

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6162

As of February 17, 2016

Title: An act relating to the expiration date of the invasive species council and account.

Brief Description: Concerning the expiration date of the invasive species council and account.

Sponsors: Senators Honeyford, Rolfes, Chase, Parlette, Pearson, Roach and Fraser; by request of Recreation and Conservation Office.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 1/13/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Creation and Role of the Invasive Species Council (Council). The Legislature first established the Council in 2006 to provide policy level direction, planning, and coordination on invasive species issues in Washington. The statutory goals of the Council include minimizing the effects of harmful invasive species, serving as a forum for identifying and understanding relevant issues, facilitating joint planning and cooperation, educating the public, and providing policy advice to the Legislature.

The same 2006 legislation also created the Invasive Species Council Account (Account), which can receive appropriations, gifts, grants, and donations. Account funds may only be used to carry out the purposes of the Council.

Membership and Staffing of the Council. Council membership consists of representatives from state and federal agencies, local governments, and other members invited by the Council. The Council is administratively located within the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), and statute directs that the RCO and participating agencies provide staff support to the Council.

Scheduled Expiration of the Council. The Legislature's initial 2006 authorization for the Council established an expiration date of December 31, 2011. In 2011, the Legislature reauthorized the Council and set the current expiration date of June 30, 2017 for the Council and associated Account.

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: The legislative authorization for the Council and associated Account is extended by five years from June 30, 2017 to June 30, 2022.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Invasive species threaten both the landscape and the way citizens use the land. The Council plays a key role in organizing prevention and response efforts. Prevention is the best solution for invasive species, particularly aquatic mussels, which will drive a huge response cost if they become established here. Because invasive species authority is spread across multiple agencies, the Council offers an important focus point. The Council consists of mostly government entities, and there is interest in exploring membership opportunities for other entities including utilities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Scott Richards, The Nature Conservancy; Mike Schwisow, Washington State Water Resources Association; Eli Levitt, Washington Department of Ecology/ Program Planner; Ben Buchholz, City Bellingham and Whatcom County; Christine Brewer, Avista; Nancy Atwood, Puget Sound Energy; Raquel Crosier, Washington Invasive Species Council.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.