

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6036

As of January 17, 2014

Title: An act relating to the Milwaukee Road corridor.

Brief Description: Concerning the Milwaukee Road corridor.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler and Mullet; by request of Parks and Recreation Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 1/16/14.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Richard Rodger (786-7401)

Background: The Milwaukee Road corridor consists of approximate 215 miles of railroad right-of-way that has been acquired by the state since 1981. In 1984 the state transferred approximately 25 miles of the right-of-way to the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission). The Commission manages the land as a recreational trail, now known as the Iron Horse State Park-John Wayne Pioneer Trail.

The Commission is prohibited from allowing motorized vehicles on the trail, except for emergency, law enforcement, or utility vehicles, or those vehicles necessary for maintenance or construction of the trail. The prohibition does not allow the Commission to issue permits for temporary linear access by local farmers, potential concession-related activities, and does not allow for other mobility devices as required under the Americans with Disability Act.

Since 1984 the Commission has acquired and manages four additional rail-trail properties that do not have any statutory restrictions. These properties are managed through a combination of master plans, agency licenses, permits and easements, and the Commission's existing policies and procedures.

Summary of Bill: The statutory provisions regarding the Commission's control and management of the Milwaukee Road corridor are repealed. The Commission will continue to manage the lands in the same manner as it does for its four other non-statutory, rail-trail properties.

Appropriation: None.

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.

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 supports local farmers and agriculture in the region. It acts as a fair deal for the public and the farmers seeking access to the trail. It creates consistency in the management of rail trails in state parks. This bill also brings state law in line with federal law regarding mobility devices under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Daniel Farber, WA State Parks; Josh Giuntoli, WA State Conservation Commission; Juelie Dalzell, Back Country Horsemen of WA; Ralph Munro, former Secretary of State.