

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6707

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Energy & Water, February 6, 2004

**Title:** An act relating to creating a public lands advisory commission for noxious weed management.

**Brief Description:** Creating a public lands advisory commission for noxious weed management.

**Sponsors:** Senators Morton, Winsley, Fraser and Rasmussen.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Energy & Water: 2/6/04 [DP-WM].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY & WATER

**Majority Report:** Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Fraser, Hale, Hargrove and Honeyford.

**Staff:** Evan Sheffels (786-7486)

**Background:** Numerous state and local agencies address weed control and prevention on public lands in Washington, including the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Ecology, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Transportation, the Conservation Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the State Weed Board, and county weed boards and weed districts.

In 1994 the federal government created the Federal Intra-Agency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds (FICMNEW). FICMNEW, which gathers 16 federal agencies to collaborate on noxious weed management and regulatory responsibility, has resulted in an implementation plan for a national early warning and rapid response system for invasive plants.

**Summary of Bill:** A Public Lands Advisory Commission for Noxious Weed Management is created to bring state agencies together with stakeholders to address noxious weed problems on public lands. The commission is chaired by the Department of Agriculture and is responsible for ensuring, by the use of measurable performance goals, that state agency noxious weed control activities are coordinated in a cost-efficient and effective manner.

A statewide plan for noxious weed management on public lands must be developed by the commission within 24 months of the commission's creation. The plan must detail performance goals and objectives for successful intra-agency cooperation in noxious weed management to guide state agencies in carrying out weed prevention and control duties. The management plan must be updated biennially. The commission must assess the management plan's effectiveness and report the findings to the Legislature at least once every five years.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** Okanogan County has less than 20 percent private land ownership. As state agency budgets are cut, weed problems get worse. This brings the agency to the table and requires good planning on the ground. It may be expected that the Department of Agriculture would automatically put the State Weed Board in charge here, but they should be specifically listed. The State Parks program is ready to collaborate and work together if passed. DNR fully supports the concept. Department of Agriculture supports early detection and rapid response, but has serious concern about implementation costs. Some of this is already being done through State Weed Board processes.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Sheilah Kennedy, Okanogan County Weed Board (pro); Mary Toohey, WSDA (neutral); Ray Fann, Steve McGonigal, State Noxious Weed Control Board; Fred Romero, State Parks (neutral); Jim King, Citizen of Parks and Research (pro).