

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5293

As of January 31, 2011

Title: An act relating to water delivered from the federal Columbia basin project.

Brief Description: Regarding the use of water delivered from the federal Columbia basin project.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler, Swecker, Holmquist Newbry and Honeyford.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Water & Energy: 2/04/11.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, WATER & ENERGY

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: Ground Water Management Subareas may be established by Department of Ecology (Ecology) rule to address declining aquifer levels and regulate withdrawals of public ground water. Deep well irrigation occurs in some subarea lands that never received federal Columbia Basin Project (Project) water as once anticipated even though they lie within project boundaries.

Ecology must issue a superseding water right permit or certificate for such a groundwater right if water from the federal Project is delivered for use by a person who holds such a groundwater right. The superseding water right permit or certificate must designate the portion of the groundwater right that is replaced by water from the federal Project as a standby or reserve right that may be used when water delivered by the federal Project is curtailed or otherwise not available. The total number of acres irrigated by the person under the groundwater right and through the use of the Project's water must not exceed the quantity of water used and number of acres irrigated under the person's water right permit or certificate for the use of water from the aquifer.

Summary of Bill: The total number of acres irrigated by a person under the groundwater right and through the use of the Project's water must not exceed the quantity of water authorized by the federal Bureau of Reclamation and the number of acres irrigated under the person's water right permit or certificate for the use of water from the aquifer.

Appropriation: None.

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.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 28, 2011.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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