
HOUSE BILL 1711

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Representatives Kretz, Springer, Pettigrew, Schmick, Short, and Condotta

Read first time 01/26/17. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to prioritizing lands to receive forest health
2 treatments; amending RCW 79.64.020; reenacting and amending RCW
3 79.64.100; and adding new sections to chapter 79.10 RCW.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 79.10
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The department shall develop and implement a policy for
8 prioritizing investments on forest health treatments in strategic
9 defensible areas to protect public lands against losses from
10 wildfire. The policy must cover forest health treatments whose
11 primary purpose is to reduce wildfire hazards as well as treatments
12 whose purposes include both reducing wildfire hazards and achieving
13 other forest health and financial sustainability goals, such as
14 reducing insect infestations and disease. The policy must consider
15 the cumulative impact of forest health investments at a landscape
16 scale.

17 (2)(a) The department's prioritization of parcels or groups of
18 parcels for forest health treatments must place primary emphasis on
19 the rate of return that the department estimates that it will achieve
20 from the treatment. The department shall estimate the rate of return
21 from a forest health treatment by evaluating the economic value of:

1 (i) Timber or other commercial forest products removed during any
2 mechanical treatments;

3 (ii) Timber or other commercial forest products likely to be
4 spared from damage by wildfire;

5 (iii) Homes, structures, agricultural products, and public
6 infrastructure likely to be spared from damage by wildfire;

7 (iv) Impacts to recreation and tourism; and

8 (v) Ecosystem services such as water quality, air quality, or
9 carbon sequestration.

10 (b) The department's evaluation of economic values for purposes
11 of determining a rate of return may rely on heuristic techniques.

12 (c) The department's evaluation of economic values in subsection
13 (2)(a)(ii) through (v) of this section must consider the differential
14 in the likelihood and intensity of wildfire on lands benefiting from
15 the forest health treatment.

16 (3) The prioritization policy in subsection (1) of this section
17 must consider whether parcels are within an area that is subject to a
18 forest health hazard warning or order pursuant to RCW 76.06.180.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 79.10
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 (1) Consistent with the prioritization policy developed pursuant
22 to section 1 of this act, the department must develop a prioritized
23 list of parcels of state land that would benefit most from forest
24 health treatments during the following six years. The department
25 shall update this list by November 15th of each even-numbered year.

26 (2) In order to develop a prioritized list that evaluates the
27 return on forest health treatments at a landscape scale, the
28 department must consult with and take into account the land
29 management plans and activities of nearby landowners, including
30 federal agencies, local governments, and private property owners. The
31 department may include federally, locally, or privately managed
32 parcels on the list provided that the treatment of such parcels in
33 conjunction with the treatment of department-managed parcels will
34 accrue superior landscape-scale benefits to state lands.

35 (3)(a) By December 1st of each even-numbered year, the department
36 must submit the list created pursuant to subsection (1) of this
37 section to the legislature in a manner consistent with the
38 requirements of RCW 43.01.036.

1 (b) Beginning December 1, 2020, and every two years thereafter,
2 the list submitted to the legislature must be accompanied by a brief
3 report summarizing the department's progress towards treating the
4 parcels included on the list that was submitted to the legislature
5 during the preceding biennium. The report must also summarize trends
6 in the locations and types of parcels listed for future forest health
7 treatments.

8 (4)(a) Except as provided in (b) and (c) of this subsection,
9 expenditures on forest health treatments by the department,
10 regardless of the account from which funds originate, must be
11 consistent with the prioritization policy under section 1 of this act
12 and the list created under this section.

13 (b) The department is not bound to adhere to the list submitted
14 to the legislature under subsection (3) of this section in the event
15 that emerging information or changed circumstances support a
16 reprioritization of parcels consistent with the policy created under
17 subsection (1) of this section.

18 (c) The department is not required to apply the prioritization
19 policy of this section where doing so would be incompatible with the
20 conditions of funding provided by the federal government or another
21 organization that is contributing funds to forest health treatments
22 involving the department.

23 (5) For purposes of this section, section 1 of this act, and RCW
24 79.64.020 and 79.64.100, "forest health treatments" or "treatment"
25 means actions taken by the department, including prescribed burning
26 or mechanical treatments, to restore the condition of a forest to one
27 that has the capacity to meet landowner objectives, is sound in
28 ecological function, is capable of being sustainably managed by the
29 department, and is resilient or resistant to degradation by insect,
30 disease, or wildfire-related disturbances.

31 **Sec. 3.** RCW 79.64.020 and 2014 c 32 s 3 are each amended to read
32 as follows:

33 (1) A resource management cost account in the state treasury is
34 created to be used solely for the purpose of defraying the costs and
35 expenses necessarily incurred by the department in managing and
36 administering state lands((~~τ~~)) and aquatic lands((~~τ~~)) and the making
37 and administering of leases, sales, contracts, licenses, permits,
38 easements, and rights-of-way as authorized under the provisions of
39 this title. Appropriations from the resource management cost account

1 to the department shall be expended for no other purposes. Funds in
2 the resource management cost account may be appropriated or
3 transferred by the legislature for the benefit of all of the trusts
4 from which the funds were derived. (~~During the 2013-2015 fiscal~~
5 ~~biennium, the legislature may transfer from the aquatics revenues in~~
6 ~~the resources management cost account to the marine resources~~
7 ~~stewardship trust account for the purposes of chapter 43.372 RCW.))
8 Department expenditures from the account for purposes of conducting
9 forest health treatments must be consistent with the prioritization
10 policy and list developed pursuant to sections 1 and 2 of this act.~~

11 (2) For the purposes of this section, "forest health treatments"
12 has the same meaning as defined in section 2(5) of this act.

13 **Sec. 4.** RCW 79.64.100 and 2012 c 166 s 5 and 2012 2nd sp.s. c 7
14 s 928 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

15 (1) There is created a forest development account in the state
16 treasury. The state treasurer shall keep an account of all sums
17 deposited, expended, or withdrawn from the account.

18 (2)(a) Any sums placed in the forest development account shall be
19 pledged for the purpose of:

20 (i) Paying interest and principal on the bonds issued by the
21 department under RCW 79.22.080 and 79.22.090 and the provisions of
22 this chapter; and

23 (ii) The purchase of land for growing timber.

24 (b) Any bonds issued shall constitute a first and prior claim and
25 lien against the account for the payment of principal and interest.

26 (3) No sums for the purposes identified in subsection (2) of this
27 section shall be withdrawn or paid out of the account except upon
28 approval of the department.

29 (4) Appropriations may be made by the legislature from the forest
30 development account to the department for the purpose of:

31 (a) Carrying on the activities of the department on state
32 forestlands;

33 (b) Establishing a state forestland pool under RCW 79.22.140 and
34 carrying on the activities of the department on lands included in the
35 land pool;

36 (c) Carrying on the activities of the department on lands managed
37 on a sustained yield basis as provided for in RCW 79.10.320; and

1 (d) Reimbursement of expenditures that have been made or may be
2 made from the resource management cost account created in RCW
3 79.64.020 in the management of state forestlands.

4 (5)(a) Department expenditures from the forest development
5 account for purposes of conducting forest health treatments must be
6 consistent with the prioritization policy and list developed pursuant
7 to sections 1 and 2 of this act.

8 (b) For the purposes of this subsection, "forest health
9 treatments" has the same meaning as defined in section 2(5) of this
10 act.

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