
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5966

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation
(originally sponsored by Senators Swecker, Jacobsen, Morton,
Hargrove, Shin and Kline)

READ FIRST TIME 02/23/07.

1 AN ACT Relating to preparing a response to the consequences of
2 climate change on the forests of the state; creating new sections; and
3 making appropriations.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that sustained
6 global climatic changes will have an effect on the health and
7 productivity of the forests in Washington. In just one instance,
8 recent observations of high summer temperatures coupled with low
9 moisture in eastern Washington, both outside of the one hundred year
10 historic range of variability, are contributing to an alarming increase
11 in mountain pine beetle infestations. The increase in pest
12 infestations leads to an increase in tree mortality and severe fires.

13 (2) The legislature further finds that minimizing the impacts of
14 global climate change, and restoring the health and resiliency of
15 eastern Washington's forests, will require an accelerated approach to
16 research coupled with an aggressive outreach and training program to
17 motivate an appropriate response on the ground. Better data can be
18 used to mobilize ground responses with enhanced site-specific
19 treatments.

1 (3) The legislature further finds that investments made today, both
2 in research, training, and on-the-ground treatments, will prove more
3 cost-effective, conserve more resources, and save more firefighting
4 costs than the option of doing nothing.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The college of forest resources at the
6 University of Washington shall:

7 (1) Determine how treatments may be customized to site-specific
8 conditions and to identify the most cost-effective treatments for
9 reducing the risk of climate change and restoring forest health.

10 (2) Implement a program of technology transfer through a series of
11 outreach activities, including trainer training, community group
12 outreach, and the production of streaming video and other instructional
13 materials concerning the risks of not responding to changing climatic
14 conditions and the benefits of various treatment options.

15 (3) Develop methods by which state and federal agencies, private
16 and community groups, and Indian tribes may directly assess the costs
17 associated with different management options, including the cost of no
18 action and how future costs can be avoided.

19 (4) Analyze the institutional cost accounting methods to
20 demonstrate where savings are accumulated and where investments are
21 most needed to restore forest health, and provide recommended
22 alternatives that can improve the responsiveness of treatments, biomass
23 collection, and infrastructure development investments aimed at
24 reducing health risks as applied differently to federal, state, and
25 private ownerships.

26 (5) Support other programs that assess the feasibility of
27 converting large amounts of underutilized biomass into useful products
28 and green energy by providing required analyses needed to efficiently
29 collect and deliver biomass to green energy end users.

30 (6) Conduct a pilot project on a high hazard area of forest land
31 that collects and analyzes remote sensing data, using tools such as
32 light detection and ranging data, in order to rapidly track forest
33 health changes and provide information for planning ground treatments
34 and the design of a comprehensive health tracking and treatment
35 planning system for state monitoring.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** In carrying out section 2 of this act, the
2 college of forest resources at the University of Washington must work
3 cooperatively and share information and findings with the department of
4 natural resources.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The sum of five hundred thousand
6 dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for
7 the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, from the general fund to the
8 University of Washington for the purposes of this act.

9 (2) The sum of five hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as
10 may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30,
11 2009, from the general fund to the University of Washington for the
12 purposes of this act.

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