

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2594

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES,  
FEBRUARY 25, 1992

**Brief Description:** Applying the state wildlife and recreation lands management act.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives Fraser, Beck, Belcher, Brumsickle, Basich, Wynne and J. Kohl; by request of Interagency for Outdoor Recreation)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Metcalf, Chairman; Oke, Vice Chairman; Conner, Owen, Snyder, Sumner, and Sutherland.

**Staff:** Gary Wilburn (786-7453)

**Hearing Dates:** February 25, 1992

**BACKGROUND:**

The state of Washington owns significant acreage of fish and wildlife habitat, natural areas, parks and other recreation lands. Over the past decade, as the state's population has grown, the demands on these lands have increased dramatically.

The state's natural resources agencies are responsible for management and maintenance of these lands and associated facilities, not only to provide for current use, but to preserve the values associated with the lands that caused their acquisition initially. Historically, these agencies have received limited funding for operations and maintenance needs and have often deferred routine maintenance in order to operate within the limits of funding. Deferred maintenance can change a routine project into one requiring major work and significant capital expenditures.

The 1990 Legislature directed the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) to assess the operation and maintenance needs of state-owned habitat and natural areas, parks, and other state-owned recreational sites. In its report, the IAC found that there are significant shortfalls in operation and maintenance funding. A one-time catch-up expenditure of \$39.5 million is required to repair facilities and roads, and to replace equipment which has exceeded its planned life cycle. It also found there is a need to increase annual operation and maintenance funding by \$10.9 million to

prevent future backlogs from occurring, and to properly care for new lands acquired during the 1989-91 biennium.

**SUMMARY:**

It is the policy of the state of Washington to provide adequate and continuing funding for operation and maintenance needs of state-owned fish and wildlife habitat, natural areas, parks, and other recreation lands in order to protect the state's investment in such lands.

The state wildlife and recreation lands management account is established and is to be used exclusively for operation and maintenance needs associated with managing state-owned habitat, natural areas, and recreation lands. Legislative appropriation is required for expenditure from this account.

Monies appropriated from the account must be used for the following purposes and distributed according to the following percentages:

- Basic stewardship - not less than 30 percent;
- Improved or Developed Resources - not less than 20 percent;
- Human Use Management - not less than 15 percent; and,
- Administration - not more than 15 percent.

The individual agencies eligible for funding from this account are not required to meet this distribution; however, funding across agencies should meet these percentages during each biennium.

The agencies eligible to receive funds from the account include the Departments of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Natural Resources, and the State Parks and Recreation Commission. Monies appropriated from the account must be distributed to these agencies in the following manner:

- Parks and Recreation Commission - not less than 25 percent;
- Department of Natural Resources - not less than 25 percent;
- Department of Wildlife - not less than 25 percent; and,
- Department of Fisheries - no minimum specified.

A State Wildlife and Recreation Lands Management Task Force is created to develop recommendations regarding new long-term funding sources for the act. The task force must investigate opportunities for the use of future appropriations for habitat conservation and recreation in meeting major operations and maintenance funding needs. In addition, the task force must report on funding needed to assist counties with local service provided to protect state-owned lands. The task force is composed of seven voting members, appointed by the Governor, plus five nonvoting members representing the departments of Fisheries, Wildlife, Natural Resources, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Office of Financial Management. The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) and

Office of Financial Management (OFM) are directed to provide staff and technical assistance to the task force. A report and recommendations must be submitted to the Governor and committees of the Legislature by September 15, 1992.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:**

The Speaker of the House and President of the Senate shall appoint nonvoting legislative members to the task force.

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

An account is needed to define the types of operation and maintenance costs and agencies eligible from the account. The task force study will assist the Legislature in identifying a fund source for this purpose.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: Representative Karen Fraser, prime sponsor; Joe Latourrette, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition; Maggie Coon, The Nature Conservancy; Larry Fairleigh, IAC; Ralph Mackey, WEC; Nina Carter, State Parks