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Sponsor(s): Senator Fraser; by request of Governor Lowry

Brief Description: Making changes to watershed planning and governance.

SB 5494 - DIGEST

Declares an intent to ensure the development of watershed resource management plans that will provide certainty as to water quality, water availability, and habitat conservation measures that must be known and considered for informed local decisions on land use planning and economic development and state decisions on water resources and water quality.

Provides for a petition process to the state to commence watershed planning.

Encourages cooperative agreements for federal endorsement of state management plans.

Establishes a policy advisory committee to be known as the water resources forum.

Revises provisions for appeals to the pollution control hearings board.

Directs the department, in conjunction with the water resources forum, to develop a budget process for its water rights administration program.

Revises the fee structure for water rights applications.

Repeals RCW 90.03.471, and provisions of chapter 90.38 RCW.