

2 **2SHB 2054** - S AMD - 451  
3 By Senators Morton and Swecker

4 PULLED 4/18/97

5 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the  
6 following:

7 "PART I  
8 BASIN PLANS

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 101.** The purpose of this chapter is to develop  
10 a more thorough and cooperative method of determining what the current  
11 water resource situation is in each water resource inventory area of  
12 the state and to provide local citizens with the maximum possible input  
13 concerning their goals and objectives for water resource management and  
14 development.

15 It is necessary for the legislature to establish processes and  
16 policies that will result in providing state agencies with more  
17 specific guidance to manage the water resources of the state consistent  
18 with current law and direction provided by local entities and citizens  
19 through the process established in accordance with this chapter.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 102.** The legislature finds that the local  
21 development of watershed plans for managing water resources and for  
22 protecting existing water rights is vital to both state and local  
23 interests. The local development of these plans serves vital local  
24 interests by placing it in the hands of people: Who have the greatest  
25 knowledge of both the resources and the aspirations of those who live  
26 and work in the watershed; and who have the greatest stake in the  
27 proper, long-term management of the resources. The development of such  
28 plans serves the state's vital interests by ensuring that the state's  
29 water resources are used wisely, by protecting existing water rights,  
30 by protecting instream flows for fish, and by providing for the  
31 economic well-being of the state's citizenry and communities.  
32 Therefore, the legislature believes it necessary for units of local  
33 government throughout the state to engage in the orderly development of  
34 these watershed plans.

1        NEW SECTION.     **Sec. 103.**     When considering applications to  
2 appropriate public waters or the perfection, transfer, change, or  
3 cancellation of water right permits, the department shall not have  
4 discretion to take any action except in a manner consistent with the  
5 standards set forth in chapters 90.03, 90.22, 90.44, and 90.54 RCW.

6        NEW SECTION.     **Sec. 104.**     Unless the context clearly requires  
7 otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this  
8 chapter.

9        (1) "Department" means the department of ecology.

10       (2) "WRIA" means a water resource inventory area established in  
11 chapter 173-500 WAC as it existed on January 1, 1997.

12       (3) "Water supply utility" means a water, combined water-sewer,  
13 irrigation, reclamation, or public utility district that provides water  
14 to persons or other water users within the district or a division or  
15 unit responsible for administering a publicly governed water supply  
16 system on behalf of a city, town, or county.

17       (4) "WRIA plan" or "plan" means the product of the planning unit  
18 including any rules adopted in conjunction with the product of the  
19 planning unit.

20       NEW SECTION.     **Sec. 105.**     In order to have the best possible program  
21 for appropriating and administering water use in the state, the  
22 legislature establishes the following principles and criteria to carry  
23 out the purpose and intent of chapter . . . , Laws of 1997 (this act).

24       (1) All WRIA planning units established under this chapter shall  
25 develop a process to assure that water resource user interests and  
26 directly involved interest groups at the local level have the  
27 opportunity, in a fair and equitable manner, to give input and  
28 direction to the process.

29       (2) State agencies with major water resource management  
30 responsibilities shall be available to share information on state-wide  
31 statutorily designated interests.

32       (3) Plans developed under chapter . . . , Laws of 1997 (this act)  
33 shall be consistent with and not duplicative of efforts already under  
34 way in a WRIA, including but not limited to watershed analysis  
35 conducted under state forest practices statutes and rules.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 106.**    (1) Once a WRIA planning unit has been  
2 organized and designated a lead agency, it shall notify the department  
3 and may apply to the department for funding assistance for conducting  
4 the planning.    Funds shall be provided from and to the extent of  
5 appropriations made by the legislature to the department expressly for  
6 this purpose.

7        (2) Each planning unit that has complied with subsection (1) of  
8 this section is eligible to receive fifty thousand dollars to initiate  
9 the planning process.    The department shall allocate additional funds  
10 to WRIA planning units based on demonstrated need.    Each WRIA planning  
11 unit may receive up to two hundred fifty thousand dollars during the  
12 first two-year period of planning, with a maximum allocation of five  
13 hundred thousand dollars for each WRIA planning unit.    Funding provided  
14 under this section shall be considered a contractual obligation against  
15 the moneys appropriated for this purpose.

16        (3) Preference shall be given to planning units requesting funding  
17 for conducting multi-WRIA planning under section 109 of this act.  
18 Preference shall also be given to planning projects that are clearly  
19 intended to respond to endangered species act listings or to attempt to  
20 resolve problems that may lead to such listings or to address water  
21 availability to meet projected growth based on office of financial  
22 management twenty-year population projections.

23        (4) The department may retain up to one percent of funds allocated  
24 under this section to defray administrative costs.

25        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 107.**    (1) This chapter shall not be construed as  
26 creating a new cause of action against the state or any county, city,  
27 town, water supply utility, conservation district, or planning unit.

28        (2) Notwithstanding RCW 4.92.090, 4.96.010, and 64.40.020, no claim  
29 for damages may be filed against the state or any county, city, town,  
30 water supply utility, Indian tribes, conservation district, or planning  
31 unit that or member of a planning unit who participates in a WRIA  
32 planning unit for performing responsibilities under this chapter.    The  
33 exclusion from liability contained in this subsection does not apply to  
34 a county, city, town, or water supply utility that votes to adopt  
35 provisions in a WRIA plan that have been identified by the superior  
36 court as being in conflict with state statute or federal law with  
37 regard to those provisions if advice regarding the conflict was  
38 provided under section 113(2) of this act.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 108.** (1)(a) Except as provided in section 109 of  
2 this act for multi-WRIA planning, the county with the largest area  
3 within the boundaries of a WRIA or a municipal corporation obtaining  
4 its water supply from the WRIA may choose to initiate water resource  
5 planning for the WRIA under this chapter. If it does so choose, it  
6 shall make application to the department of ecology to declare its  
7 intent to conduct watershed planning. Upon making application to the  
8 department, the county with the largest area within the WRIA shall  
9 convene meetings of the members of the legislative authorities of the  
10 counties with territory within a WRIA for the appointment of a WRIA  
11 planning unit. The county or municipal corporation shall also notify  
12 the cities, water supply utilities, Indian tribes, and conservation  
13 districts with territory within the WRIA that these groups are to meet  
14 to appoint their members of the WRIA planning unit. For the purposes  
15 of this section and sections 109 and 113 of this act, a county is  
16 considered to have territory within a WRIA only if the territory of the  
17 county located in the WRIA constitutes at least fifteen percent of the  
18 area of the WRIA. For conducting planning under this chapter, the  
19 county with the largest area within the boundaries of the WRIA is the  
20 lead agency for the WRIA planning, except as provided in section 109 of  
21 this act for multi-WRIA planning. When the counties of a WRIA have  
22 convened jointly to make appointments to the planning unit, they may,  
23 by a majority vote, choose as the lead agency for WRIA planning any  
24 governmental entity in the WRIA. Such a governmental entity shall act  
25 as the lead agency for this purpose if it agrees in writing to accept  
26 the designation.

27        (b) For a WRIA located within Pierce, King, or Snohomish county,  
28 the lead agency shall be the water supply utility that is using the  
29 largest amount of water from the WRIA.

30        (2) In a WRIA where water resource planning efforts have commenced  
31 before the effective date of this section, such as but not limited to  
32 the Kettle river WRIA, the county legislative authorities with  
33 territory within the WRIA in accordance with subsection (1) of this  
34 section may, by majority vote, choose to adopt the existing planning  
35 unit membership for purposes of planning under chapter . . . , Laws of  
36 1997 (this act).

37        (3)(a) One WRIA planning unit shall be appointed for the WRIA as  
38 provided by this section or for a multi-WRIA area as provided by  
39 section 109 of this act for multi-WRIA planning. The planning unit

1 shall be composed of: (i) One member from each county with territory  
2 in the WRIA representing the county and appointed by the county; (ii)  
3 one member for each county with territory in the WRIA, but not less  
4 than two members, representing cities with territory in the WRIA and  
5 appointed jointly by those cities and incorporated towns; (iii) two  
6 members representing water supply utilities other than those of a city  
7 or town with territory within the WRIA and appointed jointly by those  
8 districts; (iv) one member representing all conservation districts with  
9 territory within the WRIA and appointed jointly by those districts; (v)  
10 three members representing various special interest groups appointed  
11 jointly by the cities with territory within the WRIA; and six members  
12 representing various special interest groups appointed jointly by the  
13 counties with territory within the WRIA; (vi) one member representing  
14 the general citizenry appointed jointly by the cities with territory  
15 within the WRIA; (vii) three members representing the general citizenry  
16 appointed jointly by the counties with territory in the WRIA, of which  
17 at least one shall be a holder of a water right certificate and at  
18 least one shall be a holder of a water right for which a statement of  
19 claim was in the state's water rights claims registry before January 1,  
20 1997; (viii) if one or more federal Indian reservations are located in  
21 whole or in part within the boundaries of the WRIA, the planning unit  
22 shall extend an invitation to the tribal government of each reservation  
23 to appoint one member representing the tribal government; and (ix)  
24 three members representing state agencies including the secretary of  
25 the department of transportation or the secretary's designee, the  
26 director of the department of fish and wildlife or the director's  
27 designee, and the director of the department of ecology or the  
28 director's designee. The three members representing state government  
29 shall have a single vote representing state agency interests.

30 (b) In addition, for a WRIA located within Pierce, King, or  
31 Snohomish county, one representative of the water supply utility that  
32 is the water purveyor using the largest amount of water from the WRIA  
33 shall be a voting member of the planning unit whether the principal  
34 offices of the purveyor are or are not located within the WRIA.

35 (4) Except for a person appointed under subsection (3)(a)(ix) or  
36 (b) of this section, each person appointed to a WRIA planning unit  
37 shall have been a resident and a property owner of the WRIA for at  
38 least three years. State employees or state officials other than  
39 members appointed under subsection (3)(a)(ix) or (b) of this section

1 may be appointed to the planning unit unless they have state water  
2 resource-related duties. In appointing persons to the WRIA planning  
3 unit representing special interest groups, the counties shall consider  
4 industrial water users, general businesses, hydroelectric and thermal  
5 power producers, and irrigated agriculture, nonirrigated agriculture,  
6 forestry, recreation, environmental, and fisheries interest groups and  
7 other groups with interests in the WRIA. Counties shall attempt to  
8 provide for a balanced group of interests on the planning unit, with  
9 emphasis given to local interests and concerns.

