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HOUSE BILL 2493

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Representatives Smith and Tharinger; by request of Recreation and Conservation Office

Read first time 01/14/16. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to extending the expiration date of the habitat  
2 and recreation lands coordinating group; amending RCW 79A.25.260; and  
3 providing an expiration date.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 79A.25.260 and 2012 c 128 s 1 are each amended to  
6 read as follows:

7 (1) The habitat and recreation lands coordinating group is  
8 established. The group must include representatives from the office,  
9 the state parks and recreation commission, the department of natural  
10 resources, and the department of fish and wildlife. The members of  
11 the group must have subject matter expertise with the issues  
12 presented in this section. Representatives from appropriate  
13 stakeholder organizations and local government must also be  
14 considered for participation on the group, but may only be appointed  
15 or invited by the director.

16 (2) To ensure timely completion of the duties assigned to the  
17 group, the director shall submit yearly progress reports to the  
18 office of financial management.

19 (3) The group must:

1 (a) Review agency land acquisition and disposal plans and  
2 policies to help ensure statewide coordination of habitat and  
3 recreation land acquisitions and disposals;

4 (b) Produce an interagency, statewide biennial forecast of  
5 habitat and recreation land acquisition and disposal plans;

6 (c) Establish procedures for publishing the biennial forecast of  
7 acquisition and disposal plans on web sites or other centralized,  
8 easily accessible formats;

9 (d) Develop and convene an annual forum for agencies to  
10 coordinate their near-term acquisition and disposal plans;

11 (e) Develop a recommended method for interagency geographic  
12 information system-based documentation of habitat and recreation  
13 lands in cooperation with other state agencies using geographic  
14 information systems;

15 (f) Develop recommendations for standardization of acquisition  
16 and disposal recordkeeping, including identifying a preferred process  
17 for centralizing acquisition data;

18 (g) Develop an approach for monitoring the success of  
19 acquisitions;

20 (h) Identify and commence a dialogue with key state and federal  
21 partners to develop an inventory of potential public lands for  
22 transfer into habitat and recreation land management status; and

23 (i) Review existing and proposed habitat conservation plans on a  
24 regular basis to foster statewide coordination and save costs.

25 (4) If prioritization among the various requirements of  
26 subsection (3) of this section is necessary due to the availability  
27 of resources, the group shall prioritize implementation of subsection  
28 (3)(a) through (d) and (g) of this section.

29 (5) The group shall revisit the planning requirements of relevant  
30 grant programs administered by the office to determine whether  
31 coordination of state agency habitat and recreation land acquisition  
32 and disposal could be improved by modifying those requirements.

33 (6) The group must develop options for centralizing coordination  
34 of habitat and recreation land acquisition made with funds from  
35 federal grants. The advantages and drawbacks of the following  
36 options, at a minimum, must be developed:

37 (a) Requiring that agencies provide early communication on the  
38 status of federal grant applications to the office, the office of  
39 financial management, or directly to the legislature;

1 (b) Establishing a centralized pass-through agency for federal  
2 funds, where individual agencies would be the primary applicants.

3 (7) This section expires July 31, (~~2017~~) 2027. Prior to January  
4 1, (~~2017~~) 2027, the group shall make a formal recommendation to the  
5 board and the appropriate committees of the legislature as to whether  
6 the existence of the habitat and recreation lands coordinating group  
7 should be continued beyond July 31, (~~2017~~) 2027, and if so, whether  
8 any modifications to its enabling statute should be pursued.

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