

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2387

As Reported by House Committee On:
Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks

Title: An act relating to exchange of state lands.

Brief Description: Allowing the department of natural resources to exchange certain state lands.

Sponsors: Representatives B. Sullivan and Chase; by request of Department of Natural Resources.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks: 1/12/06, 1/24/06 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Reenacts and makes permanent a provision allowing the Department of Natural Resources to exchange any state land and its timber for any land and proceeds of equal value.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives B. Sullivan, Chair; Upthegrove, Vice Chair; Buck, Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Chandler, Dickerson, Eickmeyer, Hunt, Kagi and Orcutt.

Staff: Amy Van Horn (786-7168).

Background:

The Department of Natural Resources (Department) has the authority to exchange state land and its timber for any land of equal value, with the approval of the Board of Natural Resources (Board). Before authorizing any exchange, the Board has to determine that the exchange is in the best interest of the existing land trust. The exchange cannot reduce the acreage of publicly-owned forest land. The land exchange also must be undertaken for one of the following reasons:

- to facilitate marketing of forest products;
- to consolidate and block-up state lands;
- to acquire lands having commercial recreational leasing potential;
- to acquire county-owned lands;

- to acquire urban property which has greater income potential or which can be more efficiently managed by the Department in exchange for state urban lands; or
- to acquire any other lands if the Board deems that the exchange is in the best interest of the existing trust.

During the 2003-05 biennium, the exchange could involve cash or services proceeds, up to 5 percent of the total exchange value of the land. Cash proceeds went into a resource management cost account to pay for administrative exchange expenses.

The provision allowing land to be exchanged for proceeds was only available to the Department during the 2003-05 biennium.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A provision that allows the Department to exchange any state land and its timber for any land and proceeds of equal value is reenacted and made permanent.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill makes technical corrections to the original bill. The substitute bill clarifies that exchanges for land and proceeds must meet the same criteria as exchanges for land alone.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Assessing the merits of land exchanges is costly to the Department. The ability to receive proceeds in addition to land saves the Department money and allows it to explore more options when considering potential exchanges. The proceeds from land exchanges represents a valuable management tool for the Department.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Bonnie Bunning, Department of Natural Resources; and Jim Zimmerman, Washington Cattlemen's Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.