
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 1146

Brief Description: Increasing the amount of money available to pay wildlife damage claims.

Sponsors: Representatives B. Sullivan, Kretz, Pettigrew, Hinkle, Linville, Kristiansen, Blake, Takko, Newhouse, Warnick, Hailey, Grant, Armstrong, Kessler, Kenney, Haigh, Moeller and McCune.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the amount of money the Department of Fish and Wildlife is authorized to use from the General Fund to reimburse the owners of commercial crops that have suffered losses due to deer or elk damage from \$30,000 to \$150,000.
- Increases the amount of money the Department of Fish and Wildlife is authorized to use from the Wildlife Account to reimburse the owners of commercial crops that have suffered losses due to deer or elk damage from \$120,000 to \$150,000.

Hearing Date: 1/22/07

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The owners of a commercial agricultural or horticultural crop may apply to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for payment of damages caused by the browsing of wild deer or elk. Payments are limited to the value of the crop, but are generally capped at \$10,000 per claim.

The WDFW is limited to only spending \$30,000 per year from the General Fund on wildlife damage claims. In addition, the WDFW may spend up to \$120,000 per year from the Wildlife Account for the same purpose [RCW 77.36.070 & 080]. The \$30,000 General Fund maximum may be raised if the Legislature declares an emergency due to unusual natural conditions that cause damage to commercially raised crops. If an emergency is declared, the Department may use

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any additional funding appropriated to reimburse farmers for damage caused to crops by deer or elk.

Summary of Bill:

The amount of money the WDFW is authorized to use from the General Fund to reimburse the owners of commercial crops that have suffered losses due to deer or elk damage is increased from \$30,000 to \$150,000. In addition, the amount of money in the Wildlife Account that the WDFW is authorized to use for the same purposes is increased from \$120,000 to \$150,000.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.