

2 E2SHB 2671 - S COMM AMD

3 By Committee on Environment, Energy & Water

4 ADOPTED 03/08/02

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the health and
8 safety of its citizens, natural resources, and the environment are
9 vital interests of the state that must be protected to preserve the
10 state's quality of life. The legislature also finds that the state's
11 economic well-being is a vital interest that depends upon the
12 development of fair, coordinated environmental permitting processes
13 that ensure that the state not only protects natural resources, but
14 also encourages appropriate activities that stimulate growth and
15 development. The legislature further finds that during the past twenty
16 years, Washington's environmental protection programs have established
17 strict standards to reduce pollution and protect public health and
18 safety and the environment.

19 The legislature finds that as the number of environmental and land
20 use laws have grown in Washington, so have the number of permits
21 required of business and government. The increasing number of
22 individual permits and permit authorities has generated the potential
23 for conflict, overlap, and duplication between the various state,
24 local, and federal permits. Lack of coordination in the processing of
25 permit applications may cause costly delays and frustration to the
26 applicant.

27 The legislature finds that not all project applicants require the
28 same type of technical assistance. While applicants with small
29 projects may merely need information about local and state permits, and
30 assistance in applying for those permits, intermediate-sized projects
31 may require a facilitated facilitating permit process. Large, complex
32 projects may even need extensive coordination among local, state, and
33 federal agencies.

34 The legislature finds that a range of assistance and coordination
35 options should be available for project applicants. The legislature
36 further finds that citizens should be provided with a reliable and

1 consolidated source of information concerning federal, state, and local
2 environmental and land use laws and procedures that might apply to any
3 given proposal; facilitated interagency forums for discussion of
4 significant issues related to the multiple permitting processes can be
5 very useful for some project proponents; and finally, some applicants
6 may require active coordination of all applicable regulatory and land
7 use permitting procedures.

8 The legislature declares that the purpose of this chapter is to
9 provide efficient processes that will assist businesses and citizens in
10 complying with the environmental and land use laws while protecting
11 public health and safety and the environment.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
13 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

14 (1) "Center" means the permit assistance center established in
15 section 3 of this act.

16 (2) "Permit" includes any license, certificate, registration,
17 permit, or other form of use authorization required by a permit agency
18 to engage in a particular activity.

19 (3) "Project" means an activity, the conduct of which requires
20 permits from one or more permit agencies.

21 (4) "Use authorization" means a lease, material purchase, easement,
22 permit, or other document authorizing the use of either state-owned
23 aquatic lands or materials, or both.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The permit assistance center is created
25 in the office of the governor. The center shall:

26 (a) Publish and keep current one or more handbooks containing lists
27 and explanations of all permit laws. To the extent possible, the
28 handbook must include relevant local, state, federal, and tribal laws.
29 A state agency or local government must provide a reasonable number of
30 copies of application forms, statutes, ordinances, rules, handbooks,
31 and other informational material requested by the center and must
32 otherwise fully cooperate with the center. The center must seek the
33 cooperation of relevant federal agencies and tribal governments;

34 (b) Establish, and make known, a point of contact for distribution
35 of the handbook and advice to the public as to its interpretation in
36 any given case;

1 (c) Work closely and cooperatively with the business license center
2 in providing efficient and nonduplicative service to the public;

3 (d) Collect and disseminate information to public and private
4 entities on federal, state, local, and tribal government programs that
5 rely on private professional expertise to assist governmental agencies
6 in project permit review;

7 (e) Provide an annual performance report to the legislature and the
8 public. The report must be based on survey of customers;

9 (f) Report annually to the legislature regarding any statutory or
10 regulatory conflicts relating to differing legal authorities and roles
11 of the agencies issuing permits or use authorizations and how these
12 were resolved. The report may include recommendations to the
13 legislature and to agencies; and

14 (g) Report annually to the legislature regarding use of outside
15 independent consultants pursuant to section 7 of this act, including
16 the nature and amount of work performed by outside independent
17 consultants and implementation of the requirements of section 7 of this
18 act relating to costs.

19 (2) The center must prioritize the expenditure of general fund
20 moneys allotted to the center to provide a set of services to the
21 applicants of small projects.

