
HOUSE BILL 1654

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session

By Representatives Peterson, Lytton, Fitzgibbon, Blake, and Walkinshaw

Read first time 01/26/15. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to controlling noxious weeds while still
2 supporting pollen-rich forage plant communities for honey bees;
3 amending RCW 17.10.145; adding a new section to chapter 43.220 RCW;
4 creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The state noxious weed control board
7 shall conduct a pilot project that evaluates the advantages of
8 purposefully replacing pollen-rich noxious weeds, such as knapweed
9 and thistle, which are productive forage plants for honey bees, with
10 native forage plants that can produce similar levels of pollen to
11 support honey bee populations. The pilot project must be developed to
12 maximize the dual public benefits of reducing noxious weeds in
13 Washington and maintaining access to pollen-rich plants for honey
14 bees and apiarists.

15 (2) In implementing the pilot project, the state noxious weed
16 control board must coordinate with willing landowners and provide
17 plant starts, seed packs, and other goods or services necessary to
18 replace noxious weeds with native plants. Priority must be given to
19 private landowners located in areas where the dual benefits can be
20 maximized. However, public landowners or managers may also be
21 considered for participation.

1 (3) The implementation details of the pilot project required by
2 this section are at the sole discretion of the state noxious weed
3 control board, including the selection of pilot project partners and
4 participants.

5 (4) The state noxious weed control board must issue a report to
6 the legislature, consistent with RCW 43.01.036, that outlines the
7 successes and challenges of the pilot project. This report must be
8 presented by October 31, 2017, and include:

9 (a) Assessments of the acceptance level by landowners and the
10 apiary industry;

11 (b) An analysis of the costs and benefits of using plant
12 replacement as a strategy for satisfying the two public benefits of
13 the pilot project;

14 (c) Recommendations for incentives for landowners to choose bee-
15 friendly plant replacement over simple weed elimination; and

16 (d) Any recommendations for extending the pilot project or using
17 the lessons learned as part of Washington's overall noxious weed
18 control strategy.

19 (5) This section expires June 30, 2018.

20 **Sec. 2.** RCW 17.10.145 and 1997 c 353 s 18 are each amended to
21 read as follows:

22 (1) All state agencies shall control noxious weeds on lands they
23 own, lease, or otherwise control through integrated pest management
24 practices. Agencies shall develop plans in cooperation with county
25 noxious weed control boards to control noxious weeds in accordance
26 with standards in this chapter.

27 (2) All state agencies' lands must comply with this chapter,
28 regardless of noxious weed control efforts on adjacent lands.

29 (3) As part of compliance with this chapter, all agencies must,
30 when practicable, implement a long-term noxious weed control plan
31 that includes replacing pollen-rich or nectar-rich noxious weeds with
32 native forage plants that are beneficial for pollinators such as
33 honey bees.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.220
35 RCW to read as follows:

36 Any corps project that involves the removal of noxious weeds
37 must, when deemed practicable by the project sponsor, give preference

1 to replacing pollen-rich or nectar-rich noxious weeds with native
2 forage plants that are beneficial for pollinators such as honey bees.

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