
ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2468

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2008 Regular Session

By House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives VanDeWege, Warnick, Blake, Dickerson, Linville, Upthegrove, McCoy, Hinkle, Appleton, Lantz, Ormsby, McIntire, Roberts, Kenney, Hudgins, Loomis, Kretz, Kagi, and Chase; by request of Department of Natural Resources)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/08.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving community and urban forest conditions
2 in Washington state; amending RCW 76.15.005, 76.15.020, 76.15.010, and
3 76.15.007; adding a new section to chapter 76.15 RCW; and creating a
4 new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 76.15.005 and 1991 c 179 s 1 are each amended to read
7 as follows:

8 (1) Trees and other woody vegetation are a necessary and important
9 part of community and urban environments. Community and urban forests
10 have many values and uses including promoting urban livability,
11 improving public health, sequestering carbon, conserving energy,
12 reducing air and water pollution and soil erosion, contributing to
13 property values, attracting business, reducing glare and noise,
14 providing aesthetic and historical values, providing wood products, and
15 affording comfort and protection for humans and wildlife.

16 (2) Well-managed and maintained community and urban forests
17 minimize catastrophic losses of life, property, and environmental
18 values due to floods, windstorms, ice storms, wildland fires, and other
19 natural disasters. Natural disasters, pest and disease infestations,

1 and lack of protection from human impacts pose significant threats to
2 the community and urban forests. Management and maintenance of
3 community and urban forests requires recognition of, and cooperation
4 with, public works and utilities department vegetation management
5 programs created to prevent vegetation from interfering with or
6 damaging public facilities and utilities. Urban forests provide
7 multiple benefits and their loss would result in major financial,
8 social, and environmental costs to Washington.

9 (3) As urban and community areas in Washington state grow, the need
10 to plan for and protect community and urban forests increases. Cities
11 and communities benefit from assistance in developing and maintaining
12 community and urban forestry programs that also address future growth.

13 ((+3)) (4) Assistance and encouragement in establishment,
14 retention, and enhancement of these forests and trees by local
15 governments, citizens, organizations, and professionals are in the
16 interest of the state based on the contributions these forests make in
17 preserving and enhancing the quality of life of Washington's
18 municipalities and counties while providing opportunities for economic
19 development.

20 (5) An inventory and assessment of community and urban forest
21 conditions enables the department to identify and establish priorities
22 for actions necessary to preserve and enhance the public investment in
23 community and urban forest resources.

24 **Sec. 2.** RCW 76.15.020 and 1991 c 179 s 4 are each amended to read
25 as follows:

26 (1) The department ((may)) shall establish and maintain a program
27 in community and urban forestry to accomplish the purpose stated in RCW
28 76.15.007. The department may assist municipalities and counties in
29 establishing and maintaining community and urban forestry programs and
30 encourage persons to engage in appropriate and improved tree management
31 and care.

32 (2) The department ((may)) shall advise, encourage, and assist
33 municipalities, counties, and other public and private entities: (a)
34 In the development and coordination of policies, programs, and
35 activities for the promotion of community and urban forestry; and (b)
36 in the recognition of, and for opportunities for cooperation with,

1 public works and utilities department vegetation management programs
2 created for the prevention of vegetation interfering with or damaging
3 public facilities and utilities.

4 (3) The department may appoint a committee or council, in addition
5 to the technical advisory committee created in section 3 of this act,
6 to advise the department in establishing and carrying out a program in
7 community and urban forestry.

8 (4) The department may assist municipal and county tree maintenance
9 programs by making surplus equipment available on loan where feasible
10 for community and urban forestry programs and cooperative projects.

11 (5)(a) The department shall, in collaboration with educational
12 institutions, municipalities, corporations, the technical advisory
13 committee created in section 3 of this act, state and national service
14 organizations, and environmental organizations, conduct a prioritized
15 statewide inventory of community and urban forests.

16 (b) For purposes of efficiency, existing data and current inventory
17 technologies must be utilized in the development of the inventory.
18 Statewide data must be maintained and periodically updated by the
19 department and made available to every municipality in the state.

20 (c) The criteria established for the statewide community and urban
21 forest inventory must support the planning needs of local governments.

22 (d) The criteria for the statewide community and urban forest
23 inventory may include but is not limited to: Tree size, species,
24 location, site appropriateness, condition and health, contribution to
25 canopy cover and volume, available planting spaces, and ecosystem,
26 economic, social, and monetary value.

27 (e) In developing the statewide community and urban forest
28 inventory, the department shall strive to enable Washington cities'
29 urban forest managers to access carbon markets by working to ensure the
30 inventory developed under this section is compatible with existing and
31 developing urban forest reporting protocols designed to facilitate
32 access to those carbon markets.

33 (6) The department shall, in collaboration with a statewide
34 organization representing urban and community forestry programs, and
35 with any statutorily required urban forestry stakeholder task force
36 managed by the department of community, trade, and economic
37 development, conduct an urban forest assessment and develop

1 recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature to
2 improve community and urban forestry in Washington.

3 (7) The inventory and assessment required in this section must be
4 capable of supporting the adoption and implementation of urban forestry
5 management plans and ordinances that may be developed by local
6 governments.

