

HB 2070 - DIGEST

(SEE ALSO PROPOSED 1ST SUB)

Creates an expedited environmental review and approval process for transportation projects that require preparation of an environmental impact statement under the national environmental policy act and requires the department of transportation to use the process.

Requires certain state and local agencies to provide technical assistance to the department of transportation on accomplishing the project review and coordination activities.

Requires the department of transportation to: (1) Streamline the permitting process;

(2) Continue its efforts to improve training and compliance;

(3) Deliver the projects and activities listed in LEAP Transportation Document 2013-4 in a manner that exemplifies the stewardship goal in RCW 47.07.280;

(4) Convene three expert review panels to provide independent financial and technical review for the development of a finance plan and project implementation plan for the Columbia river crossing project, the state route number 520 bridge replacement and HOV project, and the Alaskan Way viaduct replacement project;

(5) Use available technologies to minimize permit delays for, inform and interact with interested parties regarding, and optimize the effectiveness of proposed compensatory mitigation projects; and

(6) Consult with the department of fish and wildlife, appropriate local government, and interested tribes to identify the existing fish passage barriers that, upon removal, will result in the greatest habitat benefit.

Requires the department of ecology to: (1) Update certain rules for integrating use of national environmental policy act documents in decisions under the state environmental policy act;

(2) Update certain rule-based categorical exemptions for transportation maintenance activities; and

(3) Convene a work group to identify procedures to more effectively achieve certain objectives with regard to harmonizing local land use reviews with maintenance and improvement of state transportation facilities.