
Local Government Committee

SB 6508

Brief Description: Authorizing the creation of beach management districts.

Sponsors: Senators Eide, Fraser, Murray, McDermott and Morton.

Brief Summary of Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a statutory scheme for beach management districts by emulating requirements for lake management districts.• Authorizes the Department of Ecology to provide technical assistance to community groups, and county and city legislative authorities requesting assistance with the development of beach management programs.

Hearing Date:

Staff: Lyset Cadena (786-7291).

Background:

Lake management districts

Counties, cities, or towns are authorized to create lake management districts to finance the improvement and maintenance of lakes within or partially within the county, city, or town boundaries. The district may include all or a portion of a lake and the adjacent land areas, and a lake may be in more than one district. More than one lake, or portions of lakes, including adjacent land areas, may be included in a single district.

Lake management districts are created by the adoption of a resolution of intention by a county, city, or town governing body or by filing a petition signed by landowners or the owners meeting specified requirements. The county, city, or town governing body must hold a public hearing on the proposed lake management district at the date, time, and place designated in the resolution of intention.

The county, city, or town governing body must adopt a resolution submitting the question of creating the lake management district to the owners of land within the proposed lake management

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district, including publicly owned land. A ballot must be mailed to each owner or reputed owner of any lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property within the proposed lake management district.

The lake management proposal must receive a simple majority vote in favor of creating the lake management district. The county, city, or town governing body must adopt an ordinance creating the lake management district and must proceed with establishing the special assessments or rates and charges, collecting the special assessments or rates and charges, and performing the lake improvement or maintenance activities.

Special assessments or rates or charges may be imposed on property to finance lake improvement and maintenance activities, including:

- water quality;
- studying lake water quality problems and solutions;
- cleaning and maintaining ditches and streams entering or leaving the lake; and
- related administrative, engineering, legal, and operational costs, including the costs of creating the district.

These rates may be imposed annually on all lands within the district for the duration of the district without a related issuance of lake management district bonds or revenue bonds. Special assessments may be imposed in the same manner as local improvement districts, with each land owner having the choice of paying everything at once, or installments with districts bonds being issued.

Sewerage, water, and drainage systems

Counties, as part of a system of sewerage, may provide for, finance, and operate the facilities and services and may exercise any of the powers authorized for aquifer protection areas; for lake management districts; for diking districts, and diking, drainage, and sewerage improvement districts; and for shellfish protection districts.

Watershed management

The legislative authority of a city or county and the governing body of any special purpose district enumerated may authorize up to ten percent of its water-related revenues to be expended in the implementation of watershed management plan projects or activities that are in addition to the county's, city's, or district's existing water-related services or activities.

Flood control districts are allowed to engage in activities authorized for lake management districts.

Summary of Bill:

A statutory scheme for beach management districts that is analogous to lake management districts is created.

Beach management districts addressing the control and removal of aquatic plants or vegetation must develop a plan for this activity and meet the following requirements:

- avoid or minimize the excess removal of nontarget native vegetation and organisms, alive or dead;
- avoid or minimize management activities that will result in the compaction of beach, sand, gravel, and substrate;

- dispose of excessive accumulations of vegetation in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts to the project site and other areas of the beach or deep water environment; and
- retain all natural habitat features on the beach, including trees, stumps, logs, and large rocks in their natural location.

Special assessments or rates or charges may be imposed on property to finance lake or beach improvements and maintenance activities, including:

- controlling or removing aquatic plants and vegetation;
- improving water quality;
- controlling water levels;
- treating and diverting storm water;
- controlling agricultural waste;
- studying lake or marine water quality problems and solutions;
- cleaning and maintaining ditches and streams entering or leaving the lake or marine waters;
- monitoring air quality; and
- related administrative, engineering, legal, and operational costs, including the costs of creating the lake or beach management district.

The Department of Ecology (DOE) must provide technical assistance to community groups and county and city legislative authorities requesting assistance with the development of beach management programs. The DOE must work with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Puget Sound Partnership to coordinate agency assistance to community groups and county and city legislative authorities.

The DOE, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated, must develop a study and work plan to address the problem of sea lettuce growth and proliferation in Puget Sound. The study must address issues including underlying causes of intense sea lettuce growth, human health, and quality of life impacts of sea lettuce accumulations. The DOE must provide progress reports regarding the study, its tasks, and various findings, to the relevant legislative policy committees, by January 1, 2010 and January 1, 2011.

State agencies must provide technical assistance to beach management districts to ensure that proposed beach improvement, maintenance plans, and activities are consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws and consistent with federal, state, and local resource management plans.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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