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ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5198

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Becker, Warnick, Fain, Bailey, and Brown)

READ FIRST TIME 02/24/17.

1 AN ACT Relating to fire suppression methodologies; and creating a  
2 new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the record  
5 2015 fire season saw over one million acres burned across the state.  
6 The legislature further finds that in addition to the devastating  
7 effect on our land and economy, wildfires destroyed four hundred  
8 ninety-nine structures, including three hundred seven primary  
9 residences, twenty-one commercial structures, and one hundred  
10 seventy-seven outbuildings. The legislature finds that the state must  
11 employ the best firefighting techniques, products, and technologies  
12 to prevent the unnecessary destruction of structures during future  
13 wildfire incidents.

14 (2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
15 specific purpose, by December 31, 2017, the department of natural  
16 resources must report the following to the legislature:

17 (a) A complete list of the types of long-term fire retardants,  
18 foams, and gels used by the department;

19 (b) An overview of the department's criteria in determining when,  
20 where, and how to apply long-term fire retardants, foams, and gels;

1 (c) A list of each instance the department has used long-term  
2 fire retardants, foams, and gels in fire suppression activities in  
3 the last three years;

4 (d) A description of public outreach and education activities the  
5 department has conducted relating to the use of foams or gels to  
6 protect structures during wildfire incidents, if any;

7 (e) An analysis of national fire suppression best practices  
8 relating to the use of long-term fire retardants, foams, and gels;

9 (f) An examination of how to update the department's policy on  
10 the use of long-term fire retardants, foams, and gels to match the  
11 best practices identified in (e) of this subsection;

12 (g) An analysis of relevant material safety data sheets and  
13 impacts to human health, and natural resources, including forests,  
14 from long-term fire retardants, foams, and gels; and

15 (h) Recommendations for any legislative actions necessary to  
16 improve the protection of structures from wildfires.

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