

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6363

As of January 21, 2020

Title: An act relating to tracked and wheeled all-terrain vehicles.

Brief Description: Concerning tracked and wheeled all-terrain vehicles.

Sponsors: Senators Takko and Warnick.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/20/20.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a wheeled all-terrain vehicle (WATV) to also be registered and used as a snowmobile like vehicle defined as a tracked all-terrain vehicle.
- Requires a WATV previously converted to a tracked all-terrain vehicle to meet applicable federal and state safety standards before being used again on public roads as a WATV.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: Snowmobiles. A snowmobile is a type of off-road vehicle capable of traveling over snow or ice, using an endless belt tread or cleats as a means of propulsion, and is steered by skis or sled-type runners. Snowmobiles are regulated under state law separately from other off-road vehicles. Snowmobiles are subject to a \$30 registration fee, which is deposited to the Snowmobile Account.

Wheeled All-Terrain Vehicles. A WATV is a specific category of off-road vehicle regulated separately under some aspects of a state law first enacted in 2013. There are two types of WATVs authorized to travel on public roads under certain circumstances. One is a motorized nonhighway vehicle:

- having handlebars 50 inches or less in width;
- having a seat height of at least 20 inches;
- weighing less than 1500 pounds; and
- having four tires with a diameter of 30 inches or less.

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.

The second is a utility-type vehicle:

- designed for and capable of travel over designated roads;
- traveling on four or more low-pressure tires of 20 pounds per square inch or less;
- having a maximum width less than 74 inches;
- having a maximum weight of less than 2000 pounds; and
- having a wheelbase of 110 inches or less.

On-road use requires certain vehicle registration requirements including equipment and payment of a \$12 fee. WATV off-road use requires registration and payment of an \$18 fee.

Conversion kits are currently available, allowing WATVs to be used on snow or ice as a snowmobile.

Summary of Bill: "Tracked all-terrain vehicle" is defined within the snowmobile chapter of the RCW as a WATV with tracks or a combination of tracks and skis installed in place of the tires. The definition of "snowmobile" is broadened to include tracked all-terrain vehicles.

Allows the owner of a WATV to maintain concurrent registrations for the vehicle for use as a WATV, and for use as a tracked all-terrain vehicle. When registering as a WATV, the WATV registration laws apply, including applicable fees. When registering as a tracked all-terrain vehicle, the snowmobile registration laws apply, including applicable fees.

The Department of Licensing must establish a declaration for submission by the WATV owner when initially applying for a snowmobile registration, which states the WATV complies with all applicable federal or state vehicle safety standards while in use as a WATV upon public highways.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 15, 2020.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This levels the playing field and allows WATVs equipped with tracks to operate like a snowmobile. This bill will give WATV users access to outdoor recreation all year round. I bring my young daughter with me in the summer months and we head up into the mountains on the WATV and then hike around. I would like to take her in the winter too, but really want this to be safe. This is just like the snow bikes. This recreational equipment can also help generate state revenue when people start to buy and use these kits on WATVs in Washington. Snowmobile trails need upkeep and investment to keep the recreational opportunities open. We are open to having more vehicles being able to register as a snowmobile to help financially support the programs that keep the access open. These vehicles are out there already and we feel bringing them into the system and lawfully registering them will help.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Dean Takko, Prime Sponsor; Jon Ferrian, Washington State Snowmobile Association; Brian Rogers, Washington State Snowmobile Association.

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