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**SENATE BILL 6417**

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**State of Washington**                      **53rd Legislature**                      **1994 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Owen, Oke, Prentice, Vognild, Nelson, Haugen and Winsley  
Read first time 01/21/94. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources.

1            AN ACT Relating to requiring establishment of uniform county-wide  
2 wetlands policies; adding a new section to chapter 36.70A RCW; and  
3 creating a new section.

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

5            NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 1.**        The legislature finds that there is  
6 considerable confusion and complexity resulting from the multiplicity  
7 of regulations regarding wetlands in the state that affects the  
8 public's interest in the conservation and beneficial use of wetlands  
9 and sustainable economic development. The legislature further finds  
10 that the lack of standardized methodology and procedures to define,  
11 plan for, and permit projects associated with wetlands has contributed  
12 to severe problems and conflicts. These have adversely affected the  
13 wetlands, landowners, and federal, state, regional, county and city  
14 governments, and tribes. Inconsistency in the regulatory process leads  
15 to a lack of uniformity and inequities in access to the permitting  
16 process, duplication, and even triplication of requirements, and delays  
17 in decision making potentially causing adverse economic and  
18 environmental impacts.

1 It is in the public interest that each county developing  
2 comprehensive plans and development regulations under chapter 36.70A  
3 RCW develop, with its cities, a uniform county-wide regulatory policy  
4 to promote consistency and predictability in the process of protecting  
5 wetlands resources. It is the intent of the legislature that each  
6 county establish an integrated county-wide regulatory policy that  
7 provides a predictable process for wetlands protection consistent with  
8 federal policy and state regulatory programs.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 36.70A RCW  
10 to read as follows:

11 Using the county-wide planning process established in RCW  
12 36.70A.210, or a similar collaborative process between a county and the  
13 cities within a county, each county planning under this chapter shall,  
14 by July 1, 1996, adopt uniform wetlands policies to be implemented  
15 county-wide within the county and each city within the county. The  
16 county-wide policies shall include both regulatory and nonregulatory  
17 tools to protect, at a minimum, the functions and values of wetlands  
18 for fish and wildlife habitat, flood and storm water control, shoreline  
19 erosion control, water pollution abatement, and aquifer protection.  
20 The uniform policies adopted under this section, and regulations  
21 implementing those policies, may be implemented differently by the  
22 county and by cities within the county, and also may reflect  
23 differences between urban and rural areas within the county.

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