

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2331

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to the expiration date of the invasive species council and account.

Brief Description: Concerning the expiration date of the invasive species council and account.

Sponsors: Representatives Chandler, Stanford, Blake, Kretz, Wilcox, Walkinshaw, Haler, Buys and Tharinger; by request of Recreation and Conservation Office.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/14/16, 1/20/16 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the expiration date of the Washington State Invasive Species Council from June 30, 2017, to June 30, 2022.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Walkinshaw, Vice Chair; Buys, Ranking Minority Member; Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Hurst, Lytton, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Stanford and Van De Wege.

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

Washington State Invasive Species Council.

The Washington State Invasive Species Council (Council) was established in 2006 to facilitate collaboration, coordination, and development of a statewide plan of action to combat harmful invasive species, and was set to expire in 2011. In 2011 the Council was extended to 2017. "Invasive species" means non-native organisms that cause economic or environmental harm and are capable of spreading to new areas of the state.

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.

The Council is tasked with developing and periodically updating a Statewide Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) to address invasive species. The Strategic Plan was first published in 2008 and most recently updated in 2015. Each year the Council must submit a report to the Governor and relevant policy committees of the Legislature outlining an evaluation of progress made in the preceding year to implement the Strategic Plan.

The state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) provides administrative support to the Council. Council membership must include: representatives from the state departments of Agriculture, Fish and Wildlife, Ecology, Natural Resources, and Transportation; a representative from the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board; and two representatives of county government. The Council must also invite one representative each from the United States (U.S.) Department of Agriculture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Coast Guard to serve in a nonvoting capacity.

Washington State Invasive Species Council Account.

The Washington State Invasive Species Council Account (Account) was created in 2006 and extended in 2011. All expenditures from the Account must be used to carry out the purposes of the Council, and must be directed by the Council and approved by the Director of the RCO.

Summary of Bill:

The expiration date for the Washington Invasive Species Council and the Invasive Species Council Account is changed from June 30, 2017, to June 30, 2022.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Controlling invasive species cannot be done retroactively. Most invasive species that have come into the state are still here. The Washington State Invasive Species Council (Council) has been very effective in accomplishing its mission, but there are still issues to address. The Council should be extended past 2017 to address these issues, but it is still important to provide an expiration date. Control of invasive species infestations is very costly to the state, and so is managing the damage they cause. With the continued efforts of the Council, more costs can be avoided. Before the creation of the Council, management of invasive species in Washington was done in a piecemeal fashion. The collaborative approach

to addressing the prevention and control of invasive species fostered by the Council should continue. The Council has an ambitious set of goals, and has accomplished a great deal on a limited budget. The Council helped to change invasive species response from reactive to proactive. Invasive species are not limited by state borders. A collaborative approach has been effective thus far in preventing zebra and quagga mussels from reaching the Pacific Northwest. Membership should be expanded to include a tribal representative from eastern Washington and a representative of an investor-owned utility.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Chandler, prime sponsor; Raquel Crosier, Washington State Invasive Species Council; Lizabeth Seebacher, Pacific Northwest Invasive Plant Council; Joe Maroney, Kalispel Tribe of Indians; Mike Schwisow, Washington State Water Resources Association; Peter Schrapen, Northwest Marine Trade Association; Bill Tweit, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Steve Robinson, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians; Scott Richards, The Nature Conservancy; Kendall Farley, Northwest Power and Conservation Council; Eli Levitt, Department of Ecology; Nancy Atwood, Puget Sound Energy; and Christine Brewer, Avista.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.