10 (5)(a) In voting to appoint the members of a WRIA planning unit, to  
11 select a lead agency for water resource planning under section 108 or  
12 109 of this act, to approve a WRIA plan under section 113 of this act,  
13 or to request or concur with a request for multi-WRIA planning under  
14 section 109 of this act, each county with territory within the WRIA  
15 shall have three votes, divided equally among the members of the  
16 county's legislative authority and these actions shall be made by  
17 majority vote based on the votes allocated under this section. In  
18 voting to appoint members of a WRIA planning unit: Each city with  
19 territory within the WRIA shall have one vote and appointments shall be  
20 made by majority vote of such cities; each water supply utility other  
21 than those of a city or town with territory within the WRIA shall have  
22 one vote and appointments shall be made by majority vote of such  
23 districts; and each conservation district with territory within the  
24 WRIA shall have one vote and appointments shall be made by majority  
25 vote of such districts. All appointments shall be made within sixty  
26 days of the date the appointing authorities other than the counties are  
27 notified to convene to make appointments or the appointments shall be  
28 made by the counties with territory in the WRIA in the same manner the  
29 counties make other appointments.

30 (b) The local governments of the WRIA planning unit may, by  
31 majority vote, add up to two additional members representing interests  
32 that are not included in the planning unit.

33 (c) A vacancy on the planning unit shall be filled by appointment  
34 in the same manner prescribed for appointing the position that has  
35 become vacant. The planning unit shall convene and begin work as soon  
36 as two-thirds of the number of persons eligible to be members of the  
37 planning unit have been appointed. All positions must be filled within  
38 thirty days of the convening of the planning unit. The unit shall not

1 interrupt its work to await additional original appointments or  
2 appointments to fill any vacancies that may occur in its membership.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 109.** (1) The counties with territory in a WRIA  
4 may elect to conduct multi-WRIA planning with the counties with  
5 territory in one or more other WRIAs. If the counties with territory  
6 in these other WRIAs concur, all of the counties with territory in  
7 these WRIAs shall convene and shall appoint one planning unit to  
8 conduct the water resource planning for the multi-WRIA area.

9 (a) The planning unit shall be composed of: (i) Up to one member,  
10 as that number is determined by the counties jointly, for each county  
11 with territory in the multi-WRIA area representing the counties and  
12 appointed by the counties jointly; (ii) up to one member, as that  
13 number is determined by the cities jointly, for each county with  
14 territory in the multi-WRIA area, representing cities with territory in  
15 the multi-WRIA area and appointed jointly by those cities; (iii) up to  
16 three members, as that number is determined by the districts,  
17 representing water supply utilities other than those of a city or town  
18 with territory within the multi-WRIA area and appointed jointly by  
19 those districts; (iv) up to two members, as that number is determined  
20 by the districts, representing all conservation districts with  
21 territory within the multi-WRIA area and appointed jointly by those  
22 districts; (v) three members representing various special interest  
23 groups appointed jointly by the cities with territory within the multi-  
24 WRIA area; and six members representing various special interest groups  
25 appointed jointly by the counties with territory within the multi-WRIA  
26 area; (vi) one member representing the general citizenry appointed  
27 jointly by the cities with territory within the multi-WRIA area; (vii)  
28 three members representing the general citizenry appointed jointly by  
29 the counties with territory in the multi-WRIA area, of which at least  
30 one shall be a holder of a water right certificate and at least one  
31 shall be a holder of a water right for which a statement of claim was  
32 in the state's water rights claims registry before January 1, 1997;  
33 (viii) if one or more federal Indian reservations are located in whole  
34 or in part within the boundaries of the multi-WRIA area, the planning  
35 unit shall extend an invitation to the tribal government of each  
36 reservation to appoint one member representing the tribal government;  
37 and (ix) three members representing state agencies including the  
38 secretary of the department of transportation or the secretary's

1 designee, the director of the department of fish and wildlife or the  
2 director's designee, and the director of the department of ecology or  
3 the director's designee. The three members representing state  
4 government shall have a single vote representing state agency  
5 interests.

6 (b) In addition, for a multi-WRIA planning unit located within  
7 Pierce, King, or Snohomish county, one representative of the water  
8 purveyor using the largest amount of water from the multi-WRIA area  
9 shall be a voting member of the planning unit whether the principal  
10 offices of the purveyor are or are not located within the multi-WRIA  
11 area.

12 (c) Except for a person appointed under (a)(ix) or (b) of this  
13 subsection, each person appointed to a multi-WRIA planning unit shall  
14 have been a resident and property owner within the multi-WRIA area for  
15 at least three years. State employees or state officials other than  
16 members appointed under subsection (a)(ix) or (b) of this subsection  
17 may be appointed to the planning unit unless they have state water  
18 resource-related duties. In appointing persons to the multi-WRIA  
19 planning unit representing special interest groups the counties shall  
20 consider industrial water users, general businesses, hydroelectric and  
21 thermal power producers, and irrigated agriculture, nonirrigated  
22 agriculture, forestry, recreation, environmental, and fisheries  
23 interest groups and other groups with interests in the multi-WRIA area.  
24 Counties shall attempt to provide for a balanced group of interests on  
25 the planning unit, with emphasis given to local interests and concerns.

26 (2) In a multi-WRIA area where water resource planning efforts have  
27 commenced before the effective date of this section, such as but not  
28 limited to the Kettle river WRIA, the county legislative authorities  
29 with territory within the WRIA in accordance with subsection (1) of  
30 this section may, by majority vote, choose to adopt the existing  
31 planning unit membership for purposes of planning under chapter . . . ,  
32 Laws of 1997 (this act).

33 (3)(a) The counties in the multi-WRIA area shall select, by a  
34 majority vote, a governmental entity in the multi-WRIA area to act as  
35 lead agency for water resource planning in the multi-WRIA area under  
36 this chapter. Such an entity shall serve as the lead agency if it  
37 agrees in writing to do so. All appointments shall be made within  
38 sixty days of the date the lead agency in the multi-WRIA area notifies  
39 the other appointing authorities to convene to make appointments or the

1 appointments shall be made by the counties with territory in the multi-  
2 WRIA area in the same manner the counties make other appointments.

3 (b) The local governments of the WRIA planning unit may, by  
4 majority vote, add up to two additional members representing interests  
5 that are not included in the planning unit.

6 (c) A vacancy on the planning unit shall be filled by appointment  
7 in the same manner prescribed for appointing the position that has  
8 become vacant. The planning unit shall convene and begin work as soon  
9 as two-thirds of the number of persons eligible to be members of the  
10 planning unit have been appointed. All positions must be filled within  
11 thirty days of the convening of the planning unit. The unit shall not  
12 interrupt its work to await additional original appointments or  
13 appointments to fill any vacancies that may occur in its membership.

14 (4) A planning unit for a multi-WRIA area shall perform all of the  
15 functions assigned by this chapter to a WRIA planning unit and is  
16 subject to all of the provisions of this chapter that apply to a WRIA  
17 planning unit.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 110.** The lead agency shall provide staff  
19 support from resources provided for planning under chapter . . . , Laws  
20 of 1997 (this act) for the work of the WRIA planning unit. Each WRIA  
21 planning unit may establish its own methods of operation that are  
22 consistent with this chapter and may establish methods for reviewing  
23 the operations of its lead agency. No planning unit appointed or  
24 selected under this chapter may possess or exercise the power of  
25 eminent domain. No planning unit appointed or selected under this  
26 chapter may take any action that affects in any manner a general  
27 adjudication proceeding for water rights, completed or ongoing. Each  
28 WRIA planning unit is encouraged to: Consider information and plans  
29 that may have been previously developed by other entities in  
30 establishing water resource management plans for the WRIA; consider  
31 existing data regarding water resources in the WRIA; and, for a WRIA  
32 that borders another state, cooperate with local government  
33 counterparts in the adjacent state regarding water resource planning.  
34 Water resource plans developed under this chapter for a WRIA may not  
35 interfere in any manner with a general adjudication of water rights,  
36 completed or ongoing. Such a WRIA plan may not in any manner impair,  
37 diminish, or interfere with a water right that exists before the  
38 adoption of the plan by the department under section 113 of this act.

1 All meetings of a WRIA planning unit shall be conducted as public  
2 meetings as required for such meetings by the open public meetings act,  
3 chapter 42.30 RCW. Some time shall be set aside at the end of each  
4 meeting of a WRIA planning unit for public comments. Each planning  
5 unit shall establish procedures to be followed by the unit in making  
6 decisions. The objective to be sought by the planning unit in making  
7 decisions is to reach consensus among its members on the decisions.  
8 Decisions by a two-thirds majority vote may be used if the unit has  
9 found that attempts at achieving consensus have not been successful.

10 No person who is a member of a WRIA planning unit may designate  
11 another to act on behalf of the person as a member or to attend as a  
12 member a meeting of the unit on behalf of the person. If a member of  
13 a WRIA planning unit is absent from more than five meetings of the WRIA  
14 planning unit that constitute twenty percent or more of the meetings  
15 that have been conducted by the planning unit while the person is a  
16 member of the unit and these absences have not been excused as provided  
17 by this section, the member's position on the WRIA planning unit is to  
18 be considered vacant. A person's absence from a meeting may be  
19 excused: By the chair of the planning unit if a written request to do  
20 so is received by the chair before the meeting from which the member is  
21 to be absent; or by a majority vote of the members of the planning unit  
22 at the meeting during which the member is absent.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 111.** (1) Each WRIA planning unit shall develop  
24 a water resource plan. The plan must address the elements listed in  
25 subsection (2) of this section and may include other elements added by  
26 the planning unit. Once organized, the first task of the planning unit  
27 is to prioritize these elements regarding their importance in the WRIA  
28 and in developing a water resource plan for the WRIA. A plan shall not  
29 be developed such that its provisions are in conflict with state or  
30 federal law or impair, diminish, or interfere in any manner with a  
31 water right existing prior to its adoption or with the construction,  
32 operation, or maintenance of a federal reclamation project or an  
33 instream flow requirement or condition established for hydroelectric  
34 power project licensed under the federal power act. No aspect of the  
35 plan may establish standards for water quality or regulate water  
36 quality in any manner whatsoever.

