
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2471

Brief Description: Modifying the responsibilities of the Washington geological survey.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, VanDeWege, McCoy and Kenney; by request of Department of Natural Resources.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Clarifies the objectives of the Department of Natural Resources' state geological survey.

Hearing Date: 1/16/08

Staff: Colleen Kerr (786-7168).

Background:

Washington requires the Commissioner of Public Lands to appoint a state geologist to conduct a geological survey of the state. The geological survey must include the following information:

- an examination of the state's mineral products, including gold, copper, lead, and iron ores, as well as building stones, clays, and coal;
- an examination and classification of soils and a study of their adaptability to particular crops;
- an investigation and report on water supplies, artesian wells, and the water power of the state, with reference to their application for irrigation and other purposes;
- an examination and report on the occurrence of different road-building materials;
- an examination of the physical features of the state with reference to their practical bearing for state employment;
- special geological and economic maps to illustrate the resources of the state; and
- special reports with illustrations and maps that reflect the geology and natural resources of the state

The survey's reports are printed at the direction of the state geologist. Any revenue received from the sale of the reports are paid into the state treasury.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

The survey will be known as the Washington Geological Survey. It shall serve as a bureau of information and an advisory service concerning geological resources and hazards. This service must include maintenance of a library; a public education program; and a geological database to review functions, provide expert advice to federal state and local government agencies, act as a clearinghouse of posthazard event earth science investigations, and provide technical assistance to local governments on geological hazards, mineral resources, and aggregate mining and reclamation during preparation and amendment of comprehensive plans and land use regulations.

The survey shall collect geotechnical and related reports prepared and submitted by state and local permit applicants to develop a statewide electronic database of subsurface geotechnical data. Copies of such reports must be submitted to the survey by the permit applicant at the time of permit application.

The survey shall preserve information collected in this section and nonconfidential data collected under 78.44 and 78.52 RCW, in a publicly accessible electronic data system that displays the surface and subsurface geological data using an interactive map interface for two and three-dimensional display. The survey shall also establish and maintain a storage and examination facility for physical geological samples of long-term value to the state.

Reports produced by the survey shall be distributed under the direction of the state geologist as needed by the state and science. The primary means of distribution shall be through a publicly accessible electronic data system with digital maps, but may be printed as directed by the state geologist.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/7/2008.

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