

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESB 5343

C 328 L 03
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Allowing WRIA 40 to be divided for the purposes of chapter 90.82 RCW.

Sponsors: Senators Parlette, Doumit, Mulliken, Hale and Deccio.

Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: Under Chapter 90.82 RCW, watershed planning is conducted according to the Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA). Each WRIA corresponds to a watershed or river basin.

Watershed planning is conducted in three phases: (1) initiation and organization of a planning unit; (2) water quantity assessment and future use strategy; and (3) development of a watershed plan and recommendations for action. The phase three efforts of the earliest formed planning units are expected to come to fruition, in the form of completed watershed plans submitted to county legislative authorities, in 2003.

RCW 90.82.130 provides that the legislative authority of each county with territory in a watershed must conduct at least one public hearing on a proposed watershed plan, after which they must convene in a joint session to consider the plan. By majority vote, the members of each affected county can approve or reject, but not amend, the plan. Once adopted, watershed plan obligations are binding on county governments. Counties must also adopt implementing ordinances, as necessary, setting out how binding obligations within the plan will be implemented.

Upon application, the Department of Ecology (DOE) is authorized to provide up to \$50,000 for phase one in single WRIA planning units, and up to \$75,000 in multi-WRIA units; up to \$200,000 for phase two; and up to \$250,000 for phase three.

Summary: WRIA 40 is split into two separate WRIA planning segments, 40a and 40b. Proposed WRIA 40a contains the Stemilt and Squilchuck watershed subbasins. WRIA 40b extends south of WRIA 40a and borders the western edge of the Columbia River through Kittitas, Yakima, and Benton counties.

WRIA 40a is eligible for one-fourth of the funding available for a single WRIA. 40b is eligible for the remaining three-fourths of the funding available for a single WRIA.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0	
House	86	2	(House amended)
Senate	47	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 27, 2003