

HB 2740 - DIGEST

Addresses the availability of water for permit exempt and instream uses.

States that, to achieve the goals of this act, significant legislative action is needed to address both the impact of new development on streamflows and to restore and enhance properly functioning watersheds to preserve and enhance instream resources.

Directs the department of ecology to: (1) Implement a program to restore and enhance streamflows by establishing watershed restoration and enhancement committees and develop and implement plans for streamflow restoration to support vibrant fish and wildlife, including restoring threatened and endangered salmonids;

(2) Prepare and adopt a watershed restoration and enhancement plan for certain water resource inventory areas;

(3) Distribute to the state building code council and to each county, city, town, or other local permitting authority, a list of each of the sixty-two water resource inventory areas and an identification of the statutes, rules, and other legal authorities that apply to groundwater uses in each of the areas;

(4) Initiate a pilot project to measure water use from all new groundwater withdrawals in water resource inventory area 9 (Duwamish-Green);

(5) Issue permit decisions for up to five water resource mitigation pilot projects; and

(6) Implement a program to restore and enhance streamflows to develop and implement plans to restore streamflows to levels necessary to support sustainable salmon populations.

Authorizes the state finance committee to issue general obligation bonds to provide funds for the watershed restoration and enhancement program.

Creates the joint legislative task force on water supply to: (1) Review the treatment of surface water and groundwater appropriations as they relate to instream flows and fish habitat;

(2) Develop and recommend a mitigation sequencing process and scoring system to address the appropriations; and

(3) Review the state supreme court decision in *Foster v. Department of Ecology*.

Creates the watershed restoration and enhancement account, the watershed restoration and enhancement taxable bond account, and the watershed restoration and enhancement bond account.