

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**ESHB 1836**

**AS OF MARCH 26, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Adopting the model rivers act.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives Belcher, Beck, Scott, Jacobsen, Phillips, Ferguson, Rasmussen, Fraser, Brumsickle, Sprenkle, Rust, Spanel, Leonard, Holland, Dorn, Forner, Franklin, Roland, R. Johnson, R. Fisher, H. Myers, R. King, Wang, Winsley, Nelson, Brough and Anderson).

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Staff:** Ross Antipa (786-7413)

**Hearing Dates:** April 1, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

The Washington Scenic River System Act of 1977 established a management system that fosters the protection and preservation of the natural character of rivers. Since the act was established only one river system, the Skykomish River, has been designated as a scenic river.

Persons interested in the preservation of rivers desire protection of more river systems, while persons interested in private property rights desire less government regulation.

**SUMMARY:**

The state scenic river system statutes are repealed and a more far reaching program for river protection is created. The State Parks and Recreation Commission shall prepare a list of rivers for protected river designation, and the commission may develop river plans with local input which will specify allowable uses. State government agencies, local governments, and Indian tribes shall conform to the plan and exercise their powers and duties to assure conservation and enhancement of rivers. Multiple use rivers may be designated as model rivers and local governments may develop management plans with the assistance and approval of the Parks Commission. The Department of Ecology shall identify degraded rivers and inform the Parks Commission of water quality improvement programs.

There are provisions for local river councils, technical committees, technical assistance, maintenance of water rights, limitation of regulatory authority, and protection of private and public property rights.

The Legislature has final approval over designation of protected and model rivers.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** available