S-4036.1

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**SENATE BILL 5962**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

**By** Senators Das, Rolfes, Lovelett, Nguyen, and Saldaña

AN ACT Relating to setting and achieving a 30 by 30 conservation goal; and adding a new chapter to Title 79A RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that a national policy goal of achieving the conservation of 30 percent of the nation's lands, freshwaters, and United States ocean areas, has been adopted, and similar goals have been adopted in dozens of other countries. A growing body of scientific evidence shows that natural lands and waters provide critical ecosystem functions upon which all life on earth is sustained. To assist in slowing and reversing many crises such as dwindling biodiversity, a warming climate, exposure to unsafe water and air, inequitable access to the outdoors, and declining rural jobs and resource-based local economies, there is a need to develop and maintain a considered strategy for conserving a portion of the state's lands and waters to ensure the ongoing benefits that these natural lands contribute to everyone.

Therefore, it is the intent of this chapter to adopt a policy goal of conserving 30 percent of the state's lands and waters by the year 2030 and to adopt and implement a state plan to achieve that goal.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Commission" means the 30 by 30 commission created in section 4 of this act.

(2) "Director" means the director of the recreation and conservation office.

(3) "Plan" or "30 by 30 plan" means the conservation plan required under section 4 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature establishes a policy goal that 30 percent of the state's lands and waters remain in or be added to conservation status by the year 2030.

(2) All state agencies shall administer their existing authorities consistently with this policy goal and shall provide such assistance and information as the director may request for purposes of developing the plan and assessment required under section 4 of this act.

(3) The 30 by 30 plan required by section 4 of this act must guide state agencies in achieving this goal. Cities, counties, and special purpose districts are encouraged to administer their programs and authorities consistent with this policy goal.

(4) For the purposes of interpreting this goal, in developing the 30 by 30 plan, and in taking actions to implement the plan, the term "conservation" should be considered to include not only preservation, but also the restoration as well as the use of lands and waters that are consistent with providing the critical resources that sustain all life on earth. Lands and waters designated for special protections, such as state and national parks, marine sanctuaries, marine protected areas, and other public lands, should be considered as "conserved" for purposes of this plan, but additional lands and waters in either public or private management that protect important ecosystem functions should also be considered as "conserved" for purposes of contributing toward the 30 by 30 goal.

(5) The 30 by 30 plan required by section 4 of this act should be guided by the following principles:

(a) There should be a collaborative and inclusive approach to conservation;

(b) The conservation effort should benefit everyone in the state;

(c) The state should support locally led and locally designed conservation efforts;

(d) The conservation effort should honor tribal sovereignty and support the priorities of tribal nations;

(e) The plan should pursue conservation and restoration approaches that create jobs and support healthy communities;

(f) The plan must honor private property rights and support the voluntary stewardship efforts of private landowners and fishers;

(g) Science should be used as a guide; and

(h) The effort should build on existing tools and strategies with an emphasis upon flexibility and adaptive approaches.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The director shall adopt a plan to achieve the 30 by 30 goal established in section 3 of this act. The plan must be adopted in consultation with the commissioner of public lands, and the directors of the departments of fish and wildlife, commerce, ecology, and agriculture.

(2) Development of the plan must be guided by the principles set forth in section 3 of this act and with the assistance of the 30 by 30 commission. The director shall serve as the chair of the commission.

(3) The commissioner of public lands, the director of the parks and recreation commission, and the directors of the departments of fish and wildlife, commerce, ecology, and agriculture, or their designees, are members of the commission.

(4) Representatives of federal agencies managing federal lands in the state must be invited to serve on the commission.

(5) Representatives of federally recognized tribes must be invited to serve on the commission.

(6) The director shall appoint additional members to the commission including, but not limited to, members to provide a voice to the following interests:

(a) Land conservation and preservation advocates;

(b) Forestry, farming, and ranching;

(c) Rural landowners, in addition to those identified in (b) of this subsection;

(d) Disproportionately impacted communities as identified by the environmental health disparities map required by RCW 43.70.815;

(e) Advocates for outdoor recreation and parks, including urban park accessibility; and

(f) Cities, counties, and special purpose districts.

(7) As the foundation for the plan, the director shall adopt guidance for including lands and waters considered to currently be in conservation status. The director shall prepare an assessment of current progress toward meeting the 30 by 30 statewide policy, informed by data and maps provided by relevant federal, state, tribal, and local governments. All state agencies shall provide information to the director to assist in preparing this assessment.

(8) The director shall adopt the 30 by 30 plan by December 31, 2023. The director shall thereafter periodically publish progress reports on implementation of the plan and progress toward achieving the 30 by 30 goal.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The director, with the assistance of the commission, shall develop a robust public engagement program in developing the plan. The public engagement program must include equitable community engagement among all demographic and geographic segments of the state.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 5 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 79A RCW.

**--- END ---**