37 (2) The plan must include the following:

38 (a) An assessment of water supply and use in the WRIA, including:

1 (i) A quantitative estimation of the amount of surface and ground  
2 water present in the planning unit, using United States geological  
3 survey information and other existing sources of information;

4 (ii) A quantitative estimation using existing sources of  
5 information, of the amount of precipitation and surface and ground  
6 water available, using currently available or likely available  
7 technologies, collectively for both current and future water uses,  
8 including for instream purposes and for withdrawal or diversion;

9 (iii) A quantitative estimation using existing sources of  
10 information, of the amount of surface and ground water actually being  
11 used, and the months of peak and minimum use, both in-stream and by  
12 withdrawal, for agricultural, industrial, fisheries, recreational,  
13 environmental, municipal, and residential purposes, and including  
14 amounts claimed, permitted, or certificated for future municipal needs;  
15 and

16 (iv) A quantitative estimation of the amount of water,  
17 approximately, that is represented by amounts in claims in the water  
18 rights claims registry, in water use permits, in certificated rights,  
19 and in rules establishing instream flows;

20 (b) A quantitative description of future water-based instream and  
21 out-of-stream needs in the planning unit, based on projected population  
22 and agricultural and other economic growth. That is, an identification  
23 of the water needed collectively for use for agricultural, fisheries,  
24 recreational, environmental, industrial, municipal, and residential  
25 purposes. If a federal reclamation project is providing water for  
26 reclamation purposes within the WRIA or multi-WRIA area, federal  
27 reclamation water use requirements shall be those for project lands  
28 within the WRIA or multi-WRIA area;

29 (c) Instream flows.

30 (i) Except for the main stem of the Columbia river or the main stem  
31 of the Snake river, a planning unit may propose instream flow levels as  
32 part of its plan for other rivers and streams in its WRIA or multi-WRIA  
33 area.

34 (ii) The planning unit, by unanimous recorded vote of all voting  
35 members, may set specific instream flow levels, and such flow levels  
36 shall be adopted by rule of the department.

37 (iii) If the planning unit is unable to approve specific instream  
38 flow levels unanimously, such levels may be submitted as a recommended  
39 instream flow in the WRIA plan for consideration by the department.

1 Such recommendations must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of  
2 the voting members of the planning unit.

3 (iv) Instream flow levels proposed under this subsection may not  
4 conflict with flow requirements or conditions in effect under a license  
5 issued under the federal power act.

6 (v) The planning unit may propose adjustments to instream flow  
7 levels that have been set by the state before the adoption of the  
8 planning unit's plan and will propose instream flow levels as part of  
9 the plan for the other rivers, streams, and lakes for which it  
10 determines the establishment of flows or levels to be appropriate in  
11 the WRIA, or in the multi-WRIA area for multi-WRIA planning under  
12 section 109 of this act.

13 (vi) The planning unit, by unanimous recorded vote of all voting  
14 members, may adjust established instream flow levels, and such flow  
15 levels shall be adopted by rule of the department.

16 (vii) If the planning unit is unable to approve such adjustments  
17 unanimously, such levels may be submitted as a recommended adjustment  
18 to established instream flows in the WRIA plan for consideration by the  
19 department. Such recommendations must be approved by a two-thirds  
20 majority vote of the voting members of the planning unit.

21 (viii) An instream flow or base flow or level set for a body of  
22 water in a WRIA plan adopted by the department under section 113 of  
23 this act supersedes any other such flow or level previously established  
24 for the body of water;

25 (d) A quantitative description of the ground water and of the  
26 surface water available for further appropriation including water that  
27 may be obtained through reuse. As used in this subsection (2)(d),  
28 "available" means available on the date the plan takes effect as a rule  
29 under section 113 of this act;

30 (e) An identification of known areas that provide for the recharge  
31 of aquifers from the surface and areas where aquifers recharge surface  
32 bodies of water;

33 (f) Strategies for increasing water supplies in the WRIA,  
34 including:

35 (i) Water conservation and reuse measures; and

36 (ii) Storage enhancements, including modifications to existing  
37 reservoirs, new reservoirs, and underground storage. Any quantity of  
38 water made available under these strategies is a quantity that is in

1 addition to the water declared available for appropriation under (d) of  
2 this subsection; and

3 (g) An identification of areas where voluntary water-related  
4 habitat improvement projects or voluntary transactions providing for  
5 the purchase of water-related habitat or water-related habitat  
6 easements would provide the greatest benefit to habitat in the WRIA,  
7 and a prioritization of the areas based on their potential for  
8 providing such benefits. The purpose of this element of the plan is to  
9 provide a means of coordinating nonregulatory, voluntary efforts for  
10 improving water-related habitat in the WRIA.

11 (3) Upon request the department shall assist the planning unit in  
12 drafting proposed implementing rules for the elements of the plan over  
13 which the department has authority. The draft rules shall accompany  
14 the plan as it is reviewed under the provisions of this chapter.

15 (4) A plan shall not be developed under this chapter to require  
16 directly or indirectly the implementation of laws, rules, or programs  
17 that are designed primarily to control water pollution or discharges of  
18 pollutants to water, to regulate effluent discharges or wastewater  
19 treatment systems or facilities, or to establish or require the  
20 achievement of water quality standards, including but not limited to  
21 chapter 90.48 RCW and rules adopted under chapter 90.48 RCW, the  
22 national pollutant discharge elimination system permit program, and the  
23 state waste discharge permit program.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 112.** (1) Water resource management plans  
25 developed pursuant to the process in this chapter and subsequently  
26 adopted by the department under section 113 of this act are presumed  
27 valid. This presumption shall apply in any petition or action filed  
28 against a plan.

29 (2) Any action taken by a state agency regarding or affecting water  
30 resources within a WRIA for which a plan has been adopted under section  
31 113 of this act and any planning conducted by a state agency regarding  
32 or affecting water resources within a WRIA for which a plan has been  
33 adopted under section 113 of this act shall be taken or conducted in a  
34 manner that is consistent with the plan. All actions and decisions of  
35 the department regarding water resources in the WRIA shall be  
36 consistent with and based upon such an adopted plan for the WRIA. Any  
37 other authority of the department exercised within the WRIA regarding

1 or affecting water resources shall be exercised in a manner that is  
2 consistent with such an adopted plan.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 113.** (1) Upon completing a proposed water  
4 resource plan for the WRIA, the WRIA planning unit shall publish notice  
5 of and conduct at least one public hearing in the WRIA on the proposed  
6 plan. The planning unit shall take care to provide notice of the  
7 hearing throughout the WRIA or multi-WRIA area. As a minimum, it shall  
8 publish a notice of the hearing in one or more newspapers of general  
9 circulation in the WRIA or multi-WRIA area. After considering the  
10 public comments presented at the hearing or hearings, the planning unit  
11 shall submit a copy of its proposed plan to the department and to the  
12 tribal council of each reservation with territory within the WRIA.

13 (2)(a) The department shall provide advice as to any specific  
14 subsections or sections of the plan that the department believes to be  
15 in conflict with state statute or federal law and may provide other  
16 recommendations regarding the plan. The department shall transmit its  
17 advice and recommendations regarding the plan to the WRIA planning unit  
18 within sixty days of receiving it for review.

19 (b) The tribal council may review and provide comments and  
20 recommendations to the planning unit within sixty days of the receipt  
21 of the plan.

22 (3) The WRIA planning unit shall consider each recommendation  
23 provided under subsection (2) of this section. The planning unit may  
24 adopt such a recommendation or provide changes to respond to the advice  
25 of the department and the tribal council by a two-thirds majority vote  
26 of the members of the planning unit.

27 The WRIA planning unit shall approve a water resource plan for the  
28 WRIA by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the planning unit.  
29 An approved plan shall be submitted to the counties with territory  
30 within the WRIA for adoption. If a WRIA planning unit receives funding  
31 for WRIA or multi-WRIA planning under section 106 of this act and does  
32 not approve a plan for submission to the counties within four years of  
33 the date the planning unit receives the first of that funding from the  
34 department for the planning, the department shall develop and adopt a  
35 water resource plan for the WRIA or multi-WRIA area.

36 (4) The legislative authority of each of the counties with  
37 territory within the WRIA shall provide public notice for and conduct  
38 at least one public hearing on the WRIA plan submitted to the county

1 under this section. The counties shall take care to provide notice of  
2 the hearings throughout the WRIA or multi-WRIA area. As a minimum,  
3 they shall publish a notice of the hearings in one or more newspapers  
4 of general circulation in the WRIA or multi-WRIA area. After the  
5 public hearings, the legislative authorities of these counties shall  
6 convene in joint session to consider the plan. The counties may  
7 approve or reject the plan, but may not amend the plan. Approval of a  
8 plan, or of recommendations for a plan that is not approved, shall be  
9 made by a majority vote of the members of the various legislative  
10 authorities of the counties with territory in the WRIA based on the  
11 votes allocated under section 108 of this act.

12 If the plan is not approved, it shall be returned to the WRIA  
13 planning unit with recommendations for revisions. Any revised plan and  
14 implementing rules prepared by the planning unit shall be submitted to  
15 the department and to the counties as provided by this section for WRIA  
16 water resource plans generally.

17 (5) If the plan is approved by the members of the legislative  
18 authorities, the plan shall be transmitted to the department for  
19 adoption. The department shall adopt such an approved WRIA water  
20 resource plan by rule. The department has no discretion to amend or  
21 reject the plan except as provided in section 111(2)(c) (iii) or (vii)  
22 of this act. A copy of the plan and notice of its adoption as rules  
23 shall be published in the state register under chapter 34.05 RCW. The  
24 public hearing required by chapter 34.05 RCW shall be deemed to have  
25 been satisfied by public hearings held by county legislative  
26 authorities.

