

SHB 1353 - S COMM AMD
By Committee on Ways & Means

ADOPTED 04/06/2017

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the
4 Colockum elk herd in central Washington is the fifth largest elk herd
5 in the state and is currently managed for the state by the department
6 of fish and wildlife.

7 (2) The legislature further finds that the Colockum elk herd has
8 been the subject of a great deal of planning by the department of
9 fish and wildlife. The herd is subject to an existing herd management
10 plan that attempts to ensure a healthy, productive population, manage
11 the herd for a variety of purposes, and allow for a sustainable yield
12 within the population. Proper management of the Colockum elk herd is
13 important, since the herd is a resource that provides significant
14 recreational, aesthetic, cultural, and economic benefits to
15 recreationalists, local communities, and native Americans.

16 (3) The legislature further finds that the department of fish and
17 wildlife has studied the Colockum elk herd as recently as 2012. This
18 study led to a greater understanding of the challenges facing the
19 herd and resulted in recommendations as to management approaches to
20 address those challenges.

21 (4) The legislature further finds that despite the active
22 management and research by the department of fish and wildlife, there
23 are still undesirable consequences of the Colockum elk herd's size,
24 location, and behaviors. These consequences manifest as significant
25 agricultural crop damage within the herd's range and unacceptably
26 threatens to degrade highway safety levels on Interstate 90 and other
27 roadways within the range of the herd due to collisions between herd
28 members and vehicles.

29 (5) The legislature further finds that the unwanted consequences
30 of the current Colockum elk herd management protocol are not isolated
31 to the range of the Colockum herd. Other elk herds in the state are
32 also the subject of similar management outcomes.

1 (6) The legislature further finds that the department of fish and
2 wildlife should use the Colockum elk herd as the subject of a pilot
3 project that explores the benefits of more active management. The
4 department must work with the Yakama Nation to obtain input from the
5 tribe on the tribe's recommendations. The pilot project should be
6 limited in time and geography to ensure that overall herd health is
7 not disrupted; however, it should be robust enough to offer
8 scientifically rigorous results.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 77.36
10 RCW to read as follows:

11 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
12 specific purpose, the department must conduct an elk management pilot
13 project to explore the viability of various wildlife management
14 actions to reduce elk highway collisions and elk damage to private
15 crop lands. The pilot project must initially focus on achieving a
16 reduction in highway collisions on interstate highways, and crop
17 damage on properties, within the range of the Colockum herd. The
18 department must invite the Yakama Nation to participate in all
19 aspects of the project.

20 (2) The department must work with the department of
21 transportation to explore the viability of various wildlife
22 management actions to reduce elk highway collisions, initially
23 focusing on reducing traffic collisions along interstate highways
24 within the range of the herd.

25 (3) Direct wildlife management efforts must be employed in the
26 pilot project implemented under this section, including:

27 (a) Increased use of special depredation hunts and general
28 hunting opportunity within the Colockum herd. Total hunting
29 depredations under the pilot project must be limited to three hundred
30 elk per calendar year and these efforts must be designed and
31 implemented in a manner that does not conflict with the primary goals
32 of the current elk herd management plan for the Colockum herd;

33 (b) Feeding elk within the pilot project area by persons other
34 than the department is prohibited, although in no event may this
35 prohibition affect a person who sets out feed with the intent to feed
36 domestic animals or livestock, even though such feed may be
37 inadvertently consumed by elk or other wildlife; and

38 (c) The use of managed livestock grazing to attract elk away from
39 roads and private property.

1 (4) Consistent with RCW 43.01.036, the department and the
2 department of transportation must report the results of the pilot
3 project to the appropriate committees of the legislature by October
4 31, 2020. Along with results, the departments must report on how the
5 information gleaned from the pilot project will be used to manage the
6 Colockum elk herd and other similarly situated elk herds in the
7 state.

8 (5) This section expires July 1, 2021."

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9 On page 1, line 2 of the title, after "herd;" strike the
10 remainder of the title and insert "adding a new section to chapter
11 77.36 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date."

EFFECT: Makes the specific provisions of the act subject to
available appropriated funds.

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