

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6229

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation, February 06, 2008

Title: An act relating to freshwater lakes management.

Brief Description: Requiring a comprehensive lakes management strategic plan.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Kline and Franklin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 1/24/08, 2/6/08 [DPS-WM, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6229 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Hatfield, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Hargrove, Rockefeller, Spanel and Swecker.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Stevens.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Washington contains an estimated 7,800 lakes, many of which formed due to glacial movement between 10,000 and 20,000 years ago.

Numerous entities play a role in the management of lakes in Washington including, among others: private landowners; local governments through natural resources, health, and land use planning functions; the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as manager of state-owned aquatic lands; the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) as manager of the state's fish and wildlife and through issuance of hydraulic project approvals; and the Department of Ecology (DOE) through the Shoreline Management Act and its water quality program.

Several state programs exist that provide funding for water quality related activities, including lake management. These programs include: the centennial clean water program, which funds water pollution control facilities and activities; the freshwater aquatic weeds management program, which provides funding for technical assistance, public education and grants to help control aquatic weeds; and the freshwater aquatic algae control program, which provides grants for the treatment of lakes facing harmful algal blooms.

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.

By statute, DOE must appoint an advisory committee to oversee the freshwater aquatic weeds management program. Representatives must include recreational boaters, lake residents, local governments, scientific specialists, and pesticides professionals.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): DOE must prepare a comprehensive lakes management strategic plan (strategic plan). The strategic plan must serve primarily to guide state programs that provide technical and financial assistance to private and other public entities.

DOE must develop the plan in partnership with a newly created lakes management advisory committee (advisory committee). Membership on the advisory committee must include representation from state and local governments, tribal and federal agencies, a statewide association of lakes management interests, lake residents and users, and at least one scientist with lakes health expertise.

By December 1, 2008, DOE and the advisory committee must complete a strategic plan element regarding lakes-related funding.

Additionally, by December 1, 2009, DOE and the advisory committee must complete a strategic plan element regarding lakes protection and restoration, including through monitoring, research, and education and technical assistance. DOE and the advisory committee must also make recommendations on a dedicated funding source for lakes restoration and protection. These recommendations must be based on a goal of providing lakes with no less than 10 percent of state financial assistance to address water pollution.

In addition to its role developing the strategic plan, the advisory committee oversees the freshwater aquatic weeds management program. When overseeing of the freshwater aquatic weeds management program, the advisory committee adds recreational boaters and pesticides professionals to its membership.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Includes the Puget Sound Partnership on the advisory committee, and directs the Partnership to consider the strategic plan recommendations. Removes the requirement that the strategic plan provide guidance regarding lake management funding through the toxics control accounts. Directs DOE to inform the advisory committee on expenditures from the toxics control accounts related to lakes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: Lake owners and all Washingtonians would benefit from a look at lake funding and policy coordination. There is no current comprehensive approach to managing lakes in Washington. Lakes prove tremendous benefits, including scenery, recreation, and ecological services.

OTHER: Although coordinated policy regarding lakes health is a good idea, the state must be cautious about earmarking funds, including the toxics accounts, for one specific problem. Currently, much water quality money is awarded by the state through application processes in which broad categories of projects compete.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jonathan Frodge, King County Department of Natural Resources; Wendy Brown, DNR; Bijay Adams, Libery Lake Sewer and Water District; Beth Cullen, Beth Cocchiaiella, Washington State Lakes Protection Association; Ron Cocchiaiella, Liberty Lake Property Association.

OTHER: Greg Hanon, Western States Petroleum Association; Bruce Wishart, People for Puget Sound; Melodie Selby, DOE.