27 (6) If the department finds that an element of a WRIA plan is in  
28 conflict with state statute or federal law and the unit does not remove  
29 the conflict created by the element from its plan, the state is not  
30 liable for any judgment that may be awarded regarding the conflict.  
31 The department may file a petition for declaratory judgment in the  
32 superior court to determine whether the element is or is not in  
33 conflict with state or federal law. The petition shall be filed in the  
34 superior court in the county with the largest area in the WRIA or  
35 multi-WRIA area governed by the plan. The counties that approved the  
36 plan shall be named as parties to the proceeding. The superior court  
37 shall review the potential conflict under the error of law standard.  
38 If the superior court finds that an element of the plan is in conflict  
39 with state or federal law, that element of the plan shall be invalid.

1 Decisions on such petitions are reviewable as in other civil cases.  
2 This subsection shall not be construed as establishing such state  
3 liability for any other element of the plan adopted as rules.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 114.** The WRIA planning units may accept grants,  
5 funds, and other financing, as well as enter into cooperative  
6 agreements with private and public entities for planning assistance and  
7 funding.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 115.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 (1) The department shall rule in a timely manner upon complete  
11 applications to appropriate public surface and ground water. For  
12 complete applications that seek to appropriate water from within a WRIA  
13 for which a WRIA plan has been adopted, the department shall grant or  
14 deny the application within one hundred eighty days of the date the  
15 properly completed application is filed with the department, except as  
16 provided in subsection (2) of this section. For applications filed  
17 after July 1, 1999, that seek to appropriate water from within a WRIA  
18 for which no WRIA plan has been adopted, the department shall grant or  
19 deny the application within one year of the date the properly completed  
20 application is filed with the department, except as provided in  
21 subsection (2) of this section. The times allowed in this section to  
22 rule upon an application shall not include the time it takes the  
23 applicant to respond to an explicit request for additional information  
24 reasonably required to make a determination on the application. The  
25 department shall be allowed only one such request for additional  
26 information. The cost of obtaining such information shall be  
27 reasonable in relation to the quantity and value of the water right  
28 applied for. Once the applicant responds to an information request,  
29 the stay of the time allowed for the permit decision shall end.

30 (2) If a detailed statement, generally referred to as an  
31 environmental impact statement, must be prepared under chapter 43.21C  
32 RCW for or in regard to an application to appropriate water, the  
33 department shall grant or deny the application within ninety days of  
34 the date the final environmental impact statement is available from the  
35 official responsible for it under chapter 43.21C RCW.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 116.**    A new section is added to chapter 34.05  
2    RCW to read as follows:

3        (1) Once the department of ecology receives a water resource plan  
4    submitted by a WRIA planning unit for advice and recommendations under  
5    section 113 of this act, the department shall conduct at least one  
6    public hearing on the plan and shall provide notice of the hearing and  
7    proposed plan as provided in RCW 34.05.320 for the proposal of a rule.  
8    The department shall maintain a file for the plan. Once the plan has  
9    been adopted by the counties in the WRIA under section 113 of this act  
10   and the plan has been submitted to the department of ecology, the  
11   department shall file the plan with the code reviser along with an  
12   order adopting the plan as rules. The code reviser shall cause the  
13   order and the water resource plan to be published in the Washington  
14   state register in the manner provided for the adoption of final rules  
15   and shall incorporate the plan into the Washington Administrative Code.  
16   No other aspect of this chapter that establishes procedures for the  
17   adoption of rules applies to the adoption of the plan by the  
18   department.

19        (2) For the purposes of this section, "WRIA" has the meaning  
20   established in section 104 of this act.

21        **Sec. 117.**    RCW 90.54.040 and 1997 c ... s 2 (Senate Bill 5029) are  
22   each amended to read as follows:

23        (1) Consistent with chapter . . . , Laws of 1997 (this act) the  
24   department, through the adoption of appropriate rules, is directed, as  
25   a matter of high priority to insure that the waters of the state are  
26   utilized for the best interests of the people, to develop and implement  
27   in accordance with the policies of this chapter a comprehensive state  
28   water resources program which will provide a process for making  
29   decisions on future water resource allocation and use. The department  
30   may develop the program in segments so that immediate attention may be  
31   given to waters of a given physioeconomic region of the state or to  
32   specific critical problems of water allocation and use.

33        (2) In relation to the management and regulatory programs relating  
34   to water resources vested in it, the department is further directed to  
35   modify existing regulations and adopt new regulations, when needed and  
36   possible, to insure that existing regulatory programs are in accord  
37   with the water resource policy of this chapter and the program  
38   established in subsection (1) of this section.

1 (3) The department is directed to review all statutes relating to  
2 water resources which it is responsible for implementing. When any of  
3 the same appear to the department to be ambiguous, unclear, unworkable,  
4 unnecessary, or otherwise deficient, it shall make recommendations to  
5 the legislature including appropriate proposals for statutory  
6 modifications or additions. Whenever it appears that the policies of  
7 any such statutes are in conflict with the policies of this chapter,  
8 and the department is unable to fully perform as provided in subsection  
9 (2) of this section, the department is directed to submit statutory  
10 modifications to the legislature which, if enacted, would allow the  
11 department to carry out such statutes in harmony with this chapter.

12 **PART II**

13 **STORAGE**

14 **Sec. 201.** RCW 90.54.020 and 1989 c 348 s 1 are each amended to  
15 read as follows:

16 Utilization and management of the waters of the state shall be  
17 guided by the following general declaration of fundamentals:

18 (1) Uses of water for domestic, stock watering, industrial,  
19 commercial, agricultural, irrigation, hydroelectric power production,  
20 mining, fish and wildlife maintenance and enhancement, recreational,  
21 and thermal power production purposes, and preservation of  
22 environmental and aesthetic values, and all other uses compatible with  
23 the enjoyment of the public waters of the state, are declared to be  
24 beneficial.

25 (2) Allocation of waters among potential uses and users shall be  
26 based generally on the securing of the maximum net benefits for the  
27 people of the state. Maximum net benefits shall constitute total  
28 benefits less costs including opportunities lost.

29 (3) The quality of the natural environment shall be protected and,  
30 where possible, enhanced as follows:

31 (a) Perennial rivers and streams of the state shall be retained  
32 with base flows necessary to provide for preservation of wildlife,  
33 fish, scenic, aesthetic and other environmental values, and  
34 navigational values. Lakes and ponds shall be retained substantially  
35 in their natural condition. Withdrawals of water which would conflict  
36 therewith shall be authorized only in those situations where it is

1 clear that overriding considerations of the public interest will be  
2 served.

3 (b) Waters of the state shall be of high quality. Regardless of  
4 the quality of the waters of the state, all wastes and other materials  
5 and substances proposed for entry into said waters shall be provided  
6 with all known, available, and reasonable methods of treatment prior to  
7 entry. Notwithstanding that standards of quality established for the  
8 waters of the state would not be violated, wastes and other materials  
9 and substances shall not be allowed to enter such waters which will  
10 reduce the existing quality thereof, except in those situations where  
11 it is clear that overriding considerations of the public interest will  
12 be served. Technology-based effluent limitations or standards for  
13 discharges for municipal water treatment plants located on the  
14 Chehalis, Columbia, Cowlitz, Lewis, or Skagit river shall be adjusted  
15 to reflect credit for substances removed from the plant intake water  
16 if:

17 (i) The municipality demonstrates that the intake water is drawn  
18 from the same body of water into which the discharge is made; and

19 (ii) The municipality demonstrates that no violation of receiving  
20 water quality standards or appreciable environmental degradation will  
21 result.

22 (4) The development of multipurpose water storage facilities shall  
23 be a high priority for programs of water allocation, planning,  
24 management, and efficiency. The department, other state agencies,  
25 local governments, and planning units formed under section 108 or 109  
26 of this act shall evaluate the potential for the development of new  
27 storage projects and the benefits and effects of storage in reducing  
28 damage to stream banks and property, increasing the use of land,  
29 providing water for municipal, industrial, agricultural, power  
30 generation, and other beneficial uses, and improving stream flow  
31 regimes for fisheries and other instream uses.

32 (5) Adequate and safe supplies of water shall be preserved and  
33 protected in potable condition to satisfy human domestic needs.

34 ((+5)) (6) Multiple-purpose impoundment structures are to be  
35 preferred over single-purpose structures. Due regard shall be given to  
36 means and methods for protection of fishery resources in the planning  
37 for and construction of water impoundment structures and other  
38 artificial obstructions.

1       (~~(6)~~) (7) Federal, state, and local governments, individuals,  
2 corporations, groups and other entities shall be encouraged to carry  
3 out practices of conservation as they relate to the use of the waters  
4 of the state. In addition to traditional development approaches,  
5 improved water use efficiency and conservation shall be emphasized in  
6 the management of the state's water resources and in some cases will be  
7 a potential new source of water with which to meet future needs  
8 throughout the state.

9       (~~(7)~~) (8) Development of water supply systems, whether publicly  
10 or privately owned, which provide water to the public generally in  
11 regional areas within the state shall be encouraged. Development of  
12 water supply systems for multiple domestic use which will not serve the  
13 public generally shall be discouraged where water supplies are  
14 available from water systems serving the public.

15       (~~(8)~~) (9) Full recognition shall be given in the administration  
16 of water allocation and use programs to the natural interrelationships  
17 of surface and ground waters.

18       (~~(9)~~) (10) Expressions of the public interest will be sought at  
19 all stages of water planning and allocation discussions.

20       (~~(10)~~) (11) Water management programs, including but not limited  
21 to, water quality, flood control, drainage, erosion control and storm  
22 runoff are deemed to be in the public interest.

23       **Sec. 202.** RCW 90.54.180 and 1989 c 348 s 5 are each amended to  
24 read as follows:

25       Consistent with the fundamentals of water resource policy set forth  
26 in this chapter, state and local governments, individuals,  
27 corporations, groups and other entities shall be encouraged to carry  
28 out water use efficiency and conservation programs and practices  
29 consistent with the following:

30       (1) Water efficiency and conservation programs should utilize an  
31 appropriate mix of economic incentives, cost share programs, regulatory  
32 programs, and technical and public information efforts. Programs which  
33 encourage voluntary participation are preferred.

