

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2658

As Reported by House Committee On:
Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks
Capital Budget

Title: An act relating to a statewide off-road vehicle data base.

Brief Description: Establishing a statewide ORV data base.

Sponsors: Representatives Hinkle, B. Sullivan, Condotta and Kretz.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks: 1/24/06, 1/31/06 [DPS];
Capital Budget: 2/6/06, 2/7/06 [DPS(NREP)].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation to create a public, statewide Geographic Information System database that maps public lands open for off-road vehicle use.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives B. Sullivan, Chair; Upthegrove, Vice Chair; Buck, Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Chandler, Dickerson, Eickmeyer, Hunt, Kagi and Orcutt.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) manages a number of grant programs designed to provide funding for outdoor recreation. There are specific IAC-managed grant programs that provide funding for off-road vehicle (ORV) opportunities. Sources for ORV grant funding include a dedicated portion of the state's motor vehicle fuel tax and a fee paid by ORV owners upon vehicle registration. These fund sources are also used by the IAC for administrative expenses and to support ongoing off-road and non-highway recreation programs.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The IAC must create and maintain a statewide Geographic Information System (GIS) database of ORV recreation areas open to the general public in Washington. The database will be available on the IAC's website, and other state agencies must provide links to the database. The IAC will fund the database from money already collected from ORV users.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The original bill required the IAC to outsource the database in the form of a grant, did not require other agencies to provide a website link to the database, and allowed the IAC to use money collected from non-motorized recreation users to fund the database.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (In support) The recreational use of forests must be planned. The database will be an important tool to aid land managers in dealing with the pressures that motorized recreation places on public land and the conflict it causes with other users of the same recreational areas.

Off-road vehicle riders need to know where they are and are not welcome. Not all U.S. Forest Service roads are open for ORV use, but many users are not aware of this. The database will educate the public about where they can ride. Off-road vehicle riders report that having access to good maps for where they are allowed to ride is the most important tool they can have.

Off-road vehicle trails are truly all purpose trails, since hikers, bikers, and horseback riders are all welcome to use the same trails. Oregon maintains a similar database at very little expense.

(With concerns) The bill could be expanded to include non-motorized recreational trails as well. The cost of the database will be most significant during its initial creation. Adding other trail uses would not impact the cost very much.

The money needed to establish the database could impact how much grant money some state agencies receive from the IAC for trail development and maintenance. If the database is limited to ORV trails, then the funding should come from only ORV riders. The standing advisory committee for IAC's trails grant program should be involved in evaluating the funding for the database.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Hinkle, prime sponsor; Bonnie Bunning, Department of Natural Resources; and Dick Coppock, North Central ATV Club.

(With concerns) Scott Chapman, Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation; and Jonathan Guzzo, Washington Trails Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Jarrett, Ranking Minority Member; Hankins, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Chase, Clements, Cox, Eickmeyer, Ericks, Ericksen, Flannigan, Green, Hasegawa, Kretz, Kristiansen, Lantz, McCune, Moeller, Morrell, Newhouse, O'Brien, Roach, Schual-Berke, Serben, Springer, Strow and Upthegrove.

Staff: Nona Snell (786-7153).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Capital Budget Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks:

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The database may be similar to an Oregon database that includes information for ATV and ORV users and places to ride.

The database will be funded through the NOVA account. The funds in the account are appropriate for this use because they are fees from off-road users.

The database will help avoid conflicts between off-road vehicle users and hikers and horse riders.

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation is supportive of the database and would like it expanded to include all trails.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support of the bill) Representative Hinkle, prime sponsor; and Scott Chapman, Interagency Committee.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.