

ESSB 6348 - H COMM AMD

By Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that interwatershed
4 water rights transfers pose a threat to the economic and social welfare
5 of rural communities. Because it is increasingly difficult for water
6 users to acquire new water rights, transfers are indeed a valuable and
7 necessary water management tool. However, the permanent transfer of
8 water rights away from Washington's rural communities has serious
9 economic and social impacts. Although a rural water rights holder
10 receives compensation for transferring water rights outside of a
11 watershed, third parties such as laborers and supporting businesses
12 suffer. The loss of water rights also reduces land use options and
13 property values, resulting in a shrinking revenue base for rural local
14 governments. Finally, the loss of water rights can permanently change
15 the character of agricultural land and the surrounding rural community.
16 Therefore, the legislature intends to protect rural communities from
17 the permanent and harmful impacts of interwatershed water rights
18 transfers.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The department of ecology must work
20 diligently with appropriate legislators, stakeholders, representatives
21 of appropriate tribal interests, and local governments within water
22 resource inventory areas 43, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59,
23 60, 61, and 62 to assess the impacts of interwatershed transfers on
24 rural communities and explore existing and potential new water sources,
25 including snowpack, that may be utilized in order to protect the
26 economic and social welfare of rural communities. The department of
27 ecology must submit a report, including detailed legislative and policy
28 recommendations, to the appropriate committees of the legislature by

1 November 1, 2008."

2 Correct the title.

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