22 (3) The center shall work with state resource agencies, the
23 governor's office, local government officials, and the department of
24 community, trade, and economic development to create a range of permit
25 assistance options for permit applicants. These options include, but
26 are not limited to, a centralized customer call center, a web site for
27 permitting information, facilitation services offered on a regional
28 basis, and a process for developing a coordinated permit process
29 utilizing a cost reimbursement system authorized under section 7 of
30 this act.

31 (4) The center shall also work to develop informal processes for
32 dispute resolution between agencies and permit applicants.

33 (5) To the maximum extent possible, the center shall work with the
34 transportation permit efficiency and accountability committee
35 established by chapter 47.06C RCW.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The center shall operate based on the
37 principle that citizens of the state of Washington have the right to

1 expect the following information to be provided to them when asking for
2 a permit, license, or permission to engage in a lawful activity:

3 (a) A date and time for a decision on permits;

4 (b) A defined amount of information required to award a permit by
5 a permitting authority before any application for permits can be
6 accepted; and

7 (c) An estimate of the maximum amount of costs in fees, studies, or
8 public processes that will be incurred by the permit applicant.

9 (2) This section does not create a right of action.

10 NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. (1) Upon the request of a project proponent,
11 the center shall appoint a project facilitator to assist the applicant
12 in determining which regulatory requirements, processes, and permits
13 may be required for development and operation of the proposed project.
14 The project facilitator shall provide the information to the applicant
15 and explain the options available to the applicant in obtaining the
16 required permits.

17 (2) If requested by the applicant, the project facilitator shall
18 facilitate a project scoping meeting. The meeting may involve the
19 project applicant, state agencies that will require a permit or use
20 authorization for the project, and the local governments in whose
21 jurisdiction the project is proposed. Federal agencies and tribal
22 governments that either issue or may require a permit, or that may
23 require a use authorization for the project, shall each be invited to
24 participate in the scoping meeting. All agencies participating in the
25 scoping process are encouraged to remain in communication for purposes
26 of coordination throughout the subsequent permit review processes until
27 final permit decisions are made.

28 (3) The purpose of the scoping meeting is to share perspectives and
29 identify the issues and information needs of concern to each
30 participant with regard to the proposed project, and jointly develop a
31 strategy for managing the permitting process. This project scoping
32 process must be concluded within sixty days of the applicant's request.

33 (a) During this review, the permit agencies shall identify:

34 (i) The permits that are required for the project;

35 (ii) A review of the permit application forms and other application
36 requirements of the agencies that are participating in the scoping
37 meeting;

1 (iii) The specific information needs and issues of concern and
2 their significance to each participant with regard to the permitting
3 processes involved;

4 (iv) Any statutory or regulatory conflicts that might arise
5 relating to differing legal authorities and roles of the agencies
6 issuing the permit or use authorization of the project;

7 (v) Any state or local jurisdiction or private sector liability
8 that might result from permitting or issuing a use authorization for
9 the project;

10 (vi) Any natural resources, including federal or state listed
11 species, that might be adversely affected by the permitting or
12 authorizing decision; and

13 (vii) The permit decision timelines that will be used by each
14 permit agency, including the time periods required to determine if the
15 permit applications are complete, to review the application or
16 applications, and to process the component permits. In the development
17 of this timeline, full attention must be given to achieving the maximum
18 efficiencies possible through concurrent studies, consolidated
19 applications, hearings, and comment periods.

20 (b) Following this project scoping review, the outcome shall be
21 documented in written form and furnished to the applicant, and be
22 available to the public.

23 (c) Upon completion of this review, the permitting and authorizing
24 agencies and governments shall proceed according to their respective
25 statutes.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) Upon request, a permit applicant may
27 also request that the center actively coordinate the project permitting
28 processes. This process shall be implemented through a cost
29 reimbursement contract developed under section 7 of this act.

30 (2) According to the specific requirements contained in a cost
31 reimbursement contract, the center may convene a scoping meeting as
32 outlined in section 5 of this act, serve as the main point of contact
33 for the permit applicant with regard to the coordinated permit
34 processes for the project, and manage the procedural aspects of that
35 processing consistent with existing laws. In carrying out these
36 responsibilities, the center shall ensure that the permit applicant has
37 all the information needed to apply for all the component permits that
38 are incorporated in the coordinated permit process for the project,

1 coordinate the review of those permits by the permit agencies, ensure
2 that timely permit decisions are made by the permit agencies, and
3 assist in resolving any conflict or inconsistency among the permit
4 requirements and conditions that are to be imposed by the permit
5 agencies. The center shall maintain contact with the applicant and
6 local, state, and federal permit agencies to ensure that the process is
7 progressing as scheduled.

