

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2428

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, February 23, 1996

Title: An act relating to the watershed coordinating council.

Brief Description: Requiring the watershed coordinating council to implement a watershed pilot project.

Sponsors: House Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representative Pennington).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources: 2/22/96, 2/23/96 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Drew, Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; A. Anderson, Hargrove, Morton, Oke, Owen, Snyder, Strannigan and Swecker.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: There are several hundred federal, state, local, tribal, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to restore watersheds. Legislation enacted in 1993 created the Watershed Coordinating Council to coordinate state agency watershed planning and implementation activities. The council was charged with a number of specific directives, including identifying ways to: (1) overcome barriers to state agency cooperation in watershed planning and implementation; and (2) minimize state agency duplication and overlap.

The council is comprised of the Commissioner of Public Lands or the commissioner's designee, and the director or designee from the following departments: Transportation; Agriculture; Ecology; Fish and Wildlife; Health; Community, Trade, and Economic Development; the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation; the Puget Sound Water Quality Authority; and the Conservation Commission. The council expires June 30, 1997.

Summary of Bill: The Watershed Coordinating Council is directed to establish interagency teams in at least four watersheds, where there is a local willingness to participate.

In assisting local governments, the interagency teams are specifically directed to: (1) establish an information bank; (2) provide volunteer training; (3) develop a prioritized list of restoration activities; and (4) establish an ongoing organizational framework to implement restoration activities.

The interagency teams are also directed to consolidate permit requirements for restoration projects and to resolve policy conflicts that may exist between the state agencies on the interagency teams.

The Watershed Coordinating Council is required to submit a report to the Legislature on the interagency teams by June 30, 1997.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill will show what can be done by a coordinated volunteer effort to protect watersheds.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Pennington, prime sponsor; Ron Shultz, National Audubon Society; Rick Abbett, Trout Unlimited.