

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6296

As Reported by House Committee On: Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to extending the expiration date of the habitat and recreation lands coordinating group.

Brief Description: Extending the expiration date of the habitat and recreation lands coordinating group.

Sponsors: Senators Parlette, Ranker and Fraser; by request of Recreation and Conservation Office.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/18/16, 2/23/16 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the expiration date of the Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group from July 31, 2017, to July 31, 2027.

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; Hurst, Lytton, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Schmick, Stanford and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group (Lands Group) is a statutorily created work group assigned with the task of annually reporting to the Office of Financial Management on issues relating to state habitat and recreation land purchases and disposals.

The Lands Group is required to include the participation of staff from the various state agencies involved on some level with public land acquisition and management. In addition,

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representatives of appropriate stakeholder groups may be invited to participate by the Director of the Recreational and Conservation Office (RCO). Currently the Lands Group has 16 members representing various state agencies, local governments, nonprofit organizations, industry trade groups, and legislative districts.

The Lands Group has been assigned specific statutory duties. These include:

- reviewing agency land acquisition and disposal plans to help ensure statewide coordination;
- producing a forecast of land acquisition and disposal plans;
- convening an annual forum for agencies to coordinate near-term acquisition and disposal plans;
- developing recommendations for geographic information systems mapping and acquisition and disposal recordkeeping; and
- developing an approach for monitoring the success of acquisitions.

The Lands Group was created in 2007 and was set to expire in 2012. However, before the original expiration date arrived, the Legislature extended its existence until July 31, 2017. During the Land Group's 2012 renewal, the Legislature declared that state agency participation on the Lands Group must be funded within existing resources.

Summary of Bill:

The expiration date of the Lands Group is extended from July 31, 2017, to July 31, 2027.

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) The Lands Group, one of many groups housed in the RCO, brings transparency and openness to state land acquisition programs. The Lands Group is respected by local governments and other stakeholders. It produces a forecast of land acquisition in advance of each budget cycle and a monitoring report after acquisitions have been completed. The Lands Group also provides other key accountability tools. The recovery of the Puget Sound, as envisioned by the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda, includes land acquisitions as a key component and the Lands Group coordinates the various Puget Sound recovery stakeholders in the process.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Kaleen Cottingham, Recreation and Conservation Office; and Jeff Parsons, Puget Sound Partnership.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.