

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5131

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### As Reported By House Committee On:

Capital Budget

**Title:** An act relating to changing interagency committee for outdoor recreation accounts and accounting procedures.

**Brief Description:** Revising account names and accounting procedures of the IAC.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ecology & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Spanel and Sellar; by request of Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation).

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Capital Budget: 3/27/95, 3/30/95 [DPA].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Sehlin, Chairman; Honeyford, Vice Chairman; Ogden, Ranking Minority Member; Chopp, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hankins; McMorris; Mitchell; Pennington; Regala; Silver; L. Thomas and Valle.

**Staff:** Karl Herzog (786-7271).

**Background:** The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) administers several programs that provide grants to state and local agencies for outdoor recreation and habitat conservation projects. The IAC was originally created in 1964 to implement the Initiative 215 Boating Facilities Program (I-215). Since 1964, the IAC has gained responsibility for managing other capital grant programs, including the Non-Highway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program (NOVA), and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP).

Currently, many of the capital grant programs within the IAC are managed through one account, the Outdoor Recreation Account (ORA). The ORA receives revenue from a number of sources, including a portion of the state gas tax paid by boat and off-road vehicle users, off-road vehicle permit fees, and the sale of general obligation bonds. These distinct revenue sources, each of which corresponds to one of the IAC grant programs, must be accounted for separately by the IAC within the ORA.

Agencies requesting funding from one of the grant programs within the ORA must submit a six-year facility plan to the IAC for evaluation.

The amount of gas tax revenue deposited in the ORA for the I-215 grant program is determined by a survey of boat users conducted by the Department of Licensing (DOL). If a survey results in a change in the amount of gas tax attributed to boat users, DOL must adjust the revenues deposited into the ORA on a retroactive basis, to the mid-point of the survey period.

Initiative 215 capital grants are divided equally between state and local government boating-related projects. Currently, the IAC allocates I-215 grants to local governments through a competitive process, while state agencies receive I-215 grants directly through capital budget appropriations based on IAC recommendations.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** Two new accounts are created in the state treasury for the purpose of segregating IAC grant programs and revenues for accounting purposes. A new Recreation Resource Account is created to receive revenues from a portion of the state gas tax paid by boat users, and to fund grants to state and local governments for boating-related recreation projects. A new Non-Highway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program Account (NOVA) is created to receive revenues from a portion of the state gas tax paid by off-road vehicle users and from off-road vehicle permit fees, and to fund grants to public agencies for off-road and non-highway facilities and activities.

The Outdoor Recreation Account is retained in the state treasury to receive revenues from the sale of state bonds, and to fund outdoor recreation projects under the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP).

The requirement that agencies submit a six-year facility plan to the IAC is changed. Agencies must instead submit a long-term facility plan in order to qualify for IAC grant funding.

The effective date of gas tax surveys conducted by the Department of Licensing to determine revenues for the I-215 program is changed. Instead of becoming effective retroactively, survey results will become effective in the biennium following the survey.

The process for allocating I-215 funding to state agencies is changed. The state agency portion of I-215 funds is appropriated to the IAC instead of directly to state agencies. State agencies are eligible to compete for I-215 grants from the IAC. The IAC must submit a list of prioritized state agency projects to be funded under the I-215 program with its biennial budget request.

**Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Substitute Bill:** The committee amendment clarifies that the Legislature is responsible for setting appropriation levels for the Recreation Resource Account, and requires that the IAC submit a prioritized list of state agency projects to be funded from the account with its biennial budget request.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available for original bill.

**Effective Date of Amended Bill:** Ninety days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** This bill is housekeeping legislation that will not affect the funding formulas used for IAC programs.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Senator Harriet Spanel, prime sponsor; and Laura Eckert, IAC Director. (pro)