
SENATE BILL 6149

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By Senators Doumit and Morton

Read first time 01/13/2004. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water.

1 AN ACT Relating to small scale prospecting and mining; amending RCW
2 79.14.315; adding a new section to chapter 79.90 RCW; and creating a
3 new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The departments of fish and wildlife,
6 natural resources, and ecology shall work cooperatively with the small
7 scale mining community to support educational meetings and
8 demonstrations to encourage mining activities.

9 The departments shall work with the small scale mining community to
10 study and simplify or completely deregulate gold panning and shall
11 report on this process to the 2005 legislature with legislative
12 recommendations, if needed. The departments shall survey other states'
13 regulation of gold panning as part of the study.

14 **Sec. 2.** RCW 79.14.315 and 1987 c 20 s 15 are each amended to read
15 as follows:

16 (1) Any person may engage in small scale prospecting and mining, as
17 that term is defined in RCW 77.55.270, on aquatic lands where both the

1 surface and mineral rights are owned by the state without that person
2 first obtaining a permit, lease, license, or other form of permission
3 from the department, and without being charged a rent or fee.

4 (2) The department may issue permits for recreational mineral
5 prospecting in designated areas containing noneconomic mineral
6 deposits. The term of a permit shall not exceed one year. Designated
7 areas, equipment allowed, methods of prospecting, as well as other
8 appropriate permit conditions, shall be set in rules adopted by the
9 department. Fees shall be set by the board of natural resources.

10 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 79.90 RCW
11 to read as follows:

12 The department shall allow small scale prospecting and mining, as
13 that term is defined in RCW 77.55.270, on aquatic lands where both the
14 surface and mineral rights are owned by the state. A person does not
15 have to first obtain a permit, lease, license, or other form of
16 permission from the department, and no rent or fee may be charged.

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