

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5894

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation, March 3, 1999
Ways & Means, March 8, 1999

Title: An act relating to the Whidbey Island game farm.

Brief Description: Selling the Whidbey Island game farm.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen and Gardner.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation: 3/1/99, 3/3/99 [DP-WM].
Ways & Means: 3/5/99, 3/8/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & RECREATION

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; T. Sheldon, Vice Chair; Morton, Oke, Rossi, Snyder, Spanel and Stevens.

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Loveland, Chair; Bauer, Vice Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Fairley, Fraser, Honeyford, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, Rasmussen, Roach, Rossi, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Thibaudeau, West, Winsley, Wojahn and Zarelli.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

Background: The Whidbey Island Game Farm is owned by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The department has ceased operation of the farm, which formerly raised pheasants and other game birds to provide hunting opportunities. The department now considers the property as surplus and intends to sell it.

Local residents of Whidbey Island wish the property to remain as open space.

Summary of Bill: If the sale of the Whidbey Island Game Farm occurs within one year, it can only be sold to nonprofit corporations or municipal corporations for the purpose of keeping the land in an undeveloped state.

A loan of \$694,000 is provided to the department from the general fund, if the department does not sell the property by June 30, 1999. The department must repay the loan by June 30, 2001, or when the property is sold, whichever occurs earlier.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 23, 1999.

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

Testimony For (Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation): The Whidbey Island Game Farm represents a unique ecosystem type that should be preserved in open space and preferentially should be sold to a conservation minded buyer.

Testimony Against (Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation): None.

Testified (Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation): Ron Lauson; Gregg Snyder, Snoqualmoo; PRO: Rob Harbour, Ebey's Landing NHR; Gretchen Luxenberg, National Park Service; Bob Lappin; Len Barson, Nature Conservancy; Elyse Kane, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Testimony For (Ways & Means): This bill will provide an opportunity for the whole community to raise the funds needed to purchase the Whidbey Island Game Farm.

Testimony Against (Ways & Means): None.

Testified (Ways & Means): Elyse Kane, Department of Fish and Wildlife.