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**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

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**HB 1489**

**Brief Description:** Regarding water resource management.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Blake, Chandler, Schmick, Kretz, Walsh, Warnick, Hinkle, Short, Haler, Newhouse, Ross and McCune.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Defines "stock watering" as all reasonable uses of water normally associated with the care and management of livestock including, but not limited to, drinking, feeding, cleaning of stalls, washing livestock, washing equipment used in the feeding or milking of livestock, controlling dust around livestock, and cooling livestock.
- Limits stock watering to 350 acre feet of water per year.
- Requires a permit exempt well owner planning on withdrawing more than 15,000 gallons a day for stock watering purposes to submit several documents to the Department of Ecology prior to withdrawal.

**Hearing Date:** 1/29/09, 1/30/09

**Staff:** Jaclyn Ford (786-7339)

**Background:**

The Ground Water Code was enacted in 1945. In general, it requires a water right permit for any new withdrawal of ground water after June 6, 1945. However, in addition to "grandfathering" ground water rights in existence before its enactment, the 1945 code also exempted certain new withdrawals from this permit requirement. The code states that a permit is not required for (1) any withdrawal of public ground waters for stock watering purposes, (2) for the watering of a lawn or of a non-commercial garden not exceeding one-half acre in area, (3) for single or group domestic uses in an amount not exceeding 5,000 gallons a day, or (4) for an industrial purpose in an amount not exceeding 5,000 gallons a day.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary of Bill:**

The definition of stock watering is all reasonable uses of water normally associated with the care and management of livestock including, but not limited to, drinking, feeding, cleaning of stalls, washing livestock, washing equipment used in the feeding or milking of livestock, controlling dust around livestock, and cooling livestock.

Exempt permitted wells withdrawing water for stock watering purposes must not withdraw more than 350 acre feet of water per year. One acre foot equals 325,851 gallons, therefore 350 acre feet is 114,047,850 gallons.

If the permit exempted well owner plans on withdrawing more than 15,000 gallons a day for stock watering purposes, the well owner must submit to the Department of Ecology: (1) a report of examination describing the quantity of water to be withdrawn, (2) the development schedule, (3) a metering plan, (4) a water right impairment analysis prepared by a qualified hydrologist or engineer, (5) proof of compliance with any applicable county land use planning requirements, (6) proof of compliance with applicable state environmental policy act requirements, and (7) generally applicable well construction and reporting requirements.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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