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**HOUSE BILL 1882**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Boehnke, Dye, Dent, and Pollet

AN ACT Relating to better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development; and creating new sections.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that Washington state needs equitable and affordable outdoor recreation opportunities. Since 1990, Washington's population has grown by 2,700,000 residents. Yet, over the last 30 years, Washington's state park system has added just 28 camping sites, five vault toilets, and four composting toilets.

(2) Washington is expected to add another 2,200,000 residents by 2040 but has just one new state park in development that will add a meager 52 campsites. The parks and recreation commission has acquired 39 properties since 1990 and only three of those properties have been developed into parks. Currently, many state parks are fully booked in summer weekends by the previous fall. The number and geographic distribution of state parks need to be addressed considering both the pressure on some popular parks and issues of equity for communities that have experienced disproportionate environmental impacts. Therefore, the legislature intends to make changes that will address both capacity and the distribution of visitors.

(3) Furthermore, many state parks have maintenance issues that prevent their regular use and enjoyment. State parks are also in need of safety upgrades, including appropriate staffing by park rangers and availability of wireless communication signals for emergency communication. Therefore, the legislature intends to address the quality of the visitor experience at state parks.

(4) The legislature intends to improve access to enhance economic development and public health by accelerating construction of trail miles that connect communities and improving trailhead safety and conveniences, such as garbage collection and bathrooms.

(5) The legislature also finds that on-water recreation access capacity must be addressed proactively and in tandem with on-land recreational opportunities so that recreation user groups are treated fairly.

(6) Finally, the legislature finds that new fees and taxes should not be imposed to provide these needed investments. All Washingtonians will be paying directly or indirectly for the protection of the natural environment through the climate commitment act. The legislature finds that a portion of the revenue collected from that comprehensive carbon emission regulation should be invested in an overhaul of our state outdoor recreation vision and be used to eliminate existing barriers to inclusive and equitable outdoor access.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1)(a) The joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development is established, with members as provided in this subsection:

(i) The president of the senate shall appoint two members and one alternate from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate; and

(ii) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint two members and one alternate from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives.

(b) The committee shall choose its cochairs from among its legislative members. One cochair must represent a majority caucus and the other cochair must represent a minority caucus. The cochairs must represent different chambers of the legislature.

(c) The committee shall select other officers from its members as the committee deems appropriate.

(d) The committee may designate an advisory committee to consist of private and public sector partners with special knowledge or experience concerning the relationship between outdoor recreation and economic development generally and regarding the tourism, hospitality, and retail industries. Members of such an advisory committee are not entitled to expense reimbursement.

(e) During any committee meeting in which an appointed member is absent, the alternate member from the same chamber and caucus as the absent member may vote in place of the absent member.

(2) The joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development shall review the following issues:

(a) Consider how to systematically improve outdoor recreation economic development and leadership through enhanced and expanded facilities and amenities in Washington state in a way that brings benefits to all corners of Washington;

(b) Consider how state investments in a systematic plan to upgrade Washington outdoor recreation opportunities can have maximum benefit for the private sector employers in the outdoor recreation economy and in the ability to enhance employment in the retail, travel, and tourism industries; and

(c) Consider inequities in outdoor recreation access and affordability for vulnerable populations and communities disproportionately burdened by environmental pollution in Washington and opportunities to address them.

(3) The joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development must hold at least four meetings, at least two of which must be in eastern Washington. One cochair shall preside over the meetings in western Washington and the other cochair shall preside over the meetings in eastern Washington. The first meeting of the committee must occur prior to September 30, 2022.

(4) Staff support for the joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development must be provided by the senate committee services and the house of representatives office of program research.

(5) Relevant state agencies, departments, and commissions shall cooperate with the joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development and provide information as the cochairs reasonably request.

(6) Legislative members of the joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development must be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120.

(7) The expenses of the joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development must be paid jointly by the senate and the house of representatives. Committee expenditures are subject to the approval by the senate facilities and operations committee and the house of representatives executive rules committee, or their successor committees.

(8)(a) The joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development shall report its findings and any recommendations to the committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over the parks and recreation commission by December 1, 2023.

(b) Recommendations of the committee may be made by a simple majority of committee members. In addition to majority-supported recommendations, the committee may report minority findings supported by at least two members of the committee.

(c) Notice of the completion of the findings and recommendations required in this subsection must be published in the Washington State Register by December 1, 2023.

(d) The report must include findings and recommendations with respect to:

(i) A strategic plan for cost-effective and equitable expansion of outdoor recreation opportunities;

(ii) Recommendations for modifying any state or local policies that may hinder the speed or increase the expense of development of state-owned land for public recreation access; and

(iii) Identification of any underutilized lands in the state inventory and recommendations regarding short and long-term opportunities to maximize recreation opportunity with those lands.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The parks and recreation commission, in collaboration with other state agencies, shall prepare a report for the joint select committee on better Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development by September 1, 2022. The report must compare Washington state recreational amenities and experiences on at least the following measures to border states and to outdoor recreation travel destination states such as Colorado and Utah:

(1) Per capita tent camping and RV and camp trailer sites;

(2) Boat launch and marina facilities per capita to neighboring states and outdoor recreation travel destination locations, including Utah and Colorado;

(3) Trail miles per capita in various categories of use types to neighboring states;

(4) Age and condition and number of restroom and shower facilities;

(5) Availability and strength of wireless signal at state parks;

(6) Staffing levels;

(7) Describing in detail the current maintenance and operations backlog and the commission's strategy to prioritize projects to eliminate the backlog;

(8) Describing the current state park land inventory that is undeveloped or underdeveloped and the extent to which any preliminary work has been done to map out a development plan for those undeveloped or underdeveloped lands; and

(9) Describing what is known about inequities in access and affordability of outdoor recreation opportunity in Washington and recommending the type of studies that would fill in gaps in knowledge.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act may be known and cited as the Washington outdoor recreation leadership and development act or the better world act.

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