

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6670

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks, February 6, 2020

Title: An act relating to encouraging access to state parks through cooperative programs with libraries.

Brief Description: Encouraging access to state parks through cooperative programs with libraries.

Sponsors: Senators Billig, Van De Wege, Salomon, Schoesler, Conway and Saldaña.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 2/04/20, 2/06/20 [DPS].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Requires the State Parks and Recreation Commission to provide two library discover passes, once each calendar year, to libraries that provide the pass on a loan basis to their patrons.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6670 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Van De Wege, Chair; Salomon, Vice Chair; Warnick, Ranking Member; Honeyford, McCoy, Rolfes and Short.

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) are charged with managing the public lands of the state. DFW owns or manages nearly one million acres of public land and 500 water access areas for fish and wildlife, habitat conservation, and wildlife-related recreation. DNR protects and manages 5.6 million acres of

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state-owned land. The state parks system includes 124 developed parks covering approximately 138,000 acres.

The Discover Pass is an annual pass that allows a vehicle to access state recreation lands owned by State Parks, DFW, or DNR. The cost of a Discover Pass is \$30. The annual Discover Pass is transferrable between two vehicles. The cost of a day-use permit, which serves the same function as the annual pass, but is only valid for one calendar day, is \$10. Revenue from both passes is initially deposited in the Recreation Access Pass Account, and is then distributed to the three agencies as follows:

- 84 percent to State Parks—State Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account;
- 8 percent to DFW—State Wildlife Account; and
- 8 percent to DNR—Park Land Trust Revolving Fund.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): State Parks must provide at least two library discover passes, once each calendar year, to any library that submits a request. State Parks is not required to replace any library discover pass that is lost or not returned. State Parks should prioritize the distribution of any additional library discover passes to libraries that also check out outdoor equipment, such as backpacks, binoculars, field guides, and other equipment that will enhance the patron's outdoor experience.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Requires State Parks to provide at least two library discover passes, once each calendar year, to any library that submits a request.
- Provides that State Parks should prioritize the distribution of any additional library discover passes to libraries that also check out outdoor equipment.
- Removes the appropriations section.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This bill will expand a pilot program for libraries to check out Discover Passes to the entire state. This bill will allow State Parks to provide 350 libraries throughout the state two passes for each library. Libraries are providing backpacks, binoculars, and nature guides, as well as Discover Passes, to be checked out to library patrons. This is a great way to extend the parks to a broader audience. The libraries that are participating in the pilot program are finding it very successful. Libraries want to find a way to help people have access to this important resource around the state.

OTHER: The check out Washington pilot program began last year in cooperation with the State Parks Foundation and the state library. The State Parks Foundation purchased about 40 passes and the libraries purchased backpacks, field guides, and binoculars. These guides are designed for library patrons to check out to help build appreciation for the outdoors and state lands. Libraries have expressed interest in participating in the program. Under this bill, State Parks would offer passes to all the libraries in the state. This bill will address social equity and foster an appreciation of the outdoors.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Andy Billig, Prime Sponsor; Carolyn Logue, Washington Library Association.

OTHER: Owen Rowe, Governmental Affairs Director, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.