8 (3) Upon completion of the cost reimbursement contract, each permit
9 agency shall send at least one representative qualified to make
10 decisions concerning the applicability and timelines associated with
11 all permits administered by that jurisdiction. At the request of the
12 applicant, the center shall notify any relevant federal agency or
13 federally recognized tribe of the date of the meeting and invite that
14 agency's participation in the process.

15 (4) If a permit agency or the applicant foresees, at any time, that
16 it will be unable to meet its obligations under the agreement, it shall
17 notify the center of the problem. The center shall notify the permit
18 agencies and the applicant and, upon agreement of all parties, adjust
19 the schedule, or, if necessary, schedule another work plan meeting.

20 (5) This chapter may not be construed to limit or abridge the
21 powers and duties granted to any permit agency under the law that
22 authorizes or requires the agency to issue a permit or a use
23 authorization for a project.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) The center shall negotiate a method of
25 determining, collecting, and distributing permit fees and cost
26 reimbursement for the costs associated with carrying out the purposes
27 of this chapter, including the use of existing fees as set by statute
28 or administrative rule.

29 (2) The center may enter into a written agreement with the
30 applicant to recover from the applicant the reasonable costs incurred
31 by the center and permit agencies in carrying out the requirements of
32 this chapter.

33 (3) The center may enter into a written agreement with the
34 applicant to recover from the applicant the reasonable costs incurred
35 by outside independent consultants selected by the center and permit
36 agencies to perform permit review and processing tasks consistent with
37 the coordinated permit process.

1 (4) The center and outside independent consultants may recover only
2 the costs of performing those permit services that are coordinated
3 through the one-stop coordinated permitting process established under
4 this chapter. The billing process must provide for accurate time and
5 cost accounting and may include a billing cycle that provides for
6 progress payments.

7 (5) Prior to providing reimbursement or fees to participating
8 permit agencies under this chapter, the center shall ensure that the
9 participating permit agencies have made all the permit decisions that
10 are necessary for the incorporation of the permits into the coordinated
11 permit process and act on the component permits within the time periods
12 agreed to by the participating permit agencies under the process
13 outlined in section 6 of this act.

14 (6) The center shall adopt a policy to administer cost
15 reimbursement agreements executed under this section. Cost
16 reimbursement agreements administered by the center under this section
17 must be based on competitive bids that are awarded for each agreement
18 to the responsible bidder from a prequalified consultant roster that
19 submitted the lowest responsive bid as described in RCW 43.19.1911.

20 (7) Prior to entering negotiation with the applicant on cost
21 reimbursement, the center shall request work load analyses for the
22 permits from each permitting agency. These analyses shall be available
23 to the public. The center may only agree to reduce work load if there
24 is a good cause to do so and there is no significant impact on
25 environmental review.

26 (8) If independent consultants are hired under the cost
27 reimbursement agreement, they shall report directly to the permitting
28 agency.

29 (9) The center shall develop guidance to ensure that, in developing
30 cost reimbursement agreements, conflict of interest problems are
31 eliminated.

32 (10) For permits it coordinates, the permit assistance center shall
33 coordinate all cost-reimbursement agreements executed under RCW
34 43.21A.690, 43.30.420, 43.70.630, 43.300.080, and 70.94.085.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** (1) There is established the permit
36 assistance advisory council composed of eleven members. Seven members
37 shall be appointed by the governor. In making these appointments, the
38 governor shall include representation from business, the environmental

1 community, agriculture, port districts, counties, cities, and the
2 tribes. Two members shall be members of the senate selected by the
3 president of the senate with one member selected from each caucus in
4 the senate, and two members shall be members of the house of
5 representatives selected by the speaker of the house of representatives
6 with one member selected from each caucus in the house of
7 representatives. The legislative members shall be nonvoting members of
8 the council. Appointments to the council shall reflect geographical
9 balance and the diversity of population within Washington state.
10 Members shall serve four-year terms. Of the initial members appointed
11 to the council, two shall serve for two years, two shall serve for
12 three years, and two shall serve for four years. Thereafter members
13 shall be appointed to four-year terms. Vacancies shall be filled by
14 appointment in the same manner as the original appointment for the
15 remainder of the unexpired term of the position being vacated.
16 Nonlegislative members shall be reimbursed for travel expenses as
17 provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. Legislative members shall be
18 reimbursed as provided in RCW 44.04.120.

