

6342

Sponsor(s): Senators Oke, Jacobsen, Parlette, Swecker, Finkbeiner, Winsley, Spanel, Berkey, Esser, Regala, Kline, T. Sheldon, Fraser, Doumit, Rasmussen, Haugen and Eide

Brief Description: Recognizing important bird areas.

SB 6342 - DIGEST

(SEE ALSO PROPOSED 1ST SUB)

Declares that it is the goal of the legislature to promote: Partnerships with volunteers; rural economic development; nature tourism; and conservation of biodiversity by encouraging partnerships between state government agencies, volunteers, and nonprofit organizations to designate and conserve natural assets that attract nature tourists and bird watchers to Washington's rural areas.

Recognizes the scientific work by Audubon Washington to use internationally recognized scientific criteria and protocols to identify, conserve, and monitor areas of the state that are important for migrating and resident birds. Scientists, ornithologists, and qualified volunteers contribute to Audubon Washington's important bird area program by identifying important bird areas, then developing mutually agreed-upon bird conservation plans and monitoring plans in cooperation with public land managers and private landowners.

Declares an intent to have Washington state participate in the recognition portion of the important bird area program by directing the natural heritage program at the department of natural resources to officially recognize important bird areas as they are identified by Audubon Washington.

Declares that Audubon Washington must develop and maintain a map showing all lands designated as important bird areas and forward this information to the program. The program must make it available to the general public or other entities interested in important bird areas.

Directs Audubon Washington to send important bird area maps to the departments of fish and wildlife, agriculture, the parks and recreation commission, and other state agencies managing state-owned lands. Audubon Washington must also make the map available to the general public for rural economic development purposes, promoting local nature tourism, or scientific inventory, research, and reference purposes.