

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5906

As of April 16, 2013

Title: An act relating to maintaining access to state recreational lands managed by the department of natural resources.

Brief Description: Maintaining access to state recreational lands managed by the department of natural resources.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, Hill, Holmquist Newbry, Hargrove, Becker, Sheldon, Bailey, Eide, Pearson, Brown, Baumgartner, Harper, Braun, Hasegawa, Rivers, Nelson, Schoesler, Shin, Keiser, Ericksen, Billig, Parlette, Conway, Honeyford and Fraser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 4/16/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Sherry McNamara (786-7402)

Background: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages approximately 3 million acres of lands to benefit public institutions, counties, as well as a number of preserves and conservation areas. In addition, DNR is generally responsible for the enforcement of the state's natural resources laws, monitoring recreational activities on DNR land, and monitoring criminal activity as it relates to DNR land.

Summary of Bill: Appropriates \$1 million to DNR to increase the number of officers protecting the state's natural resources and ensure safe recreation on state lands, in order to stop the need for recreational area closures.

Appropriation: \$1 million.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill is about our state's public lands and the use of those lands by our citizens. People who want to hunt, fish, hike, or ride their ORVs are finding that our public lands are being closed. Currently, DNR has nine law enforcement officers and one chief for the state's 5.6 million acres of public land; with only two officers to cover all of eastern Washington. The resources provided in this bill will help DNR to ensure that recreation on DNR-managed lands will be safe, enjoyable, and accessible for our children and our grandchildren. Funding is critical for keeping DNR-managed lands open and safe. There have been approximately 2000 incidents reported on our public lands for our law enforcement officers to handle. DNR leveraged other resources to help with enforcement, including other local law enforcement agencies, as well as Fish and Wildlife officers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Roach, prime sponsor; Deb Essman, Kittitas Field and Stream; Mark Mauren, Larry Raedel, DNR; Arthur West, citizen.