19 (2) The council shall elect a chair and a vice-chair from the
20 voting members of the committee. The chair and vice-chair shall serve
21 a term of one year.

22 (3) The council shall:

23 (a) Assess the performance of the center;

24 (b) Review annual customer surveys conducted by the center to
25 determine the effectiveness of the center; and

26 (c) Recommend changes to the services provided by the center to
27 enhance technical assistance to permit applicants.

28 (4) The council shall meet at least four times per year.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** (1) The powers, duties, and functions of the
30 permit assistance center at the department of ecology are transferred
31 to the center created in section 3 of this act.

32 (2)(a) All reports, documents, surveys, books, records, files,
33 papers, or written material in the possession of the department of
34 ecology pertaining to the powers, functions, and duties transferred
35 shall be delivered to the custody of the center. All cabinets,
36 furniture, office equipment, motor vehicles, and other tangible
37 property employed by the department of ecology in carrying out the
38 powers, functions, and duties transferred shall be made available to

1 the center. All funds, credits, or other assets held in connection
2 with the powers, functions, and duties transferred shall be assigned to
3 the center.

4 (b) Any appropriations made to the department of ecology for
5 carrying out the powers, functions, and duties transferred shall, on
6 June 30, 2002, be transferred and credited to the center.

7 (c) Whenever any question arises as to the transfer of any
8 personnel, funds, books, documents, records, papers, files, equipment,
9 or other tangible property used or held in the exercise of the powers
10 and the performance of the duties and functions transferred, the
11 director of financial management shall make a determination as to the
12 proper allocation and certify the same to the state agencies concerned.

13 (3) All rules and all pending business before the department of
14 ecology pertaining to the powers, functions, and duties transferred
15 shall be continued and acted upon by the center. All existing
16 contracts and obligations shall remain in full force and shall be
17 performed by the center.

18 (4) The transfer of the powers, duties, functions, and personnel of
19 the authority shall not affect the validity of any act performed before
20 June 30, 2002.

21 (5) If apportionments of budgeted funds are required because of the
22 transfers directed by this section, the director of financial
23 management shall certify the apportionments to the agencies affected,
24 the state auditor, and the state treasurer. Each of these shall make
25 the appropriate transfer and adjustments in funds and appropriation
26 accounts and equipment records in accordance with the certification.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** Nothing in this chapter affects the
28 jurisdiction of the energy facility site evaluation council as provided
29 in chapter 80.50 RCW.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** A new section is added to chapter 43.131
31 RCW to read as follows:

32 The permit assistance center and its powers and duties terminates
33 June 30, 2007, as provided in section 12 of this act.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** A new section is added to chapter 43.131
35 RCW to read as follows:

1 The following acts or parts of acts, as now existing or hereafter
2 amended, are each repealed, effective June 30, 2008:

- 3 (1) Section 1 of this act;
- 4 (2) Section 2 of this act;
- 5 (3) Section 3 of this act;
- 6 (4) Section 4 of this act;
- 7 (5) Section 5 of this act;
- 8 (6) Section 6 of this act;
- 9 (7) Section 7 of this act;
- 10 (8) Section 8 of this act;
- 11 (9) Section 9 of this act; and
- 12 (10) Section 10 of this act.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** Sections 1 through 10 of this act
14 constitute a new chapter in Title 90 RCW.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** If specific funding for the purposes of
16 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not
17 provided by June 30, 2002, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act
18 is null and void.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 15.** This act is necessary for the immediate
20 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
21 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
22 immediately."

23 **E2SHB 2671** - S COMM AMD
24 By Committee on Environment, Energy & Water

25 ADOPTED 03/08/02

26 On page 1, line 2 of the title, after "ecology;" strike the
27 remainder of the title and insert "adding new sections to chapter
28 43.131 RCW; adding a new chapter to Title 90 RCW; creating a new
29 section; and declaring an emergency."

--- END ---