
General Government Appropriations & Oversight Committee

HB 2153

Brief Description: Making the discover pass transferable between two vehicles.

Sponsors: Representatives Hudgins, Ahern, Miloscia, Moscoso, McCune, Ladenburg, Orcutt, Fitzgibbon, Armstrong, Short, Springer, Alexander, Seaquist, Dunshee, Probst, Upthegrove, Blake, Lytton, Jinkins, Kagi, Cody, Hasegawa, Van De Wege, Reykdal, Fagan, Buys, Hinkle, Kenney, Moeller, Kretz, Klippert, Wilcox, Overstreet, Asay, Schmick, Kristiansen, Sells, Appleton, Finn, Stanford, Billig, Hansen, Takko, Wylie, Maxwell, Pearson, Hunt, Santos, Morris, Roberts, Clibborn, Zeiger and Dammeier.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows for one Discover Pass to be valid and transferrable between two vehicles.
- Allows for one Vehicle Access Pass to be valid and transferrable between two vehicles.

Hearing Date: 1/26/12

Staff: Michael Bennion (786-7118).

Background:

The Washington State Parks system, the fourth oldest in the nation, includes 117 developed parks on over 100,000 total acres. Each year, the system sees well over 40 million visitors, with many using one of the over 2,000 modern camping sites or other overnight accommodation, holding events with use of group facilities, or simply for day-use recreating purposes.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) are charged with managing the public lands of the state. The WDFW owns or manages nearly one million

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acres of public land for fish and wildlife, habitat conservation, and wildlife-related recreation. The DNR protects and manages 5.6 million acres of state-owned land.

Until July 1, 2011, there was no charge to the public for access to both the DNR or the State Parks land and recreation sites. The WDFW charged \$10 for the annual fish and wildlife lands vehicle use permit, or the permit was provided free of charge with all hunting and fishing licenses.

State Parks have historically been funded with varying levels of state general fund. In response to reductions in general fund support and in an effort to make the State Parks self-supporting, agency request and subsequently enacted legislation in 2011 created the Discover Pass permit as a way to increase contributions from users.

The Discover Pass or Day-use permit is required for vehicle access to over 3 million acres of recreational lands managed by the three agencies (State Parks, WDFW, DNR) combined. Visitors wishing to park on state recreational lands must obtain a permit allowing vehicle access for one calendar day.

For holders of certain hunting and fishing licenses on WDFW recreation lands and water-access sites, a Vehicle Access Pass is required for WDFW lands and boat launches.

The Discover Pass permit is valid for one vehicle for twelve months from the point of purchase at a cost of \$30, while a Day-use permit costs \$10. Every four years, the Office of Financial Management must review the cost of the permits and recommend to the legislature any adjustment to account for inflation.

Summary of Bill:

Removes the requirement of only one motor vehicle per Discover Pass and provides space for two motor vehicle license plate numbers per Discover Pass.

Allows for an additional license plate number to be included on a Vehicle Access Pass.

Each Discover Pass or Day-use permit, Vehicle Access Pass, Annual Natural Investment Permit or Sno-Park seasonal permit sold prior to the effective date is valid for two license plate numbers written on the pass or permit.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.