34       (2) Increased water use efficiency should receive consideration as  
35 a potential source of water in state and local water resource planning  
36 processes. In determining the cost-effectiveness of alternative water  
37 sources, consideration should be given to the benefits of conservation,  
38 including waste water recycling, and (~~(impoundment)~~) storage of waters.

1 (3) In determining the cost-effectiveness of alternative water  
2 sources, full consideration should be given to the benefits of storage  
3 which can reduce the damage to stream banks and property, increase the  
4 utilization of land, provide water for municipal, industrial,  
5 agricultural, and other beneficial uses, provide for the generation of  
6 electric power from renewable resources, and improve stream flow  
7 regimes for fishery and other instream uses.

8 (4) Entities receiving state financial assistance for construction  
9 of water source expansion or acquisition of new sources shall develop,  
10 and implement if cost-effective, a water use efficiency and  
11 conservation element of a water supply plan pursuant to RCW  
12 43.20.230(1).

13 (5) State programs to improve water use efficiency should focus on  
14 those areas of the state in which water is overappropriated; areas that  
15 experience diminished streamflows or aquifer levels; and areas where  
16 projected water needs, including those for instream flows, exceed  
17 available supplies.

18 (6) Existing and future generations of citizens of the state of  
19 Washington should be made aware of the importance of the state's water  
20 resources and the need for wise and efficient use and development of  
21 this vital resource. In order to increase this awareness, state  
22 agencies should integrate public education on increasing water use  
23 efficiency into existing public information efforts. This effort shall  
24 be coordinated with other levels of government, including local  
25 governments and Indian tribes.

26 **PART III**

27 **GENERAL ADJUDICATIONS**

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 301.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
29 RCW to read as follows:

30 The legislature finds that the lack of certainty regarding water  
31 rights within a water resource basin may impede management and planning  
32 for water resources. The legislature further finds that planning units  
33 conducting water resource planning under chapter 90.-- RCW (sections  
34 101 through 114 of this act) may find that the certainty provided by a  
35 general adjudication of water rights under this chapter is required for  
36 water planning or water management in a water resource inventory area  
37 or in a portion of the area. Therefore, such planning units may

1 petition the department to conduct such a general adjudication and the  
2 department shall give high priority to such a request in initiating any  
3 such general adjudications under this chapter.

4 **PART IV**  
5 **WATER PURVEYORS**

6 **Sec. 401.** RCW 90.03.383 and 1991 c 350 s 1 are each amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 (1) The legislature recognizes the value of interties for improving  
9 the reliability of public water systems, enhancing their management,  
10 and more efficiently utilizing the increasingly limited resource.  
11 Given the continued growth in the most populous areas of the state, the  
12 increased complexity of public water supply management, and the trend  
13 toward regional planning and regional solutions to resource issues,  
14 interconnections of public water systems through interties provide a  
15 valuable tool to ensure reliable public water supplies for the citizens  
16 of the state. Public water systems have been encouraged in the past to  
17 utilize interties to achieve public health and resource management  
18 objectives. The legislature finds that it is in the public interest to  
19 recognize interties existing and in use as of January 1, 1991, and to  
20 have associated water rights modified by the department of ecology to  
21 reflect current use of water through those interties, pursuant to  
22 subsection (3) of this section. The legislature further finds it in  
23 the public interest to develop a coordinated process to review  
24 proposals for interties commencing use after January 1, 1991.

25 (2) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions  
26 shall apply:

27 (a) "Interties" are interconnections between public water systems  
28 permitting exchange, acquisition, or delivery of wholesale and/or  
29 retail water between those systems for other than emergency supply  
30 purposes, where such exchange, acquisition, or delivery is within  
31 established instantaneous and annual withdrawal rates specified in the  
32 systems' existing water right permits or certificates, or contained in  
33 claims filed pursuant to chapter 90.14 RCW, and which results in better  
34 management of public water supply consistent with existing rights and  
35 obligations. Interties include interconnections between public water  
36 systems permitting exchange, acquisition, or delivery of water to serve  
37 as primary or secondary sources of supply(~~(, but do not include~~

1 ~~development of new sources of supply to meet future demand)) and the~~  
2 development of new sources of supply to meet future demands if the  
3 water system or systems receiving water through such an intertie make  
4 efficient use of existing sources of water supply and the provision of  
5 water through such an intertie is consistent with local land use plans.  
6 For this purpose, a system's full compliance with the state department  
7 of health's conservation guidelines for such systems is deemed  
8 efficient use.

9 (b) "Service area" is the area designated as the wholesale and/or  
10 retail area in a water system plan or a coordinated water system plan  
11 pursuant to chapter 43.20 or 70.116 RCW respectively. When a public  
12 water system does not have a designated service area subject to the  
13 approval process of those chapters, the service area shall be the  
14 designated place of use contained in the water right permit or  
15 certificate, or contained in the claim filed pursuant to chapter 90.14  
16 RCW.

17 (3)(a) Public water systems with interties existing and in use as  
18 of January 1, 1991, or that have received written approval from the  
19 department of health prior to that date, shall file written notice of  
20 those interties with the department of health and the department of  
21 ecology. The notice may be incorporated into the public water system's  
22 five-year update of its water system plan, but shall be filed no later  
23 than June 30, 1996. The notice shall identify the location of the  
24 intertie; the dates of its first use; the purpose, capacity, and  
25 current use; the intertie agreement of the parties and the service  
26 areas assigned; and other information reasonably necessary to modify  
27 the public water system's water right ((permit)). Notwithstanding the  
28 provisions of RCW 90.03.380 and 90.44.100, for public water systems  
29 with interties existing and in use or with written approval as of  
30 January 1, 1991, the department of ecology, upon receipt of notice  
31 meeting the requirements of this subsection, shall, as soon as  
32 practicable, modify the place of use descriptions in the water right  
33 permits, certificates, or claims to reflect the actual use through such  
34 interties, provided that the place of use is within service area  
35 designations established in a water system plan approved pursuant to  
36 chapter 43.20 RCW, or a coordinated water system plan approved pursuant  
37 to chapter 70.116 RCW, and further provided that the water used is  
38 within the instantaneous and annual withdrawal rates specified in the  
39 water rights ((permit)) and that no outstanding complaints of

1 impairment to existing water rights have been filed with the department  
2 of ecology prior to September 1, 1991. Where such complaints of  
3 impairment have been received, the department of ecology shall make all  
4 reasonable efforts to resolve them in a timely manner through agreement  
5 of the parties or through available administrative remedies.

6 (b) An intertie meeting the requirements of this subsection (3) for  
7 modifying the place of use description in a water right permit,  
8 certificate, or claim may be used to its full design or built capacity  
9 within the most recently approved retail or wholesale or retail and  
10 wholesale service area, without further approval under this section and  
11 without regard to the capacity actually used before January 1, 1991.

12 (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of RCW 90.03.380 and 90.44.100,  
13 exchange, acquisition, or delivery of water through interties approved  
14 by the department of health commencing use after January 1, 1991, shall  
15 be permitted when the intertie improves overall system reliability,  
16 enhances the manageability of the systems, provides opportunities for  
17 conjunctive use, or delays or avoids the need to develop new water  
18 sources, and otherwise meets the requirements of this section, provided  
19 that each public water system's water use shall not exceed the  
20 instantaneous or annual withdrawal rate specified in its water right  
21 authorization, shall not adversely affect existing water rights, and  
22 shall not be inconsistent with state-approved plans such as water  
23 system plans or other plans which include specific proposals for  
24 construction of interties. Interties approved and commencing use after  
25 January 1, 1991, shall not be inconsistent with regional water resource  
26 plans developed pursuant to chapter 90.54 RCW or chapter 90.-- RCW  
27 (sections 101 through 114 of this act).

28 (5) For public water systems subject to the approval process of  
29 chapter 43.20 RCW or chapter 70.116 RCW, proposals for interties  
30 commencing use after January 1, 1991, shall be incorporated into water  
31 system plans pursuant to chapter 43.20 RCW or coordinated water system  
32 plans pursuant to chapter 70.116 RCW and submitted to the department of  
33 health and the department of ecology for review and approval as  
34 provided for in subsections (5) through (9) of this section. The plan  
35 shall state how the proposed intertie will improve overall system  
36 reliability, enhance the manageability of the systems, provide  
37 opportunities for conjunctive use, or delay or avoid the need to  
38 develop new water sources.

1 (6) The department of health shall be responsible for review and  
2 approval of proposals for new interties. In its review the department  
3 of health shall determine whether the intertie satisfies the criteria  
4 of subsection (4) of this section, with the exception of water rights  
5 considerations, which are the responsibility of the department of  
6 ecology, and shall determine whether the intertie is necessary to  
7 address emergent public health or safety concerns associated with  
8 public water supply.

9 (7) If the intertie is determined by the department of health to be  
10 necessary to address emergent public health or safety concerns  
11 associated with public water supply, the public water system shall  
12 amend its water system plan as required and shall file an application  
13 with the department of ecology to change its existing water right to  
14 reflect the proposed use of the water as described in the approved  
15 water system plan. The department of ecology shall process the  
16 application for change pursuant to RCW 90.03.380 or 90.44.100 as  
17 appropriate, except that, notwithstanding the requirements of those  
18 sections regarding notice and protest periods, applicants shall be  
19 required to publish notice one time, and the comment period shall be  
20 fifteen days from the date of publication of the notice. Within sixty  
21 days of receiving the application, the department of ecology shall  
22 issue findings and advise the department of health if existing water  
23 rights are determined to be adversely affected. If no determination is  
24 provided by the department of ecology within the sixty-day period, the  
25 department of health shall proceed as if existing rights are not  
26 adversely affected by the proposed intertie. The department of ecology  
27 may obtain an extension of the sixty-day period by submitting written  
28 notice to the department of health and to the applicant indicating a  
29 definite date by which its determination will be made. No additional  
30 extensions shall be granted, and in no event shall the total review  
31 period for the department of ecology exceed one hundred eighty days.

