
ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2529

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By House Committee on Government Operations (originally sponsored by Representatives Elliot, Grant, Mastin, Sheldon, Reams, D. Schmidt, Scott, Hymes and Thompson)

Read first time 01/29/96.

1 AN ACT Relating to mineral resource land designation; adding a new
2 section to chapter 36.70A RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that the
5 availability of minerals through surface mining is essential to the
6 economic well-being of the state and nation. The citizens of the state
7 are rapidly running out of approved or designated sites to extract
8 these minerals. Therefore, the available sources of these minerals are
9 nearly exhausted.

10 The state has enacted several laws in recent years directing local
11 governments to make land use decisions for appropriate uses of land
12 through designation in advance of or during the comprehensive planning
13 process and then to limit the specific approval process to mitigating
14 specific impacts of the use or uses allowed by the designation. The
15 current planning and regulatory environment makes economically viable
16 permits unobtainable for the vast majority of the sites where the
17 minerals are located and needed.

18 The cost of transportation of minerals for any significant distance
19 can have an exponential effect on the costs to the taxpayers of the

1 state. Surface mining must take place in diverse areas where the
2 geologic, topographic, climatic, biologic, and social conditions are
3 significantly different, and reclamation specifications must vary
4 accordingly. But surface mining is a finite use of the land and
5 another beneficial use must follow through reclamation.

6 Therefore, the legislature finds that designation, production, and
7 conservation of adequate sources of minerals is in the best interests
8 of the citizens of the state.

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

11 (1)(a) Where the county has classified mineral lands pursuant to
12 RCW 36.70A.050 and mineral resource lands of long-term commercial
13 significance exist, a county shall designate sufficient mineral
14 resource lands in the comprehensive plans to meet the projected twenty-
15 year, county-wide need. Once designated, mineral resource uses,
16 including operations as defined in RCW 78.44.031, shall be established
17 as an allowed use in local development regulations.

18 (b) The county shall designate mineral resource deposits, both
19 active and inactive, in economically viable proximity to locations
20 where the deposits are likely to be used.

21 (c) This section has no applicability to metals mining and milling
22 operations as defined in RCW 78.56.020.

23 (2) Nothing in this section precludes any unit of government from
24 accepting the lowest responsible bid for purchase of mineral materials,
25 regardless of source.

26 (3) Through its comprehensive plan and development regulations, as
27 defined in RCW 36.70A.030, a county, city, or town shall discourage the
28 siting of new applications of incompatible uses adjacent to mineral
29 resource industries, deposits, and holdings.

30 (4) Any additions or amendments to comprehensive plans or
31 development regulations required by this section may be adopted during
32 the normal course of adopting or amending the comprehensive plan or
33 development regulations.

34 (5) For the purposes of this section:

35 (a) "Long-term commercial significance" includes the mineral
36 composition of the land for long-term economically viable commercial
37 production, in consideration with the mineral resource land's proximity

1 to population areas, product markets, and the possibility of more
2 intense uses of the land.

3 (b) "Allowed use" means the use or uses specified by local
4 development regulations as appropriate within those areas designated
5 through the advance or comprehensive planning process. Once
6 designated, a proposed allowed use shall be reviewed for project
7 specific impacts and may be conditioned to mitigate significant adverse
8 impacts within the context of site plan approval, but such review shall
9 not revisit the question of land use.

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