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**Community Development, Housing &  
Tribal Affairs Committee**

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**HB 1935**

**Brief Description:** Concerning state parks and recreation.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Haler, Hudgins, Goodman, Angel, Wilcox, Alexander, Seaquist, Appleton, Ryu, Tarleton, Zeiger, Moscoso and Bergquist.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the State Treasurer to transfer from the General Fund to the Recreation Access Pass Account an amount equal to the sales of Discover Passes and day-use permits for the preceding year.
- Requires the State Treasurer to transfer from the General Fund to the State Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account an amount equal to the total fees waived under the Park Passes program during the preceding year.
- Determines that vehicles displaying a State Parks special license plate are not required to display the Discover Pass or day-use permit within a state park.

**Hearing Date:** 2/20/13

**Staff:** Sean Flynn (786-7124).

**Background:**

The State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) owns and manages a diverse system of parks with many different types of facilities and historic buildings and a variety of recreation programs. The State Parks operates 116 open and developed parks and owns other undeveloped state lands.

The State Parks is made up of a seven member commission appointed by the governor. Members serve a six year term, expiring on December 31 of even-numbered years.

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*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.*

### State Parks Revenues.

The State Parks receives revenue from a variety of sources, including user fees and donations. The State Parks sets rates and charges camping fees in park campgrounds. Under the park passes program, the State Parks issues different passes for specially designated groups that qualify for discounts or exemptions from park fees. The State Parks also receives funds from voluntary donations made by vehicle owners at the time license fees are collected.

The Discover Pass and day-use permits allow motor vehicle access to recreation areas on state lands managed by the State Parks, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). A Discover Pass costs \$30 per year. A day-use permit costs \$10 per day. Monetary penalties may be assessed for failure to comply with the Discover Pass and day-use permit requirements.

### State Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account.

All receipts from user fees, concessions, leases and donation and other park activities is deposited in to the State Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account (RS Account), created in the State Treasury. Expenditures from the RS Account may be used for park operations, park facility development and maintenance, enhancing park stewardship and other park purposes. Expenditures may only be made after appropriation from the Legislature.

### Recreation Access Pass Account.

All money received from the sale of the Discover Pass and day-use permits are deposited into the Recreation Access Pass Account (RAP Account). The first \$71 million in revenue is distributed on a proportional basis among the State Parks (84 percent), the DNR (8 percent), and the DFW (8 percent). Revenues above \$71 million are distributed equally among those agencies.

The State Parks distribution share of the RAP Account is deposited into the RS Account. The proceeds from the RAP Account must be used for the purposes of operating and maintaining state parks.

### State Parks Special License Plates.

The Department of Licensing issues a special license plate recognizing state parks as a premier destination of uncommon quality that preserves significant natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources. The initial fee for a State Parks special license plate is \$40, and \$30 for renewal. After administrative costs are deducted, all revenue from the sale of the special plates is deposited into the State Parks Education and Enhancement Account. Expenditures from this account may only be used to provide public educational opportunities and enhancement of state parks.

### **Summary of Bill:**

#### Transfer to Recreation Access Pass Account.

Each year, the State Treasurer shall transfer from the General Fund to the RAP Account an amount equal to the sales of Discover Passes and day-use permits for the immediately preceding year. The matching funds must be distributed in the same manner and proportions as Discover Pass and day-use permit sales revenue is distributed in the RAP Account.

Transfer to the State Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account.

Each year, the State Treasurer shall transfer from the general fund to the RS Account an amount equal to the total fees waived under the Park Passes program during the immediately preceding year.

State Parks License Plate.

The Discover Pass or day-use permit is not required for motor vehicle access in a state park for persons who display a State Parks special license plate.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 18, 2013.

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