

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5934

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As of January 8, 2024

**Title:** An act relating to pollinator habitat.

**Brief Description:** Concerning pollinator habitat.

**Sponsors:** Senators Padden and Van De Wege.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs: 1/11/24.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes that a local government must require a permit applicant of certain permits with landscaping to include at least 25 percent of the planted area as pollinator habitat to the extent practicable.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, LAND USE & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

**Staff:** Karen Epps (786-7424)

**Background:** Washington State Department of Agriculture Pollinator Health Program. The Department of Agriculture (WSDA) promotes and protects pollinator habitat and the health and sustainability of pollinator species by providing technical and financial assistance to state agencies, local governments, and private landowners to implement practices promoting habitat for managed pollinators, as well as beekeeper and grower best management practices.

Pollinator Habitat. The Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Department of Transportation, State Parks, and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board must consider pollinator habitat when managing lands or habitat. WDFW must evaluate various restoration techniques with the goal of improving

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habitat for native pollinators where practicable when making habitat improvements or for riparian restoration.

If a public works project includes landscaping, at least 25 percent of the planted area must be pollinator habitat to the extent practicable. WSDA, in consultation with the State Conservation Commission (Commission) and WDFW, must develop a list of native forage plants that are pollen-rich or nectar-rich and beneficial for all pollinators, including honey bees.

The Commission provides grant funding to conservation districts to educate residents and community groups in urban, suburban, and rural nonfarm areas about the value of pollinator habitat for both managed and native pollinators. Educational efforts include the benefits of habitat diversity, especially pollen-rich and nectar-rich flowering forbs and shrubs.

**Summary of Bill:** If a project permit, a commercial building permit, or a residential building permit includes landscaping, a local government must require the applicant to include at least 25 percent of the planted area as pollinator habitat to the extent practicable. The local government must provide the list of native forage plants developed by WSDA to applicants.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

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