
ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL 2478

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Representatives Peterson, Stambaugh, Buys, Dent, Gregerson, Riccelli, Orwall, Stanford, Blake, Sawyer, Tharinger, Fitzgibbon, Walkinshaw, Tarleton, McBride, Moscoso, Bergquist, Pollet, S. Hunt, Goodman, and Wilcox

Read first time 01/13/16. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to supporting agricultural production, including
2 that of apiarists, through the preservation of forage for
3 pollinators; amending RCW 17.10.145; adding a new section to chapter
4 43.220 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The state noxious weed control board
7 shall conduct a pilot project that evaluates the options, methods,
8 and costs of purposefully replacing pollen-rich and nectar-rich
9 noxious weeds, such as knapweeds and nonnative thistles, which are
10 productive forage plants for honey bees, with either native or
11 noninvasive, nonnative forage plants that can produce similar levels
12 of pollen and nectar with a similar bloom succession to support
13 populations of honey bees and other pollinators. The goal of the
14 pilot project is to develop optional guidance and best practices for
15 landowners and land managers faced with the removal of noxious weeds.
16 The pilot project must be developed to maximize the dual public
17 benefits of reducing noxious weeds in Washington and supporting
18 agricultural production through the maintenance of access to
19 seasonally balanced pollen-rich and nectar-rich plants for honey bees
20 and other pollinators.

1 (2)(a) In implementing the pilot project, the state noxious weed
2 control board must coordinate with willing landowners to provide
3 goods or services, such as plant starts and seed packs, necessary to
4 replace noxious weeds with either native or noninvasive, nonnative
5 plants or to create, in conjunction with noxious weed control
6 efforts, new seasonally balanced forage patches for honey bees and
7 other pollinators.

8 (b) Priority in participation in the pilot project must be given
9 to interested private landowners located in areas where the dual
10 benefits of the pilot project can be maximized. However, public
11 landowners or managers may also be considered for participation. No
12 landowner may be required to participate in the pilot project either
13 directly or as a condition of a permit or other governmental action.

14 (3) The implementation details of the pilot project required by
15 this section are at the sole discretion of the state noxious weed
16 control board, including the selection of pilot project partners and
17 participants. However, pilot project partners should be located in
18 both eastern and western Washington. The state noxious weed control
19 board:

20 (a) Shall coordinate with the county noxious weed control boards
21 in which pilot projects are located, unless the county does not have
22 a local noxious weed control board; and

23 (b) May coordinate with the state conservation commission or
24 individual conservation districts in the implementation of the pilot
25 project if the state noxious weed control board finds that
26 coordination would be beneficial.

27 (4) The state noxious weed control board must issue a report to
28 the legislature, consistent with RCW 43.01.036, that outlines the
29 successes and challenges of the pilot project, including the
30 development of the tools in this subsection. This report must be
31 presented by October 31, 2020, and include:

32 (a) A description of the following tools:

33 (i) A list of suitable pollen-rich forage plant alternatives to
34 noxious weeds, taking into account traits such as nectar and pollen
35 quality, bloom succession, growth requirements, and habitat type;

36 (ii) A list of seed and plant start suppliers that may be able to
37 provide pollen-rich forage plant alternatives to noxious weeds; and

38 (iii) A matrix, based on the pilot project, to provide guidelines
39 to landowners and land managers when replacing noxious weeds or
40 creating new pollen-rich forage patches;

1 (b) An assessment scale that may be used by landowners, land
2 managers, and the apiary industry to rate the usefulness of the tools
3 described in this subsection; and

4 (c) Any recommendations for extending the pilot project or using
5 the lessons learned as part of Washington's overall noxious weed
6 control strategy.

7 (5) This section expires June 30, 2021.

8 **Sec. 2.** RCW 17.10.145 and 1997 c 353 s 18 are each amended to
9 read as follows:

10 (1) All state agencies shall control noxious weeds on lands they
11 own, lease, or otherwise control through integrated pest management
12 practices. Agencies shall develop plans in cooperation with county
13 noxious weed control boards to control noxious weeds in accordance
14 with standards in this chapter.

15 (2) All state agencies' lands must comply with this chapter,
16 regardless of noxious weed control efforts on adjacent lands.

17 (3) While conducting planned projects to ensure compliance with
18 this chapter, all agencies must give preference, when deemed
19 appropriate by the acting agency for the project and targeted
20 resource management goals, to replacing pollen-rich or nectar-rich
21 noxious weeds with native forage plants that are beneficial for all
22 pollinators, including honey bees.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.220
24 RCW to read as follows:

25 Any corps project that involves the removal of noxious weeds
26 must, when deemed appropriate for the project goals by the project
27 sponsor, include the planting of pollen-rich and nectar-rich native
28 plants to provide forage for all pollinators, including honey bees.

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