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**HOUSE BILL 1882**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2022 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Boehnke, Dye, Dent, and Pollet

Read first time 01/11/22. Referred to Committee on Community & Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to better Washington outdoor recreation  
2 leadership and development; and creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that Washington  
5 state needs equitable and affordable outdoor recreation  
6 opportunities. Since 1990, Washington's population has grown by  
7 2,700,000 residents. Yet, over the last 30 years, Washington's state  
8 park system has added just 28 camping sites, five vault toilets, and  
9 four composting toilets.

10 (2) Washington is expected to add another 2,200,000 residents by  
11 2040 but has just one new state park in development that will add a  
12 meager 52 campsites. The parks and recreation commission has acquired  
13 39 properties since 1990 and only three of those properties have been  
14 developed into parks. Currently, many state parks are fully booked in  
15 summer weekends by the previous fall. The number and geographic  
16 distribution of state parks need to be addressed considering both the  
17 pressure on some popular parks and issues of equity for communities  
18 that have experienced disproportionate environmental impacts.  
19 Therefore, the legislature intends to make changes that will address  
20 both capacity and the distribution of visitors.

1 (3) Furthermore, many state parks have maintenance issues that  
2 prevent their regular use and enjoyment. State parks are also in need  
3 of safety upgrades, including appropriate staffing by park rangers  
4 and availability of wireless communication signals for emergency  
5 communication. Therefore, the legislature intends to address the  
6 quality of the visitor experience at state parks.

7 (4) The legislature intends to improve access to enhance economic  
8 development and public health by accelerating construction of trail  
9 miles that connect communities and improving trailhead safety and  
10 conveniences, such as garbage collection and bathrooms.

11 (5) The legislature also finds that on-water recreation access  
12 capacity must be addressed proactively and in tandem with on-land  
13 recreational opportunities so that recreation user groups are treated  
14 fairly.

15 (6) Finally, the legislature finds that new fees and taxes should  
16 not be imposed to provide these needed investments. All  
17 Washingtonians will be paying directly or indirectly for the  
18 protection of the natural environment through the climate commitment  
19 act. The legislature finds that a portion of the revenue collected  
20 from that comprehensive carbon emission regulation should be invested  
21 in an overhaul of our state outdoor recreation vision and be used to  
22 eliminate existing barriers to inclusive and equitable outdoor  
23 access.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1)(a) The joint select committee on  
25 better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development is  
26 established, with members as provided in this subsection:

27 (i) The president of the senate shall appoint two members and one  
28 alternate from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate; and

29 (ii) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint  
30 two members and one alternate from each of the two largest caucuses  
31 of the house of representatives.

32 (b) The committee shall choose its cochairs from among its  
33 legislative members. One cochair must represent a majority caucus and  
34 the other cochair must represent a minority caucus. The cochairs must  
35 represent different chambers of the legislature.

36 (c) The committee shall select other officers from its members as  
37 the committee deems appropriate.

38 (d) The committee may designate an advisory committee to consist  
39 of private and public sector partners with special knowledge or

1 experience concerning the relationship between outdoor recreation and  
2 economic development generally and regarding the tourism,  
3 hospitality, and retail industries. Members of such an advisory  
4 committee are not entitled to expense reimbursement.

5 (e) During any committee meeting in which an appointed member is  
6 absent, the alternate member from the same chamber and caucus as the  
7 absent member may vote in place of the absent member.

8 (2) The joint select committee on better Washington outdoor  
9 recreation leadership and development shall review the following  
10 issues:

11 (a) Consider how to systematically improve outdoor recreation  
12 economic development and leadership through enhanced and expanded  
13 facilities and amenities in Washington state in a way that brings  
14 benefits to all corners of Washington;

15 (b) Consider how state investments in a systematic plan to  
16 upgrade Washington outdoor recreation opportunities can have maximum  
17 benefit for the private sector employers in the outdoor recreation  
18 economy and in the ability to enhance employment in the retail,  
19 travel, and tourism industries; and

20 (c) Consider inequities in outdoor recreation access and  
21 affordability for vulnerable populations and communities  
22 disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution in Washington  
23 and opportunities to address them.

24 (3) The joint select committee on better Washington outdoor  
25 recreation leadership and development must hold at least four  
26 meetings, at least two of which must be in eastern Washington. One  
27 cochair shall preside over the meetings in western Washington and the  
28 other cochair shall preside over the meetings in eastern Washington.  
29 The first meeting of the committee must occur prior to September 30,  
30 2022.

31 (4) Staff support for the joint select committee on better  
32 Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development must be  
33 provided by the senate committee services and the house of  
34 representatives office of program research.

35 (5) Relevant state agencies, departments, and commissions shall  
36 cooperate with the joint select committee on better Washington  
37 outdoor recreation leadership and development and provide information  
38 as the cochairs reasonably request.

1 (6) Legislative members of the joint select committee on better  
2 Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development must be  
3 reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120.

4 (7) The expenses of the joint select committee on better  
5 Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development must be paid  
6 jointly by the senate and the house of representatives. Committee  
7 expenditures are subject to the approval by the senate facilities and  
8 operations committee and the house of representatives executive rules  
9 committee, or their successor committees.

10 (8)(a) The joint select committee on better Washington outdoor  
11 recreation leadership and development shall report its findings and  
12 any recommendations to the committees of the legislature with  
13 jurisdiction over the parks and recreation commission by December 1,  
14 2023.

15 (b) Recommendations of the committee may be made by a simple  
16 majority of committee members. In addition to majority-supported  
17 recommendations, the committee may report minority findings supported  
18 by at least two members of the committee.

19 (c) Notice of the completion of the findings and recommendations  
20 required in this subsection must be published in the Washington State  
21 Register by December 1, 2023.

22 (d) The report must include findings and recommendations with  
23 respect to:

24 (i) A strategic plan for cost-effective and equitable expansion  
25 of outdoor recreation opportunities;

26 (ii) Recommendations for modifying any state or local policies  
27 that may hinder the speed or increase the expense of development of  
28 state-owned land for public recreation access; and

29 (iii) Identification of any underutilized lands in the state  
30 inventory and recommendations regarding short and long-term  
31 opportunities to maximize recreation opportunity with those lands.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The parks and recreation commission, in  
33 collaboration with other state agencies, shall prepare a report for  
34 the joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation  
35 leadership and development by September 1, 2022. The report must  
36 compare Washington state recreational amenities and experiences on at  
37 least the following measures to border states and to outdoor  
38 recreation travel destination states such as Colorado and Utah:

39 (1) Per capita tent camping and RV and camp trailer sites;

- 1           (2) Boat launch and marina facilities per capita to neighboring  
2 states and outdoor recreation travel destination locations, including  
3 Utah and Colorado;
- 4           (3) Trail miles per capita in various categories of use types to  
5 neighboring states;
- 6           (4) Age and condition and number of restroom and shower  
7 facilities;
- 8           (5) Availability and strength of wireless signal at state parks;
- 9           (6) Staffing levels;
- 10          (7) Describing in detail the current maintenance and operations  
11 backlog and the commission's strategy to prioritize projects to  
12 eliminate the backlog;
- 13          (8) Describing the current state park land inventory that is  
14 undeveloped or underdeveloped and the extent to which any preliminary  
15 work has been done to map out a development plan for those  
16 undeveloped or underdeveloped lands; and
- 17          (9) Describing what is known about inequities in access and  
18 affordability of outdoor recreation opportunity in Washington and  
19 recommending the type of studies that would fill in gaps in  
20 knowledge.

21          NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 4.** This act may be known and cited as the  
22 Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development act or the  
23 better world act.

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