32 (8) If the department of health determines the proposed intertie  
33 appears to meet the requirements of subsection (4) of this section but  
34 is not necessary to address emergent public health or safety concerns  
35 associated with public water supply, the department of health shall  
36 instruct the applicant to submit to the department of ecology an  
37 application for change to the underlying water right or claim as  
38 necessary to reflect the new place of use. The department of ecology  
39 shall consider the applications pursuant to the provisions of RCW

1 90.03.380 and 90.44.100 as appropriate. The department of ecology  
2 shall not deny or limit a change of place of use for an intertie on the  
3 grounds that the holder of a permit has not yet put all of the water  
4 authorized in the permit to beneficial use. If in its review of  
5 proposed interties and associated water rights the department of  
6 ecology determines that additional information is required to act on  
7 the application, the department may request applicants to provide  
8 information necessary for its decision, consistent with agency rules  
9 and written guidelines. Parties disagreeing with the decision of the  
10 department of ecology ((øæ)) to approve or deny the application for  
11 change in place of use may appeal the decision to the pollution control  
12 hearings board.

13 (9) The department of health may approve plans containing intertie  
14 proposals prior to the department of ecology's decision on the water  
15 right application for change in place of use. However, notwithstanding  
16 such approval, construction work on the intertie shall not begin until  
17 the department of ecology issues the appropriate water right document  
18 to the applicant consistent with the approved plan.

19 (10) The 1997 amendments to this section in this act are null and  
20 void if any one of sections 101 through 116 of this act is vetoed by  
21 June 30, 1997.

22 **Sec. 402.** RCW 90.03.330 and 1987 c 109 s 89 are each amended to  
23 read as follows:

24 (1) Upon a showing satisfactory to the department that any  
25 appropriation has been perfected in accordance with the provisions of  
26 this chapter, it shall be the duty of the department to issue to the  
27 applicant a certificate stating such facts in a form to be prescribed  
28 by him, and such certificate shall thereupon be recorded with the  
29 department. Any original water right certificate issued, as provided  
30 by this chapter, shall be recorded with the department and thereafter,  
31 at the expense of the party receiving the same, be by the department  
32 transmitted to the county auditor of the county or counties where the  
33 distributing system or any part thereof is located, and be recorded in  
34 the office of such county auditor, and thereafter be transmitted to the  
35 owner thereof.

36 (2) If a public water system is providing water for municipal  
37 supply purposes under a certificated water right, the instantaneous and

1 annual withdrawal rates specified in the certificate are deemed valid  
2 and perfected.

3 (3) If a federal reclamation project is providing water for  
4 reclamation purposes under a certificated water right, the  
5 instantaneous and annual withdrawal rates specified in the certificate  
6 are deemed valid and perfected.

7 (4) If an irrigation district is providing water for the purposes  
8 authorized by chapter 87.03 RCW under a certificated water right, the  
9 instantaneous and annual withdrawal rates specified in the certificate  
10 are deemed valid and perfected.

11 (5) The 1997 amendments to this section in this act are null and  
12 void if any one of sections 101 through 116 of this act is vetoed by  
13 June 30, 1997.

14 **PART V**  
15 **RELINQUISHMENT**

16 **Sec. 501.** RCW 90.14.140 and 1987 c 125 s 1 are each amended to  
17 read as follows:

18 (1) For the purposes of RCW 90.14.130 through 90.14.180,  
19 "sufficient cause" shall be defined as the nonuse of all or a portion  
20 of the water by the owner of a water right for a period of five or more  
21 consecutive years where such nonuse occurs as a result of:

22 (a) Drought, or other unavailability of water;

23 (b) Active service in the armed forces of the United States during  
24 military crisis;

25 (c) Nonvoluntary service in the armed forces of the United States;

26 (d) The operation of legal proceedings;

27 (e) Federal laws imposing land or water use restrictions either  
28 directly or through the voluntary enrollment of a landowner in a  
29 federal program implementing those laws, or acreage limitations, or  
30 production quotas;

31 (f) An elapse of time occurring while a request or application is  
32 processed for transferring or changing a water right to use by a public  
33 water supplier for municipal purposes;

34 (g) The implementation of practices or technologies or the  
35 installation or repair of facilities, including but not limited to  
36 water conveyance practices, technologies, or facilities, that are more

1 efficient or more water use efficient than practices, technologies, or  
2 facilities previously used under the water right.

3 (2) Notwithstanding any other provisions of RCW 90.14.130 through  
4 90.14.180, there shall be no relinquishment of any water right:

5 (a) If such right is claimed for power development purposes under  
6 chapter 90.16 RCW and annual license fees are paid in accordance with  
7 chapter 90.16 RCW, or

8 (b) If such right is used for a standby or reserve water supply to  
9 be used in time of drought or other low flow period so long as  
10 withdrawal or diversion facilities are maintained in good operating  
11 condition for the use of such reserve or standby water supply, or

12 (c) If such right is claimed for a determined future development to  
13 take place ((either)) at any time within fifteen years of either July  
14 1, 1967, or the most recent beneficial use of the water right,  
15 whichever date is later, or

16 (d) If such right is claimed for municipal water supply purposes  
17 under chapter 90.03 RCW, or

18 (e) If such waters are not subject to appropriation under the  
19 applicable provisions of RCW 90.40.030 as now or hereafter amended.

20 **PART VI**  
21 **GENERAL PERMITS**

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 601.** The legislature finds that the present  
23 delay in the processing of water right applications is not beneficial  
24 to the citizens of the state nor is it in keeping with the goal of  
25 managing the resource to the highest possible standard and maximum net  
26 benefit.

27 The legislature further finds that water conservation efforts would  
28 be greatly enhanced by a permit system that encourages water right  
29 applicants to use only the amount of water actually necessary to meet  
30 their needs.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 602.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
32 RCW to read as follows:

33 (1) The department shall develop a general permit system for  
34 appropriating water for nonconsumptive, nonbypass uses. This system  
35 must be designed and used to accurately identify and register any water  
36 right application that qualifies for the streamlined process of

1 appropriation of water by meeting the requirements in this section and  
2 registering the use. The general permit system must be applicable  
3 state-wide, and all waters of the state shall be eligible for coverage  
4 under the system. The evaluation and report required for an  
5 application under RCW 90.03.290 are not required for applications  
6 processed under the general permit system. For the purposes of this  
7 section:

8 (a) "Nonconsumptive, nonbypass use" means a use of water in which  
9 water is diverted from a stream or drawn from an aquifer and following  
10 its use is discharged back into or near the point of diversion or  
11 withdrawal without diminishment in quality and less than five thousand  
12 gallons of net consumption per day; and

13 (b) "Without diminishment of quality" means that, before being  
14 discharged back to its source, the water being discharged meets state  
15 water quality standards adopted under chapter 90.48 RCW.

16 (2) The department shall, by January 1, 1998, establish the general  
17 permit system by adopting rules in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW.  
18 Before the adoption of rules for a system, the department shall consult  
19 with representatives of the following interest groups: Agriculture;  
20 aquaculture; home construction and development; county government; city  
21 government; surface mining; and the environmental community. At least  
22 four public hearings must be held at various locations around the  
23 state, not less than two of which shall be east of the crest of the  
24 Cascade mountains. The rules must identify criteria for proposed uses  
25 of water for which applications might be processed under the system and  
26 must establish procedures for filing and processing applications and  
27 issuing water rights certificates under the general permit system.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 603.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
29 RCW to read as follows:

30 An application for registration as a nonconsumptive, nonbypass  
31 water user under the general permit system established under section  
32 602 of this act must be made on a form adopted and provided by the  
33 department. Within sixty days of receipt of a properly completed  
34 application, the department shall determine whether the proposed use is  
35 eligible to be processed under the general permit system. If the  
36 department determines that the proposed use is eligible to be processed  
37 under the system, the application must be processed under the system  
38 within the next sixty days. The priority date of the water right

1 established pursuant to this section shall be the date that the  
2 properly completed application is submitted. If the department  
3 determines that the proposed use is not eligible for the processing,  
4 the department shall explain to the applicant in writing the reasons  
5 for its determination. For a proposed use determined ineligible for  
6 the processing, if the department finds that the information contained  
7 on the application form substantially satisfies the information  
8 requirements for an application for a use that would normally be filed  
9 for processing the application outside of the general permit system,  
10 the department shall notify the applicant of its finding and shall  
11 process the application as if it were filed for processing outside of  
12 the system. If the department finds that the information does not  
13 substantially satisfy the requirements, the application must be  
14 considered to be incomplete for the processing and the applicant must  
15 be notified of this consideration.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 604.** A new section is added to chapter 90.03  
17 RCW to read as follows:

18 Nothing in sections 602 and 603 of this act authorizes the  
19 impairment or operates to impair any existing water rights. A water  
20 right holder under sections 602 and 603 of this act shall not make  
21 withdrawals that impair a senior water right. A holder of a senior  
22 water right who believes his or her water right is impaired may file a  
23 complaint with the department of ecology. Where such complaints of  
24 impairment have been received, the department of ecology shall make all  
25 reasonable efforts to resolve them in a timely manner through agreement  
26 of the parties. Nothing in section 602 or 603 of this act may be  
27 construed as waiving any requirement established under chapter 90.48  
28 RCW or federal law that a permittee secure a discharge permit regarding  
29 water quality.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 605.** If specific funding for the purposes of  
31 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not  
32 provided by June 30, 1997, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act  
33 is null and void.

34 **PART VII**  
35 **APPEALS**

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 701.**    The legislature recognizes that in many  
2 cases the value of real property directly depends upon the amount of  
3 water that is available for use on that property. The legislature also  
4 recognizes that water rights are a type of property right in which many  
5 different parties may assert an interest. Current statutes require  
6 many property rights actions in which different parties assert  
7 interests, such as actions for partition or eminent domain, to be filed  
8 in superior court. The legislature further finds that informal  
9 procedures such as mediation and fact finding have been employed  
10 successfully in other areas of the law, and may produce positive  
11 results in certain types of water disputes. The legislature therefore  
12 finds that property owners should have a choice to select informal or  
13 formal hearings before the pollution control hearings board, and that  
14 relinquishment proceedings should be appealed to the local superior  
15 courts.

16        **Sec. 702.**    RCW 34.05.514 and 1995 c 347 s 113 and 1995 c 292 s 9  
17 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

18        (1) Except as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section,  
19 proceedings for review under this chapter shall be instituted by paying  
20 the fee required under RCW 36.18.020 and filing a petition in the  
21 superior court, at the petitioner's option, for (a) Thurston county,  
22 (b) the county of the petitioner's residence or principal place of  
23 business, or (c) in any county where the property owned by the  
24 petitioner and affected by the contested decision is located.

