
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2893

Brief Description: Providing timelines for the forest riparian easement program.

Sponsors: Representatives Orcutt, Hatfield, Sump, Blake, Kristiansen and Pearson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Small Forest Landowner Office to determine the compensation to be offered to a landowner for an easement within 60 days of the landowner's application for the Forest Riparian Easement Program.

Hearing Date: 2/6/04

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Forest Riparian Easement (FRE) Program is a program managed by the Department of Natural Resources's (DNR) Small Forest Landowner Office to acquire fifty-year easements along riparian and other sensitive aquatic areas from small forest landowners that are willing to sell or donate easements to the state [RCW 76.13.120(1)]. The DNR is authorized to purchase easements from small forest landowners and hold the easements in the name of the state [RCW 76.13.120(3)]. The easements are restrictive only, and do not restrict the landowner's activities except as necessary to protect the riparian functions of the habitat for the term of the easement [RCW 76.13.120(5)].

The value of the easement is determined by the DNR based on the fair market value of the timber volume covered by the easement [RCW 76.13.120]. This calculation is made by the DNR after it conducts a timber cruise of 100 percent of the proposed easement [WAC 222-21-040]. The data gathered in the timber cruise is then applied to a stumpage value table to calculate the fair market value [WAC 222-21-045].

Summary of Bill:

The Small Forest Landowner Office is required to determine the compensation to be offered to a landowner for an easement within 60 days of the landowner's application for the FRE program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/26/04.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.