

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6199

C 90 L 14
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Addressing wildfires caused by incendiary devices.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Braun and Hargrove).

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

Background: Current law prohibits a person from throwing away any lit material or discharging tracer or incendiary ammunition in a forest, brush, range, or grain area during the closed season. The statute specifically includes cigarettes, matches, and fireworks as examples of lit materials. The term closed season means the period between April 15 and October 15, unless the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) establishes different dates because of fire conditions. A violation of this prohibition is punishable as a misdemeanor.

Also, it is a gross misdemeanor to knowingly cause a fire or explosion in a way that places forest lands in danger of damage.

Summary: In addition to the current prohibitions on actions in a forest, brush, range, or grain area during the closed season, it is generally unlawful to release a sky lantern or detonate an exploding target. However, a person may use a nonflammable exploding target if they have either lawful possession and control of the land or written permission for the activity.

At other times of the year, a person is generally prohibited from discharging incendiary ammunition, releasing a sky lantern, or detonating an exploding target in a forest, brush, range, or grain area unless the person has either lawful possession and control of the land or written permission for the activity.

Violations of these prohibitions remain punishable as a misdemeanor.

Several terms are defined:

- Exploding target means a device designed or marketed to ignite or explode when struck by firearm ammunition or other projectiles;
- Incendiary ammunition means ammunition designed to ignite or explode on impact, or trace its course with a trail of smoke, chemical incandescence, or fire; and

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- Sky lantern means an unmanned luminary device that uses heated air to remain airborne.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 12, 2014