SB 5966-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Finds that minimizing the impacts of global climate change, and restoring the health and resiliency of eastern Washington's forests, will require an accelerated approach to research coupled with an aggressive outreach and training program to motivate an appropriate response on the ground. Better data can be used to mobilize ground responses with enhanced site-specific treatments.

Finds that investments made today, both in research, training, and on-the-ground treatments, will prove more cost-effective, conserve more resources, and save more firefighting costs than the option of doing nothing.

Directs the college of forest resources at the University of Washington to: (1) Determine how treatments may be customized to site-specific conditions and to identify the most cost-effective treatments for reducing the risk of climate change and restoring forest health.

(2) Implement a program of technology transfer through a series of outreach activities, including trainer training, community group outreach, and the production of streaming video and other instructional materials concerning the risks of not responding to changing climatic conditions and the benefits of various treatment options.

(3) Develop methods by which state and federal agencies, private and community groups, and Indian tribes may directly assess the costs associated with different management options, including the cost of no action and how future costs can be avoided.

(4) Analyze the institutional cost accounting methods to demonstrate where savings are accumulated and where investments are most needed to restore forest health, and provide recommended alternatives that can improve the responsiveness of treatments, biomass collection, and infrastructure development investments aimed at reducing health risks as applied differently to federal, state, and private ownerships.

(5) Support other programs that assess the feasibility of converting large amounts of underutilized biomass into useful products and green energy by providing required analyses needed to efficiently collect and deliver biomass to green energy end users.

(6) Conduct a pilot project on a high hazard area of forest land that collects and analyzes remote sensing data, using tools such as light detection and ranging data, in order to rapidly track forest health changes and provide information for planning ground treatments and the design of a

comprehensive health tracking and treatment planning system for state monitoring.

Appropriates the sum of five hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, from the general fund to the University of Washington for the purposes of this act.

Appropriates the sum of five hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, from the general fund to the University of Washington for the purposes of this act.