

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5289

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources & Parks, February 14, 2013

Title: An act relating to the discover pass.

Brief Description: Concerning the discover pass.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove, Hatfield, Ranker, Hobbs, Sheldon and Schoesler.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 2/05/13, 2/14/13 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5289 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Pearson, Chair; Smith, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Hewitt, Kline, Parlette and Rolfes, Ranking Member.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Discover Pass Requirement Generally. In general, a Discover Pass or Day-Use Permit is required for any motor vehicle to park at or operate on recreation sites or lands managed by the State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), or Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). Specific areas where a pass is required include state parks, DNR managed uplands, and DFW wildlife areas and water access sites.

The statutory price of an annual Discover Pass is \$30, and a Day-Use permit is \$10.

DFW Vehicle Access Pass. The DFW Vehicle Access Pass (VAP) is issued free with certain hunting and fishing licenses and allows access to DFW-managed lands. The VAP is issued along with licenses including:

- trapping licenses and big and small game hunting licenses;
- combination, saltwater, and freshwater recreational fishing licenses; and
- watchable wildlife decals.

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 (Recommended Substitute): Operating on Certain Agency Roads. Operation of a motor vehicle on State Parks, DNR, and DFW managed roads that are not blocked by a gate is generally allowed without the need for a Discover Pass or Day-Use Permit. However, a pass is required to operate a motor vehicle in a state park beyond a staffed entrance booth or otherwise at the entrance to a state park where staff is present for purposes of pass compliance.

Authorizing Certain Discounted Sales. State Parks, DNR, and DFW may mutually agree to sell discounted Discover Passes or Day-Use Permits under certain circumstances. The discounts apply for purposes of bulk sales to retailers, agency license and permit bundling, and partnership opportunities to expand the visibility of the passes and recreation on state lands. The agencies must prioritize opportunities for discounted sales that result in net revenue gain.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute):

- Specifies that a Discover Pass or Day-Use Permit is required for operation of a motor vehicle in a state park beyond a staffed entrance booth or otherwise at an entrance where staff is present for purposes of pass compliance.
- Removes the discount for a Discover Pass purchased in the same transaction as certain hunting and fishing licenses. Instead, authorizes State Parks, DNR, and DFW to mutually agree to sell discounted Discover Passes or Day-Use Permits under certain circumstances.
- Makes technical changes.

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 on Original Bill: CON: This legislation represents a net loss in revenue. We cannot, with no exceptions, cut funding to parks.

OTHER: The agencies support the bill's effort to create equity amongst the various areas of Washington, and appreciate the sponsors' work on the bill language. The revenue stream impacts an ability to maintain park areas for the public. Clarification of language upon entry to parks regarding the Discover Pass may be necessary.

Persons Testifying: CON: Brian Yearout, WA Federation of State Employees.

OTHER: Mark Mauren, DNR; Greg Schirato, DFW; Daniel Farber, State Parks; James King, Citizens for Parks and Recreation.