood collection are established for all three primary state land managing agencies. Under the policy, certain rock collecting is allowed without prior authorization or permitting. Non-permitted rock collecting is to be allowed as long as the collection is for personal use, only hand tools are used in the collection process, and no more than 250 pounds of rock are collected in any day. For petrified wood, the maximum non-permitted collection amounts are 25 pounds per day or 250 pounds per year.

Any other rock collection still must be permitted by the appropriate agency. The agencies are permitted to close certain sensitive areas to rock collection and any agency rock extraction areas (such as quarries and stockpiles for road maintenance) or active mining claim sites remain closed to recreational rock collection.

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.