

2 2SHB 1557 - S COMM AMD

3 By Committee on Natural Resources & Parks

4 ADOPTED 4/1/97

5 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
6 following:

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The purpose of this act is to improve fish
8 and wildlife habitat, water quality, and water quantity for the benefit
9 of the public at large. Private property owners should be encouraged
10 to make voluntary improvements to their property as recommended by
11 governmental agencies without the penalty of paying higher property
12 taxes as a result of those improvements.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 84.36 RCW
14 to read as follows:

15 (1) All improvements to real and personal property that benefit
16 fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, or water quantity are exempt
17 from taxation if the improvements are included under a written
18 conservation plan approved by a conservation district. The
19 conservation districts shall cooperate with the federal natural
20 resource conservation service, other conservation districts, the
21 department of ecology, the department of fish and wildlife, and
22 nonprofit organizations to assist landowners by working with them to
23 obtain approved conservation plans so as to qualify for the exemption
24 provided for in this section. As provided in subsection (3) of this
25 section and section 3(2) of this act, a conservation district shall
26 certify that the best management practice benefits fish and wildlife
27 habitat, water quality, or water quantity. A habitat conservation plan
28 under the terms of the federal endangered species act shall not be
29 considered a conservation plan for purposes of this exemption.

30 (2) The exemption shall remain in effect only if improvements
31 identified in the written best management practices agreement are
32 maintained as originally approved or amended. Improvements made as a
33 requirement to mitigate for impacts to fish and wildlife habitat, water
34 quality, or water quantity are not eligible for exemption under this
35 section.

1 (3) A claim for exemption under this section may be filed annually
2 with the county assessor at any time during the year for exemption from
3 taxes levied for collection in the following year when submitted on
4 forms prescribed by the department of revenue developed in consultation
5 with the conservation district. The landowner shall certify each year
6 that the improvements for which exemption is sought are maintained as
7 originally approved or amended in the written conservation plan. The
8 claim must contain the certification by the conservation district that
9 the improvements for which exemption is sought were included under a
10 written conservation plan approved by the conservation district
11 including best management practices that benefit fish and wildlife
12 habitat, water quality, or water quantity.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 89.08 RCW
14 to read as follows:

15 (1) For the purpose of identifying property that may qualify for
16 the exemption provided under section 2 of this act, each conservation
17 district shall develop and maintain a list of best management practices
18 that qualify for the exemption.

19 (2) Each conservation district shall ensure that the appropriate
20 forms approved by the department of revenue are made available to
21 property owners who may qualify for the exemption under section 2 of
22 this act and shall certify claims for exemption as provided in section
23 2(3) of this act.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Section 2 of this act applies to taxes
25 levied for collection in 1998 and thereafter."

26 **2SHB 1557** - S COMM AMD
27 By Committee on Natural Resources & Parks

28 ADOPTED 4/11/97

29 On page 1, line 3 of the title, after "programs;" strike the
30 remainder of the title and insert "adding a new section to chapter
31 84.36 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 89.08 RCW; and creating new
32 sections."

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