25        (2) For proceedings involving institutions of higher education, the  
26 petition shall be filed either in the county in which the principal  
27 office of the institution involved is located or in the county of a  
28 branch campus if the action involves such branch.

29        (3) For proceedings involving the relinquishment of a water right  
30 and appeals of informal hearings of the pollution control hearings  
31 board, the petition shall be filed in the superior court for the county  
32 in which is located the land upon which the water was used.

33        **Sec. 703.**    RCW 43.21B.110 and 1993 c 387 s 22 are each amended to  
34 read as follows:

35        (1) The pollution control hearings board shall only have  
36 jurisdiction to hear and decide appeals from the following decisions of  
37 the department, the director, the administrator of the office of marine

1 safety, and the air pollution control boards or authorities as  
2 established pursuant to chapter 70.94 RCW, or local health departments:

3 (a) Civil penalties imposed pursuant to RCW 18.104.155, 70.94.431,  
4 70.105.080, 70.107.050, 88.46.090, 90.03.600, 90.48.144, 90.56.310, and  
5 90.56.330.

6 (b) Orders issued pursuant to RCW 18.104.043, 18.104.060,  
7 43.27A.190, 70.94.211, 70.94.332, 70.105.095, 86.16.020, 88.46.070,  
8 (~~90.14.130~~) and 90.48.120.

9 (c) The issuance, modification, or termination of any permit,  
10 certificate, or license by the department or any air authority in the  
11 exercise of its jurisdiction, including the issuance or termination of  
12 a waste disposal permit, the denial of an application for a waste  
13 disposal permit, or the modification of the conditions or the terms of  
14 a waste disposal permit.

15 (d) Decisions of local health departments regarding the grant or  
16 denial of solid waste permits pursuant to chapter 70.95 RCW.

17 (e) Decisions of local health departments regarding the issuance  
18 and enforcement of permits to use or dispose of biosolids under RCW  
19 70.95J.080.

20 (f) Any other decision by the department, the administrator of the  
21 office of marine safety, or an air authority which pursuant to law must  
22 be decided as an adjudicative proceeding under chapter 34.05 RCW.

23 (2) The jurisdiction of the pollution control hearings board is  
24 further limited as follows:

25 (a) The hearings board has no jurisdiction to review orders  
26 pertaining to the relinquishment of a water right under RCW 90.14.130,  
27 or to review proceedings regarding general adjudications of water  
28 rights conducted pursuant to chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW.

29 (b) The following hearings shall not be conducted by the hearings  
30 board:

31 (~~(a)~~) (i) Hearings required by law to be conducted by the  
32 shorelines hearings board pursuant to chapter 90.58 RCW.

33 (~~(b)~~) (ii) Hearings conducted by the department pursuant to RCW  
34 70.94.332, 70.94.390, 70.94.395, 70.94.400, 70.94.405, 70.94.410, and  
35 90.44.180.

36 (~~(c)~~) ~~Proceedings by the department relating to general~~  
37 ~~adjudications of water rights pursuant to chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW.~~

38 (d) (iii) Hearings conducted by the department to adopt, modify,  
39 or repeal rules.

1 (3) (~~Review of~~) Rules and regulations adopted by the hearings  
2 board shall be subject to review in accordance with the provisions of  
3 the Administrative Procedure Act, chapter 34.05 RCW.

4 **Sec. 704.** RCW 43.21B.130 and 1990 c 65 s 3 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 The administrative procedure act, chapter 34.05 RCW, shall apply to  
7 the appeal of rules and regulations adopted by the board to the same  
8 extent as it applied to the review of rules and regulations adopted by  
9 the directors and/or boards or commissions of the various departments  
10 whose powers, duties and functions were transferred by section 6,  
11 chapter 62, Laws of 1970 ex. sess. to the department. (~~All other  
12 decisions and orders of the director and all decisions of air pollution  
13 control boards or authorities established pursuant to chapter 70.94 RCW  
14 shall be subject to review by the hearings board as provided in this  
15 chapter.~~)

16 **Sec. 705.** RCW 43.21B.240 and 1989 c 175 s 105 are each amended to  
17 read as follows:

18 The department and air authorities shall not have authority to hold  
19 adjudicative proceedings pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act,  
20 chapter 34.05 RCW. Such hearings, except those involving water  
21 quantity decisions, as defined in section 713 of this act, that are  
22 appealed directly to a superior court, and appeals of orders pertaining  
23 to the relinquishment of a water right issued pursuant to RCW  
24 90.14.130, shall be held by the pollution control hearings board.

25 **Sec. 706.** RCW 43.21B.305 and 1994 c 253 s 5 are each amended to  
26 read as follows:

27 In an appeal that involves a penalty of five thousand dollars or  
28 less, and in an informal hearing appeal relating to a water quantity  
29 decision as defined in section 713 of this act, the appeal may be heard  
30 by one member of the board, whose decision shall be the final decision  
31 of the board. The board shall define by rule alternative procedures to  
32 expedite small appeals. These alternatives may include: Mediation,  
33 upon agreement of all parties unless initiated as provided in section  
34 713 of this act; submission of testimony by affidavit; conducting  
35 hearing by telephone; or other forms that may lead to less formal and  
36 faster resolution of appeals.

1       **Sec. 707.** RCW 43.21B.310 and 1992 c 73 s 3 are each amended to  
2 read as follows:

3       (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, any order  
4 issued by the department(~~(, the administrator of the office of marine~~  
5 ~~safety,))~~ or authority pursuant to RCW 70.94.211, 70.94.332,  
6 70.105.095, 43.27A.190, 86.16.020, 88.46.070, or 90.48.120(2) or any  
7 provision enacted after July 26, 1987, or any permit, certificate, or  
8 license issued by the department may be appealed to the pollution  
9 control hearings board if the appeal is filed with the board and served  
10 on the department or authority within thirty days after receipt of the  
11 order. Except as provided under chapter 70.105D RCW, (~~this is~~) these  
12 are the exclusive means of appeal of such an order.

13       (~~(2)~~) (a) The department, the administrator, or the authority in  
14 its discretion may stay the effectiveness of an order during the  
15 pendency of such an appeal.

16       (~~(3)~~) (b) At any time during the pendency of an appeal of such an  
17 order to the board, the appellant may apply pursuant to RCW 43.21B.320  
18 to the hearings board for a stay of the order or for the removal  
19 thereof.

20       (~~(4)~~) (c) Any appeal before the hearings board must contain the  
21 following in accordance with the rules of the hearings board:

22       (~~(a)~~) (i) The appellant's name and address;

23       (~~(b)~~) (ii) The date and docket number of the order, permit, or  
24 license appealed;

25       (~~(c)~~) (iii) A description of the substance of the order, permit,  
26 or license that is the subject of the appeal;

27       (~~(d)~~) (iv) A clear, separate, and concise statement of every  
28 error alleged to have been committed;

29       (~~(e)~~) (v) A clear and concise statement of facts upon which the  
30 requester relies to sustain his or her statements of error; and

31       (~~(f)~~) (vi) A statement setting forth the relief sought.

32       (~~(5)~~) (d) Upon failure to comply with any final order of the  
33 department or the administrator, the attorney general, on request of  
34 the department or the administrator, may bring an action in the  
35 superior court of the county where the violation occurred or the  
36 potential violation is about to occur to obtain such relief as  
37 necessary, including injunctive relief, to insure compliance with the  
38 order. The air authorities may bring similar actions to enforce their  
39 orders.

1       (~~(6)~~) (e) An appealable decision or order shall be identified as  
2 such and shall contain a conspicuous notice to the recipient that it  
3 may be appealed only by filing an appeal with the hearings board and  
4 serving it on the department within thirty days of receipt.

5       (2) Water quantity decisions of the department, as defined in  
6 section 713 of this act, may be appealed either to the pollution  
7 control hearings board or directly to a superior court as provided in  
8 section 713 of this act. Appeals of orders pertaining to the  
9 relinquishment of a water right are filed in superior court as provided  
10 by RCW 90.14.130.

11       **Sec. 708.** RCW 43.27A.190 and 1987 c 109 s 11 are each amended to  
12 read as follows:

13       Notwithstanding and in addition to any other powers granted to the  
14 department of ecology, whenever it appears to the department that a  
15 person is violating or is about to violate any of the provisions of the  
16 following:

17       (1) Chapter 90.03 RCW; or

18       (2) Chapter 90.44 RCW; or

19       (3) Chapter 86.16 RCW; or

20       (4) Chapter 43.37 RCW; or

21       (5) Chapter 43.27A RCW; or

22       (6) Any other law relating to water resources administered by the  
23 department; or

24       (7) A rule or regulation adopted, or a directive or order issued by  
25 the department relating to subsections (1) through (6) of this section;  
26 the department may cause a written regulatory order to be served upon  
27 (~~said~~) the person either personally, or by registered or certified  
28 mail delivered to addressee only with return receipt requested and  
29 acknowledged by him or her. The order shall specify the provision of  
30 the statute, rule, regulation, directive or order alleged to be or  
31 about to be violated, and the facts upon which the conclusion of  
32 violating or potential violation is based, and shall order the act  
33 constituting the violation or the potential violation to cease and  
34 desist or, in appropriate cases, shall order necessary corrective  
35 action to be taken with regard to such acts within a specific and  
36 reasonable time. The regulation of a headgate or controlling works as  
37 provided in RCW 90.03.070, by a watermaster, stream patrolman, or other  
38 person so authorized by the department shall constitute a regulatory

1 order within the meaning of this section. A regulatory order issued  
2 hereunder shall become effective immediately upon receipt by the person  
3 to whom the order is directed, except for regulations under RCW  
4 90.03.070 which shall become effective when a written notice is  
5 attached as provided therein. Any person aggrieved by such order may  
6 appeal the order pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310, except that appeals of  
7 orders pertaining to the relinquishment of a water right shall be filed  
8 in superior court pursuant to RCW 90.14.130.

