
Ecology & Parks Committee

SSB 6380

Brief Description: Concerning the purchase of wetland mitigation bank credits by the department of transportation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Haugen, Jacobsen, Ranker and Swecker).

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires the Washington State Department of Transportation, when purchasing wetland mitigation bank credits, to determine which bank provides the most or multiple benefits to impacted habitat.

Hearing Date: 2/19/10

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

Background:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is required by state and federal law to mitigate for its construction projects' impacts. Mitigation can include: creating, restoring, enhancing, or preserving a functioning wetland within the service area; using stored credits in one of their existing mitigation banks; or purchasing mitigation banking credits from a private entrepreneurial mitigation bank that has been certified by the Department of Ecology's Wetland Banking Program.

A wetland mitigation bank is a wetland, stream, or other aquatic resource that has been restored or created for the purpose of providing compensation for unavoidable impacts to aquatic resources. Units of mitigation can be bought from a wetland bank and credited as mitigation against projects with unavoidable wetland impacts.

Summary of Bill:

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.

When purchasing wetland mitigation bank credits, the WSDOT must determine which bank provides the most or multiple benefits to the impacted habitat. When possible, the WSDOT must consider purchasing credit from the wetland mitigation bank that provides the most benefit and likelihood for success.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.