
**Fisheries, Ecology & Parks
Committee**

SB 5011

Brief Description: Promoting wildlife viewing.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Winsley and Kohl-Welles.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development to host a conference on promoting wildlife viewing tourism.
- Directs the Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage wildlife programs in a manner that provides for wildlife viewing opportunities and supports wildlife viewing tourism without impairing the state's wildlife resources.

Hearing Date:

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) manages both the game and non-game wildlife species that exist in Washington. Non-game species are those wildlife species that are not hunted or trapped, and include grizzly bears, songbirds, butterflies, and frogs. The DFW maintains a wildlife diversity division that manages non-game wildlife species, and promotes what is often referred to as "watchable wildlife".

Each person purchasing or renewing a personalized Washington license plate is charged a fee of \$30. Revenue generated from this fee is dedicated to the preservation of non-game species, and the management of non-consumptive wildlife resources.

Summary of Bill:

Wildlife Viewing Conference

The DFW and the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development are directed to work with local governments and other interest groups to co-host a working conference on promoting wildlife viewing tourism during calendar year 2003. The conference's objective is to adopt a strategic plan and specific implementing actions to promote wildlife viewing tourism in Washington. The promoted tourism must provide sustainable economic development in the state's rural areas while maintaining the state's wildlife diversity.

Topics that the two affected departments are asked to address include:

- Strategies to increase revenue to communities with wildlife viewing resources;
- Strengthening the wildlife tourism elements of community partnerships;
- Providing leadership and services by state agencies to assist local communities with Wildlife viewing assessments and marketing;
- Developing proposals to increase state funding to local communities for the development of wildlife viewing opportunities; and
- Promoting wildlife viewing as an element of the Lewis and Clark bicentennial.

A summary of conference proceedings and proposals for legislative funding must be submitted to the Legislature by December 15, 2003.

On-Going Agency Directions

The DFW is directed to manage wildlife programs in a manner that provides for wildlife viewing opportunities and supports wildlife viewing tourism without impairing the state's wildlife resources.

Appropriation: The sum of \$45,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the DFW.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.