

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1353

Chapter 244, Laws of 2017

65th Legislature
2017 Regular Session

ELK MANAGEMENT PILOT PROJECT

EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/23/2017

Passed by the House April 18, 2017
Yeas 96 Nays 0

FRANK CHOPP

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Passed by the Senate April 6, 2017
Yeas 48 Nays 1

CYRUS HABIB

President of the Senate

Approved May 8, 2017 11:14 AM

JAY INSLEE

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1353** as passed by House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

BERNARD DEAN

Chief Clerk

FILED

May 8, 2017

**Secretary of State
State of Washington**

SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1353

AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

Passed Legislature - 2017 Regular Session

State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session

By House Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Dent, Blake, Buys, and Hayes)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/17.

1 AN ACT Relating to commissioning an elk management pilot project
2 that focuses initially on the Colockum elk herd; adding a new section
3 to chapter 77.36 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an
4 expiration date.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the
7 Colockum elk herd in central Washington is the fifth largest elk herd
8 in the state and is currently managed for the state by the department
9 of fish and wildlife.

10 (2) The legislature further finds that the Colockum elk herd has
11 been the subject of a great deal of planning by the department of
12 fish and wildlife. The herd is subject to an existing herd management
13 plan that attempts to ensure a healthy, productive population, manage
14 the herd for a variety of purposes, and allow for a sustainable yield
15 within the population. Proper management of the Colockum elk herd is
16 important, since the herd is a resource that provides significant
17 recreational, aesthetic, cultural, and economic benefits to
18 recreationalists, local communities, and native Americans.

19 (3) The legislature further finds that the department of fish and
20 wildlife has studied the Colockum elk herd as recently as 2012. This
21 study led to a greater understanding of the challenges facing the

1 herd and resulted in recommendations as to management approaches to
2 address those challenges.

3 (4) The legislature further finds that despite the active
4 management and research by the department of fish and wildlife, there
5 are still undesirable consequences of the Colockum elk herd's size,
6 location, and behaviors. These consequences manifest as significant
7 agricultural crop damage within the herd's range and unacceptably
8 threatens to degrade highway safety levels on Interstate 90 and other
9 roadways within the range of the herd due to collisions between herd
10 members and vehicles.

11 (5) The legislature further finds that the unwanted consequences
12 of the current Colockum elk herd management protocol are not isolated
13 to the range of the Colockum herd. Other elk herds in the state are
14 also the subject of similar management outcomes.

15 (6) The legislature further finds that the department of fish and
16 wildlife should use the Colockum elk herd as the subject of a pilot
17 project that explores the benefits of more active management. The
18 department must work with the Yakama Nation to obtain input from the
19 tribe on the tribe's recommendations. The pilot project should be
20 limited in time and geography to ensure that overall herd health is
21 not disrupted; however, it should be robust enough to offer
22 scientifically rigorous results.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 77.36
24 RCW to read as follows:

25 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
26 specific purpose, the department must conduct an elk management pilot
27 project to explore the viability of various wildlife management
28 actions to reduce elk highway collisions and elk damage to private
29 crop lands. The pilot project must initially focus on achieving a
30 reduction in highway collisions on interstate highways, and crop
31 damage on properties, within the range of the Colockum herd. The
32 department must invite the Yakama Nation to participate in all
33 aspects of the project.

34 (2) The department must work with the department of
35 transportation to explore the viability of various wildlife
36 management actions to reduce elk highway collisions, initially
37 focusing on reducing traffic collisions along interstate highways
38 within the range of the herd.

1 (3) Direct wildlife management efforts must be employed in the
2 pilot project implemented under this section, including:

3 (a) Increased use of special depredation hunts and general
4 hunting opportunity within the Colockum herd. Total hunting
5 depredations under the pilot project must be limited to three hundred
6 elk per calendar year and these efforts must be designed and
7 implemented in a manner that does not conflict with the primary goals
8 of the current elk herd management plan for the Colockum herd;

9 (b) Feeding elk within the pilot project area by persons other
10 than the department is prohibited, although in no event may this
11 prohibition affect a person who sets out feed with the intent to feed
12 domestic animals or livestock, even though such feed may be
13 inadvertently consumed by elk or other wildlife; and

14 (c) The use of managed livestock grazing to attract elk away from
15 roads and private property.

16 (4) Consistent with RCW 43.01.036, the department and the
17 department of transportation must report the results of the pilot
18 project to the appropriate committees of the legislature by October
19 31, 2020. Along with results, the departments must report on how the
20 information gleaned from the pilot project will be used to manage the
21 Colockum elk herd and other similarly situated elk herds in the
22 state.

23 (5) This section expires July 1, 2021.

Passed by the House April 18, 2017.

Passed by the Senate April 6, 2017.

Approved by the Governor May 8, 2017.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State May 8, 2017.

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