

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1342

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Ecology & Parks, March 28, 1995
Ways & Means, April 3, 1995

Title: An act relating to the parks and recreation commission.

Brief Description: Creating the parks renewal and stewardship account.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Fuhrman, Buck, Sehlin, Romero, Ogden, Regala, Jacobsen and Basich; by request of Parks and Recreation Commission).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ecology & Parks: 3/23/95, 3/28/95 [DPA-WM].
Ways & Means: 4/3/95 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; C. Anderson, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, McDonald, Spanel and Swecker.

Staff: Cathy Baker (786-7708)

Background: In 1971 the Legislature created the Trust Land Acquisition Program. This program authorized the State Parks and Recreation Commission to purchase trust lands which are suitable for park purposes from the Department of Natural Resources. There are 50 trust land parcels identified in statute as suitable for these purchases. All but one of the parcels identified in statute have been purchased by the State Parks and Recreation Commission for inclusion in the parks system.

The 1971 legislation also established the trust land purchase account. Originally, all monies from park concessions and user fees were deposited into this account and used to assist the Parks Commission in purchasing trust lands identified for addition to the parks system. In recent years, this account has been increasingly used to fund park operations.

The 1994 supplemental operating budget directed the Parks Commission to study options for increasing the involvement of non-governmental organizations in the acquisition, development, and operation of the state parks system. The Office of Financial Management also directed the Parks Commission to review the way its programs are funded and to recommend appropriate alternatives. The commission's study made a number of recommendations, including establishing a dedicated, non-appropriated account into which park user fees would be deposited for park operations and maintenance.

The park land trust revolving fund is a non-appropriated fund used by the Department of Natural Resources to purchase property to replace trust lands sold to the State Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Parks Commission is authorized to sell timber from State Parks if the timber is surplus to the needs of the park. State law defines the manner by which trees on park lands are managed and removed.

Summary of Amended Bill: The trust land purchase account is eliminated and the parks renewal and stewardship account is created. All State Park revenue, including user fees, leases, and concessions are deposited into the renewal and stewardship account. The account is subject to allotment procedures and to legislative appropriation.

Revenue from surplus timber sales on state park land is to be deposited into the renewal and stewardship account.

The Department of Natural Resources and State Parks are granted general authority to negotiate the sale of trust lands to the Parks Commission at fair market value.

The names and descriptions of previously purchased trust land parcels are removed from the statute. Technical changes are made in provisions dealing with administration of the park land trust revolving fund.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: An intent section is added. It is the intent of the bill to dedicate State Park's revenues to park operations and improvements. Parks revenues are intended to complement, not supplant, general fund support for the agency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1995.

Testimony For: This bill will help stabilize State Park's budget and will also help demonstrate to park users and staff that park fees will be returned to parks to support operations and capital improvements.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Russ Cahill, State Parks and Recreation Commission (pro).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; Bauer, Cantu, Drew, Finkbeiner, Fraser, Gaspard, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Johnson, Long, McDonald, Pelz, Quigley, Roach, Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Strannigan, West, Winsley and Wojahn.

Staff: Tracy Cox (786-7437)

Ways & Means Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The requirement that \$18 million must be used for park operations is deleted.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: No one.