

HB 1626 - DIGEST

Finds that: (1) Healthy wildlife populations are a valuable and treasured public resource to the people of the state of Washington. However, as the human population increases, negative interactions between humans and wildlife will become more frequent;

(2) Interactions between humans and wildlife can have significant financial impacts on the affected landowner;

(3) The commercial agriculture, horticulture, and livestock industries are important components of the state economy that can be negatively impacted by interactions with wildlife. However, other landowners, both commercial and residential, may be faced with wildlife interactions that result in property damage;

(4) It is in the best interests of the state for the department of fish and wildlife to respond quickly to wildlife damage complaints and to work with those affected to prevent and minimize negative interactions while maintaining healthy wildlife populations; and

(5) Negative wildlife interactions can be best reduced by encouraging landowners to contribute, through their land management practices, to healthy wildlife populations and to provide access for related recreation.

Declares an intent to provide a solution where all property owners have a potential avenue to petition the state for some mitigation of the damages caused by wildlife.

Provides that the act applies prospectively only and not retroactively. The act applies only to claims that arise on or after July 1, 2010. Claims under chapter 77.36 RCW that arise before July 1, 2010, must be adjudicated under chapter 77.36 RCW as it existed before July 1, 2010.

Expires section 12 of the act on July 30, 2014.