

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1244

As of March 18, 2013

Title: An act relating to clarifying the department of natural resources' authority to enter into cooperative agreements.

Brief Description: Clarifying the department of natural resources' authority to enter into cooperative agreements.

Sponsors: House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Stanford, Orcutt, Ryu, Warnick, Maxwell, Blake, Upthegrove, Lytton, MacEwen, Van De Wege, Haigh and Tharinger; by request of Department of Natural Resources).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/06/13, 92-5.

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 3/14/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages nearly 3 million acres of uplands and over 2 million acres of aquatic lands. Although each of the individual land holdings are managed by DNR for a specific benefit or purpose, the concept of multiple-use management overlays all of the DNR-managed land.

The idea of multiple use means the provision of several uses simultaneously on the same tract of land. Outdoor recreation, in all of its various forms, is one of the multiple uses that DNR must provide when the recreation does not negatively impact the underlying land management purposes. Accordingly, many lands managed by DNR are used for hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, and ORV use.

In implementing the multiple-use mandates, DNR is authorized to plan, construct, and operate recreational areas, trails, and facilities by itself or in conjunction with public agencies. It is also authorized to plan, construct, and operate facilities for educational, scientific, or experimental purposes in conjunction with public or private agencies. DNR may enter into contracts, leases, or other agreements as necessary to implement this authority.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: DNR is provided specific authority to enter into agreements with certain non-state entities to assist DNR with implementing its multiple-use mandates, compliance with local ordinances, and fostering the use of aquatic lands. These agreements must be consistent with the land management obligations of DNR.

DNR may enter into these cooperative agreements with individuals and certain nonprofit organizations or other volunteer groups. These organizations include those registered under section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code, other nonprofit groups organized for the public benefit, and groups comprised of volunteers.

DNR may utilize the services of these groups to plan, construct, and operate recreational areas, trails, and facilities for educational, scientific, or experimental purposes or for other purposes that provide a benefit to lands managed by DNR. These other purposes may include the following:

- carrying out restoration and enhancement projects;
- enhancing watershed conditions; and
- providing vegetation management, including the removal of non-native vegetation.

DNR may receive gifts of personal property, services, or other items of value to help fund their various mandates and as consideration for entering into a cooperative agreement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill enables DNR to accomplish work on state lands while maintaining trust obligations at a time when finances are limited.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Randy Acker, DNR; Jack Field, WA Cattlemen's Assn.