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**Agriculture & Natural  
Resources Committee**

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**HB 1336**

**Brief Description:** Concerning watershed planning grants and implementation lead agencies.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Linville, Kirby, Grant, Rockefeller, Quall, Hunt, Shabro, Jarrett, Delvin, Morris and Conway; by request of Governor Locke.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Provides for the coordination and oversight of watershed plans and authorizes a grant program for these activities.
- Requires the governments that implement watershed plans to provide for the periodic review of the plans and to consider recommending amendments to the plan.
- Provides for the adoption of such amendments.

**Hearing Date:** 1/29/03

**Staff:** Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

**Background:**

State law provides a process for conducting watershed planning through a locally initiated process. If planning is conducted under this process, it must include a component on current and future water availability and use. (RCW 90.82.070.) It may include components regarding instream flows, water quality, and habitat. (RCW 90.82.080, .090, and .100.)

Watershed planning may be conducted for one watershed or water resource inventory area (WRIA) or it may be conducted for multiple WRIA's. For this purpose, the local governments that initiate the process select or create a planning unit and designate a lead agency to provide staff support for the planning unit. (RCW 90.82.060.) Grants are available from the Department of Ecology for organizing a planning unit and establishing work schedules, for conducting assessments, studying storage opportunities, and setting instream flows, and for developing a watershed plan and making recommendations for actions to be taken. (RCW 90.82.040.) Once a plan is approved by the planning unit, it is

submitted to each of the counties with territory in the watershed or watersheds for which planning was conducted. After publishing notice and conducting at least one public hearing per county, the legislative authorities of these counties are to approve or disapprove of the plan in a joint session. If approved by the counties, the plan is an approved watershed plan. (RCW 90.82.130.)

**Summary of Bill:**

Implementation of Watershed Plans. The governments that formally accept obligations for implementing an adopted watershed plan may designate an implementation lead agency to provide coordination and oversight during the implementation of the plan. This agency may be the same as the lead agency for the development of the watershed plan or a different agency. Some of the activities that qualify for coordination and oversight are listed such as: seeking funding, tracking progress toward implementation milestones, and coordinating actions taken by different organizations. Some of the alternatives that implementing governments should consider during implementation are listed. (Section 3(1) & (2).)

Grants. State phase IV grants for watershed plan coordination and oversight are authorized. Implementation lead agencies may receive up to: \$100,000 for the first three years; and \$50,000/year for each of two extension years. If planning was conducted for more than one WRIA, an additional \$25,000/year/additional WRIA may be available for first 3 years; and an additional \$12,500/year/additional WRIA for the two extension years. A match of 10% to 25% is required for the funding. The match may include financial contributions or in-kind goods and services directly related to coordination and oversight functions. (Section 1(2).) Within one year of accepting funding, the implementing governments must complete a detailed implementation plan which must clearly define: coordination and oversight responsibilities, needed interlocal agreements, rules, and ordinances; funding mechanisms; and timelines. It must include coordination of salmon recovery projects with salmon recovery lead entities. Submittal of such a detailed plan is required for receiving funding for subsequent years. (Section 3(4).)

Revising Adopted Watershed Plans. The implementing governments, with the advice of the original planning unit or similar group, must provide for the periodic review of approved watershed plans and consider recommending amendments if needed. Any approval of amendments must be through county legislative authorities following the procedures for adopting the original watershed plan. (Section 3(3).)

Other. State agencies with obligations under an adopted watershed plan are to fulfill them by adopting policies, procedures, and agreements, not just rules. An organization voluntarily accepting an obligation under the plan must also take such actions. All implementing agencies and organizations should annually review implementation needs as to budget and staffing. (Section 2.)

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 27, 2003.

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