

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5320

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As of February 25, 2015

**Title:** An act relating to the administrative rate the recreation and conservation funding board may retain to administer the grant programs established in chapter 79A.15 RCW

**Brief Description:** Concerning the administrative rate the recreation and conservation funding board may retain to administer the grant programs established in chapter 79A.15 RCW.

**Sponsors:** Senators Honeyford, Keiser, Ranker, Warnick and Parlette; by request of Recreation and Conservation Office.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources & Parks: 2/04/15, 2/11/15 [DP-WM].  
Ways & Means: 2/24/15.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

**Majority Report:** Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Pearson, Chair; Dangel, Vice Chair; Hatfield, Ranking Minority Member; Chase, Hewitt, McAuliffe and Warnick.

**Staff:** Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Staff:** Sherry McNamara (786-7402)

**Background:** Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). The RCO administers a number of boards, and associated grant and policy programs, relating to natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation. These programs include the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB); the Salmon Recovery Funding Board; the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office; the Invasive Species Council; as well as the Habitat and Recreational Land Coordinating Group.

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). The WWRP provides funds for the acquisition and development of land for outdoor recreation, habitat conservation, and farmland preservation. Eligible recipients include state agencies, local governments, tribes,

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and nonprofit entities. The program includes a number of funding categories, each of which receive a specified percentage of funds appropriated by the Legislature.

The statute provides rulemaking and grant review and prioritization authority to the RCFB, which is administrated by the RCO.

WWRP Administrative Rate. The RCFB may apply up to 3 percent of funds appropriated in the capital budget for the WWRP for RCO's administrative expenses in operating the program.

**Summary of Bill:** The statutory method for funding the administration of the WWRP is shifted from up to 3 percent of appropriations to an amount based on actual administrative costs averaged over the previous five biennia as a percentage of new WWRP appropriations.

Each biennium the RCFB must submit the result of this administrative cost calculation along with the prioritized WWRP project lists. Over the previous five biennia, the RCO calculates its average administrative costs as a percentage of new WWRP appropriations at 4.3 percent.

**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 (Natural Resources & Parks):** PRO: The RCO administers the WWRP, acquiring and developing lands for outdoor recreation and conservation, and currently receives 3 percent of appropriations to cover administrative costs. However, a flat funding structure is not enough to cover staffing, the grant management program, and the additional costs that come from increasing demands for public disclosure of information, cultural resources assessments, and instant access to information.

**Persons Testifying (Natural Resources & Parks):** PRO: Kaleen Cottingham, RCO.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means):** PRO: WWRP law sets the administrative rate at 3 percent for the program. Since that time a number of things have been added to the agency's workload that require additional funding. Because of this, we are asking for an update to reflect the real costs for administering WWRP. With this increase in the administrative rate the agency can increase the monitoring of projects, among other items. Currently the agency's administrative rates range from 3 to 10 percent. WWRP is the lowest rate. We don't want the other grant programs to subsidize WWRP.

**Persons Testifying (Ways & Means):** PRO: Kaleen Cottingham, RCO.