

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6274

As of January 14, 2010

Title: An act relating to establishing a work group to make recommendations to improve trail interactions in Washington state.

Brief Description: Establishing the Washington state trail interactions work group.

Sponsors: Senator Jacobsen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 1/14/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: According to a 2008 study from the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), *Defining and Measuring Success: The Role of State Government in Outdoor Recreation*, Washington State manages almost 650,000 acres for outdoor recreation, habitat, or environmental protection. The state also manages approximately 3 million acres for resource production, which are often available for public recreation. The federal government owns approximately 9.1 million acres and local governments own approximately 237,000 acres for recreation habitat, or environmental protection. Additionally, private landowners, ranging from residences to timberland, also provide a significant but unknown number of acres available for recreation.

The 2008 study also surveyed Washington residents concerning their participation in recreation activities, including participation in trail based recreation. According to the study, approximately: 20 percent of residents participate in hiking; 13 percent drive off-road vehicles for recreation, with about 7 percent using rural trails; about 4 percent participate in equestrian activities; and about about 32 percent ride bicycles, with about 4 percent riding on forest or mountain trails.

Summary of Bill: The Washington State Trail Interactions Work Group (work group) is established. The work group consists of appropriate and balanced representation from non-motorized recreational users, motorized recreational users, and public, private, and tribal landowners. The RCO must appoint members as well as staff to the work group.

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 work group must examine trail interactions in Washington State and make recommendations regarding trail access, the accessibility of online information, signage, trail enjoyment, and safety. To ensure that the public has the opportunity to provide input, the work group must hold meetings at diverse locations throughout the state. A report to the Legislature containing the work group's recommendations is due December 1, 2010, and the work group expires June 30, 2011.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 7, 2010.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The work group provides an opportunity to expand on recent work between diverse recreational interests, particularly with regards to trails issues.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jonathan Guzzo, Washington Trails Association.