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## Local Government Committee

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### HB 2213

**Brief Description:** Modifying certain definitions for the purpose of firefighting services for unprotected lands.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Chandler, Van De Wege and Johnson.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies the definition of "improved property" in regards to forest protection to specify that the definition includes agricultural structures as defined in the state building code, and bridges.

**Hearing Date:** 1/17/12

**Staff:** Ann Koepke (786-7291), Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

#### Background:

Among other obligations, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has the duty and authority to prevent, control and suppress state forest fires. Numerous statutorily defined terms are applicable in the provision of firefighting services of the DNR. Examples include:

- "fire protection service agency" or "agency" means any local, state, or federal governmental entity responsible for the provision of firefighting services;
- "fire protection jurisdiction" means an area or property located within a fire protection district, a regional fire protection service authority, a city, a town, a port district, certain lands protected by DNR, or on federal lands;
- "firefighting services" means the provision of services related to the protection of life and property;
- "property" is defined as land, structures, or land and structures;
- "improved property" means property upon which a structure is located, but does not include roads, bridges, land devoted primarily to growing and harvesting timber, or land

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devoted primarily to the production of livestock or agricultural commodities for commercial purposes; and

- "unprotected land" means improved property located outside of a fire protection jurisdiction.

Fire protection agencies are not obligated to provide firefighting services to unprotected land. If firefighting services are provided to unprotected land and the property owners have not formed or annexed into a fire protection jurisdiction or contracted with a fire protection agency for firefighting services, the property owners must reimburse the agency initiating firefighting services on unprotected land for actual costs that are incurred that are proportionate to the fire itself.

The Washington State Building Code exists to promote the safety and welfare of occupants and users of buildings and structures. It provides definitions of a number of structures, including agricultural structures.

**Summary of Bill:**

The definition of "improved property" in regards to forest protection is modified to specify that the definition includes agricultural structures as defined in the state building code, and bridges.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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