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SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1654

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

**By** House General Government & Information Technology (originally sponsored by Representatives Peterson, Lytton, Fitzgibbon, Blake, and Walkinshaw)

READ FIRST TIME 02/27/15.

1 AN ACT Relating to controlling noxious weeds while still  
2 supporting pollen-rich forage plant communities for honey bees;  
3 amending RCW 17.10.145; adding a new section to chapter 43.220 RCW;  
4 creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The state noxious weed control board  
7 shall conduct a pilot project that evaluates the advantages of  
8 purposefully replacing pollen and nectar-rich noxious weeds, such as  
9 knapweeds and nonnative thistles, which are productive forage plants  
10 for honey bees, with either native or noninvasive, nonnative forage  
11 plants that can produce similar levels of pollen and nectar to  
12 support honey bee populations. The pilot project must be developed to  
13 maximize the dual public benefits of reducing noxious weeds in  
14 Washington and maintaining access to pollen and nectar-rich plants  
15 for honey bees and apiarists.

16 (2) In implementing the pilot project, the state noxious weed  
17 control board must coordinate with managers of state or federal  
18 public lands, which may include providing plant starts, seed packs,  
19 and other goods or services necessary to replace noxious weeds with  
20 either native or noninvasive, nonnative plants or to create, in

1 conjunction with noxious weed control efforts, new forage patches for  
2 honey bees and other pollinators.

3 (3) The implementation details of the pilot project required by  
4 this section are at the sole discretion of the state noxious weed  
5 control board, including the selection of pilot project partners and  
6 participants. However, if possible, pilot project partners should be  
7 located in both eastern and western Washington.

8 (4) The state noxious weed control board must issue a report to  
9 the legislature, consistent with RCW 43.01.036, that outlines the  
10 successes and challenges of the pilot project, including the  
11 development of the tools in this subsection. This report must be  
12 presented by October 31, 2017, and include:

13 (a) A description of the following tools:

14 (i) A list of suitable pollen-rich forage plant alternatives to  
15 noxious weeds, taking into account traits such as nectar and pollen  
16 quality, bloom succession, growth requirements, and habitat type.

17 (ii) A list of seed and plant start suppliers that may be able to  
18 provide pollen-rich forage plant alternatives to noxious weeds.

19 (iii) A matrix, based on the pilot project, to provide guidelines  
20 to land managers when replacing noxious weeds or creating new pollen-  
21 rich forage patches;

22 (b) An assessment scale that may be used by public land managers  
23 and the apiary industry to rate the usefulness of the tools described  
24 in this subsection.

25 (c) Any recommendations for extending the pilot project or using  
26 the lessons learned as part of Washington's overall noxious weed  
27 control strategy.

28 (5) This section expires June 30, 2018.

29 **Sec. 2.** RCW 17.10.145 and 1997 c 353 s 18 are each amended to  
30 read as follows:

31 (1) All state agencies shall control noxious weeds on lands they  
32 own, lease, or otherwise control through integrated pest management  
33 practices. Agencies shall develop plans in cooperation with county  
34 noxious weed control boards to control noxious weeds in accordance  
35 with standards in this chapter.

36 (2) All state agencies' lands must comply with this chapter,  
37 regardless of noxious weed control efforts on adjacent lands.

38 (3) While conducting planned projects to ensure compliance with  
39 this chapter, all agencies must give preference, when deemed

1 appropriate by the acting agency for the project and targeted  
2 resource management goals, to replacing pollen-rich or nectar-rich  
3 noxious weeds with native forage plants that are beneficial for all  
4 pollinators, including honey bees.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.220  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 Any corps project that involves the removal of noxious weeds  
8 must, when deemed appropriate for the project goals by the project  
9 sponsor, include the planting of pollen-rich and nectar-rich native  
10 plants to provide forage for all pollinators, including honey bees.

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