FINAL BILL REPORT
ESSB 5198

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning fire suppression methodologies.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Becker, Warnick, Fain, Bailey and Brown).

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

Background: Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Legislature designated DNR as the state's manager for forest fire prevention and suppression activities. In this role, DNR must lead and supervise all matters pertaining to the state's forest fire service.

Fire Retardants. Aerial and ground-applied fire retardants reduce wildfire intensity and rate of spread. Fire retardants include water, chemical sprays, water-enhancing gels, and foams. Fire retardants can pose a risk to human health, wildlife and habitats. Generally, the public is excluded from wildfire areas and not directly affected by fire retardants.

Summary: DNR must report on the types and risks of fire retardants used, including long-term fire retardants, foams, and gels. Specifically, this report must include best practices for fire retardants used at the national level. Additionally, the report must summarize public outreach and education regarding these fire suppressants, and analyze fire retardant chemicals and health and natural resources impacts.

Furthermore, DNR must recommend any legislative actions necessary to improve the protection of structures from wildfires. DNR has until December 31, 2017, to provide this report and recommendations to the Legislature.

The DNR report is subject to appropriation.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0
House	55	43

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.

Effective: July 23, 2017