

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SSB 5973

C 32 L 14
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating the community forest trust account.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rolfes, Pearson, Honeyford, Cleveland, Hargrove, Hewitt, Fraser, Litzow, Parlette, Kline and McAuliffe; by request of Commissioner of Public Lands).

Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Parks
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: The Community Forest Trust (CFT) Program Generally. In 2011 the Legislature provided the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with discretionary authority to create and manage CFTs. A CFT is a discrete category of non-fiduciary lands held by DNR and actively managed to generate financial support for the CFT and to sustain working forest conservation objectives.

The CFT program must satisfy statutory principles that include the following:

- protecting in perpetuity working forest lands that are at a significant risk of conversion to another land use;
- maintaining the land in a working status;
- generating revenue at levels that are, at a minimum, capable of reimbursing DNR for management costs; and
- providing for ongoing, sustainable public recreational access.

DNR may acquire lands for the CFT through purchase, donation, transfer, or a variety of means other than eminent domain. Once acquired, a CFT must be managed consistent with a management plan developed in cooperation with a local advisory committee.

Accounts Related to the CFT Program. The CFT law includes a variety of transactional elements involving either acquisition or distribution of funds:

- if state trust lands are transferred into the CFT, the value of that transfer must be provided to the beneficiaries of the trust;
- DNR must obtain a financial commitment from the local community prior to establishing a CFT; and
- legislative direction on how revenue from CFT lands may be used.

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.

The Legislature authorized DNR to use the Resource Management Cost Account and Parkland Trust Revolving Fund to hold and manage funds relating to CFT acquisitions and DNR's management costs. Each of these accounts is also used by DNR to hold and manage funds that relate to transactions involving federally granted lands or state forest lands.

Summary: A new account, entitled the CFT account (account), is established for purposes of holding and managing funds relating to the CFT program. All funds received for CFT purposes, including appropriations, funds transfers, and revenue from valuable material sales, must be deposited in the account. DNR may use funds from the account for purposes of the CFT program, such as for CFT acquisitions and reimbursement of its management costs.

The account is an appropriated account that retains its earned interest. The Commissioner of Public Lands generally approves account expenditures, except the Board of Natural Resources must do so for expenditures to acquire CFT land or reimburse state and local government contributions for an acquisition.

References to CFT-related funds are removed from the current Resource Management Cost Account and Parkland Trust Revolving Fund statutes.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	3
House	81	17

Effective: June 12, 2014
Contingent (Section 7)