

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5437

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regarding the operation and authority of the state conservation commission.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development (originally sponsored by Senators Schoesler, Hatfield and Haugen; by request of Conservation Commission).

Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: The State Conservation Commission (Commission) performs several functions, including assisting the state's 47 local conservation districts in carrying out soil, water, and other natural resource conservation projects. It consists of 10 members: two appointed by the Governor, three elected by local district supervisors, and five serving ex officio, including directors of the departments of Ecology and Agriculture, the Commissioner of Public Lands, the President of the Washington Association of Conservation Districts, and the Dean of the Washington State University College of Agriculture.

The Commission meets once every two months at locations across the state. Members are eligible for \$50 per diem compensation when attending official meetings or performing statutorily prescribed duties approved by the Chair.

The Commission must be supplied with suitable office accommodations, necessary supplies, and equipment at the Department of Ecology's (DOE) central office.

Summary: Commission members are eligible for \$100 per diem compensation when attending official meetings or performing statutorily prescribed duties approved by the Chair.

Suitable office accommodations at DOE's central office need only be supplied to the Commission as long as the Commission and the Office of Financial Management (OFM) deem it appropriate and financially justifiable to do so. OFM will consider possible colocation with other agencies and other ways to achieve efficiencies in the best interest of the state.

The Commission may seek and accept grants from any source, public or private, and accept gifts or endowments.

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 Commission may contract for or conduct conferences, seminars, and training sessions and may recover costs for these activities at a rate it determines. It may provide reimbursement to participants in these activities and other Commission sponsored meetings and events, and meals for participants in working meetings.

The Commission's rulemaking authority is clarified, and technical revisions make language gender neutral and delete or correct improper terminology.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	1
House	95	2

Effective: July 26, 2009