9 **Sec. 709.** RCW 90.14.130 and 1987 c 109 s 13 are each amended to  
10 read as follows:

11 When it appears to the department of ecology that a person entitled  
12 to the use of water has not beneficially used his or her water right or  
13 some portion thereof, and it appears that (~~said~~) the person's right  
14 has or may have reverted to the state because of such nonuse, as  
15 provided by RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, or 90.14.180, the department of  
16 ecology shall notify such person by order: PROVIDED, That where a  
17 company, association, district, or the United States has filed a  
18 blanket claim under the provisions of RCW 90.14.060 for the total  
19 benefits of those served by it, the notice shall be served on such  
20 company, association, district or the United States and not upon any of  
21 its individual water users who may not have used the water or some  
22 portion thereof which they were entitled to use. The order shall  
23 contain: (1) A description of the water right, including the  
24 approximate location of the point of diversion, the general description  
25 of the lands or places where such waters were used, the water source,  
26 the amount involved, the purpose of use, and the apparent authority  
27 upon which the right is based; (2) a statement that unless sufficient  
28 cause be shown on appeal the water right will be declared relinquished;  
29 and (3) a statement that such order may be appealed to the (~~pollution~~  
30 ~~control hearings board~~) superior court. Any person aggrieved by such  
31 an order may appeal it to the (~~pollution control hearings board~~  
32 ~~pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310~~) superior court for the county in which is  
33 located the land upon which the water was used. Any such appeal to  
34 superior court shall be heard de novo. The order shall be served by  
35 registered or certified mail to the last known address of the person  
36 and be posted at the point of division or withdrawal. The order by  
37 itself shall not alter the recipient's right to use water, if any.

1       **Sec. 710.** RCW 90.14.190 and 1987 c 109 s 14 are each amended to  
2 read as follows:

3       Any person feeling aggrieved by any decision of the department of  
4 ecology may have the same reviewed pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310.  
5 However, any order pertaining to the relinquishment of a water right  
6 shall be filed in superior court pursuant to RCW 90.14.130. In any such  
7 review, the findings of fact as set forth in the report of the  
8 department of ecology shall be prima facie evidence of the fact of any  
9 waiver or relinquishment of a water right or portion thereof. If the  
10 hearings board affirms the decision of the department, a party seeks  
11 review in superior court of that hearings board decision pursuant to  
12 chapter 34.05 RCW, and the court determines that the party was injured  
13 by an arbitrary, capricious, or erroneous order of the department, the  
14 court may award reasonable attorneys' fees.

15       **Sec. 711.** RCW 90.14.200 and 1989 c 175 s 180 are each amended to  
16 read as follows:

17       (1) All matters relating to the implementation and enforcement of  
18 this chapter by the department of ecology shall be carried out in  
19 accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW, the Administrative Procedure Act,  
20 except where the provisions of this chapter expressly conflict with  
21 chapter 34.05 RCW. Proceedings held pursuant to RCW 90.14.130 are  
22 ~~((adjudicative proceedings within the meaning of chapter 34.05 RCW.~~  
23 ~~Final decisions of the department of ecology in these proceedings))~~  
24 appealable to superior court as provided in that section. Other final  
25 decisions of the department of ecology under this chapter are subject  
26 to review by the pollution control hearings board in accordance with  
27 chapter 43.21B RCW.

28       (2) RCW 90.14.130 provides nonexclusive procedures for determining  
29 a relinquishment of water rights under RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, and  
30 90.14.180. RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, and 90.14.180 may be applied in,  
31 among other proceedings, general adjudication proceedings initiated  
32 under RCW 90.03.110 or 90.44.220: PROVIDED, That nothing herein shall  
33 apply to litigation involving determinations of the department of  
34 ecology under RCW 90.03.290 relating to the impairment of existing  
35 rights.

36       **Sec. 712.** RCW 90.66.080 and 1979 c 3 s 8 are each amended to read  
37 as follows:

1 The department is hereby empowered to promulgate such rules as may  
2 be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. Decisions of  
3 the department, other than rule making, shall be subject to review by  
4 the pollution control hearings board or a superior court in accordance  
5 with chapter 43.21B RCW.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 713.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21B  
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) A water right claimant, or permit or certificate holder or  
9 applicant who is aggrieved or adversely affected by a water quantity  
10 decision may appeal the decision either to the pollution control  
11 hearings board pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310 or to the superior court for  
12 a county in which is located land on which the water is or was put to  
13 a beneficial use.

14 (2) At the request of any party, the board shall conduct an  
15 informal hearing, consisting of mediation and, if a settlement cannot  
16 be agreed upon, fact finding with recommendations. The hearings board  
17 shall adopt rules governing the election, practice, and procedures of  
18 informal hearings consistent with this section and section 714 of this  
19 act.

20 (3) For purposes of this chapter, a "water quantity decision"  
21 includes the following:

22 (a) A decision to grant or deny a permit or certificate for a right  
23 to the beneficial use of water or to amend, change, or transfer such a  
24 right; and

25 (b) A decision to enforce the conditions of a permit for, or right  
26 to, the beneficial use of water or to require any person to discontinue  
27 the use of water.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 714.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21B  
29 RCW to read as follows:

30 (1) When one of the parties elects an informal hearing pursuant to  
31 section 713 of this act, a board member or an administrative law judge  
32 from the environmental hearings office shall be assigned as the  
33 mediator for the appeal.

34 (2) The parties involved in the informal hearing must provide the  
35 mediator and the other parties in advance with a clear, concise  
36 statement of the disputed issues and the parties' position in relation  
37 to the issues and supporting documentation. The mediator shall meet

1 with the parties either jointly or separately, in the general area of  
2 the project under review or by telephone, at the discretion of the  
3 mediator, and shall take such steps as the mediator deems appropriate  
4 to resolve their differences and reach a settlement agreement. If a  
5 settlement agreement is reached, the mediator shall prepare and submit  
6 to the hearings board a written order of dismissal to which the  
7 settlement agreement is attached. The hearings board shall enter the  
8 order and dismiss the case unless the hearings board finds that the  
9 settlement agreement is contrary to law.

10 If the hearings board finds that the settlement agreement is  
11 contrary to law, it shall notify the parties and refer the dispute back  
12 to mediation.

13 (3) If the parties are unable to achieve a settlement agreement  
14 within ninety days after being appointed, the mediator shall issue a  
15 statement that a settlement agreement has not been reached. After  
16 issuance of the statement, the party filing the appeal may request the  
17 hearings board to submit the dispute to fact finding with  
18 recommendations. Notice of the request for fact finding must be sent  
19 to the other parties.

20 (4) Within five days of the receipt of the request for fact  
21 finding, the hearings board shall assign a board member or an  
22 administrative appeals judge from the environmental hearings office to  
23 serve as fact finder. The person who served as the mediator to the  
24 dispute may serve as the fact finder with the consent of both parties.

25 (5) Within five days of being appointed, the fact finder shall  
26 establish a date, time, and place for the fact-finding hearing. The  
27 date of the hearing must be within thirty days of the appointment of  
28 the fact finder. The hearing shall be conducted in the general area  
29 where the project under review is located. At least seven days before  
30 the date of the hearing, each party must submit to the fact finder and  
31 to the other parties written proposals on all of the issues it intends  
32 to submit to fact finding. The fact finder has the power to issue  
33 subpoenas requiring the attendance and production of witnesses and the  
34 production of evidence. The order of presentation at the hearing shall  
35 be as agreed by the parties or as determined by the fact finder. Each  
36 documentary exhibit shall be filed with the fact finder and copies  
37 shall be provided to the other parties. The fact finder shall declare  
38 the hearing closed after the parties have completed presenting their  
39 testimony within agreed time limits.

1 (6) The fact finder shall, within thirty days following the  
2 conclusion of the hearing, make written findings of fact and written  
3 recommendations to the parties as to how the dispute should be  
4 resolved. The fact finder may not apply any presumption as part of the  
5 findings of fact or recommendations. A copy of the findings and  
6 recommendations shall be filed with the hearings board. The findings  
7 of fact and recommendations of the fact finder are advisory only, and  
8 are not subject to review by the hearings board.

9 (7) The time limits established in this section may be extended by  
10 mutual agreement of all the parties.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 715.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21B  
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 (1) Within thirty days after the fact finder has filed the findings  
14 of fact and recommendations pursuant to section 714 of this act, a  
15 party may request a formal hearing by the hearings board or appeal the  
16 water quantity decision directly to superior court. All parties must  
17 agree to a formal hearing before a formal hearing is granted.

18 (2) If a party elects to file an action in superior court following  
19 an informal hearing, it must be filed in the county in which is located  
20 the land upon which the water is or would be used.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 716.** A new section is added to chapter 43.21B  
22 RCW to read as follows:

23 In all appeals involving a water quantity decision by the  
24 department, as defined in section 713 of this act, the appeal to  
25 superior court shall be heard de novo. If an informal hearing on the  
26 decision or order had been completed by the pollution control hearings  
27 board, no issue may be raised in superior court that was not raised and  
28 discussed as part of the fact-finding hearing. No bond may be required  
29 on appeals to the superior court or on review by the supreme court  
30 unless specifically required by the judge of the superior court.

31 **PART VIII**  
32 **MISCELLANEOUS**

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 801.** As used in this act, part headings  
34 constitute no part of the law.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 802.**    Sections 101 through 114 of this act  
2 constitute a new chapter in Title 90 RCW.

3        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 803.**    If any provision of this act or its  
4 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the  
5 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other  
6 persons or circumstances is not affected."

7    **2SHB 2054** - S AMD - 451  
8        By Senators Morton and Swecker

9

10        On page 1, line 1 of the title, after "management;" strike the  
11 remainder of the title and insert "amending RCW 90.54.040, 90.54.020,  
12 90.54.180, 90.03.383, 90.03.330, 90.14.140, 43.21B.110, 43.21B.130,  
13 43.21B.240, 43.21B.305, 43.21B.310, 43.27A.190, 90.14.130, 90.14.190,  
14 90.14.200, and 90.66.080; reenacting and amending RCW 34.05.514; adding  
15 new sections to chapter 90.03 RCW; adding a new section to chapter  
16 34.05 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 43.21B RCW; adding a new  
17 chapter to Title 90 RCW; and creating new sections."

--- END ---