7 (8) The department shall, in collaboration with municipalities, the
8 technical advisory committee created in section 3 of this act, and a
9 statewide organization representing urban and community forestry
10 programs, develop an implementation plan for the inventory and
11 assessment of the community and urban forests in Washington.

12 (9)(a) The criteria and implementation plan for the statewide
13 community and urban forest inventory and assessment required under this
14 section must be completed by December 1, 2008. Upon the completion of
15 the criteria and implementation plan's development, the department
16 shall report the final product to the appropriate committees of the
17 legislature. Subsequent annual reports must be submitted each December
18 until the statewide assessment required under this section is complete.

19 (b) An initial inventory and assessment, consisting of the
20 community and urban forests of the willing municipalities located in
21 one county located east of the crest of the Cascade mountains and the
22 willing municipalities located in one county located west of the crest
23 of the Cascade mountains must be completed by June 1, 2010.

24 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 76.15 RCW
25 to read as follows:

26 (1) The commissioner of public lands shall appoint a technical
27 advisory committee to provide advice to the department during the
28 development of the criteria and implementation plan for the statewide
29 community and urban forest inventory and assessment required under RCW
30 76.15.020.

31 (2) The technical advisory committee must include, but not be
32 limited to, representatives from the following groups: Arborists;
33 municipal foresters; educators; consultants; researchers; public works
34 and utilities professionals; information technology specialists; and
35 other affiliated professionals.

36 (3) The technical advisory committee members shall serve without
37 compensation. Advisory committee members who are not state employees

1 may receive reimbursement for travel expenses as provided by RCW
2 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. Costs associated with the technical advisory
3 committee may be paid from the general fund appropriation made
4 available to the department for community and urban forestry.

5 (4) The technical advisory committee created in this section must
6 be disbanded by the commissioner of public lands upon the completion of
7 the criteria and implementation plan for the statewide community and
8 urban forest inventory and assessment required under RCW 76.15.020.

9 **Sec. 4.** RCW 76.15.010 and 2000 c 11 s 15 are each amended to read
10 as follows:

11 (~~Unless the context clearly requires otherwise,~~) The definitions
12 in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context
13 clearly requires otherwise.

14 (1) "Community and urban forest" is that land in and around human
15 settlements ranging from small communities to metropolitan areas,
16 occupied or potentially occupied by trees and associated vegetation.
17 Community and urban forest land may be planted or unplanted, used or
18 unused, and includes public and private lands, lands along
19 transportation and utility corridors, and forested watershed lands
20 within populated areas.

21 (2) "Community and urban forest assessment" means an analysis of
22 the community and urban forest inventory to establish the scope and
23 scale of forest-related benefits and services, the economic valuation
24 of such benefits, highlight trends and issues of concern, identify high
25 priority areas to be addressed, outline strategies for addressing the
26 critical issues and urban landscapes, and identify opportunities for
27 retaining trees, expanding forest canopy, and planting additional trees
28 to sustain Washington's urban and community forests.

29 (3) "Community and urban forest inventory" means a management tool
30 designed to gauge the condition, management status, health, and
31 diversity of a community and urban forest. A community and urban
32 forest inventory may evaluate individual trees or groups of trees or
33 canopy cover within community and urban forests, and must be
34 periodically updated by the department of natural resources.

35 (4) "Community and urban forestry" means the planning,
36 establishment, protection, care, and management of trees and associated

1 plants individually, in small groups, or under forest conditions within
2 municipalities and counties.

3 ~~((+3))~~ (5) "Department" means the department of natural resources.

4 ~~((+4))~~ (6) "Municipality" means a city, town, port district,
5 public school district, community college district, irrigation
6 district, weed control district, park district, or other political
7 subdivision of the state.

8 ~~((+5))~~ (7) "Person" means an individual, partnership, private or
9 public municipal corporation, Indian tribe, state entity, county or
10 local governmental entity, or association of individuals of whatever
11 nature.

12 **Sec. 5.** RCW 76.15.007 and 1991 c 179 s 2 are each amended to read
13 as follows:

14 The purpose of this chapter is to:

15 (1) Encourage planting and maintenance and management of trees in
16 the state's municipalities and counties and maximize the potential of
17 tree and vegetative cover in improving the quality of the environment.

18 (2) Encourage the coordination of state and local agency activities
19 and maximize citizen participation in the development and
20 implementation of community and urban forestry-related programs.

21 (3) Foster healthy economic activity for the state's community and
22 urban forestry-related businesses through cooperative and supportive
23 contracts with the private business sector.

24 (4) Facilitate the creation of employment opportunities related to
25 community and urban forestry activities including opportunities for
26 inner city youth to learn teamwork, resource conservation,
27 environmental appreciation, and job skills.

28 (5) Provide meaningful voluntary opportunities for the state's
29 citizens and organizations interested in community and urban forestry
30 activities.

31 (6) Facilitate recognition of, and cooperation with, public works
32 and utilities department vegetation management programs created for the
33 prevention of vegetation interfering with or damaging public facilities
34 and utilities.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** If specific funding for the purposes of this

1 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by
2 June 30, 2008, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and
3 void.

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