

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8009

As of February 21, 2022

Brief Description: Calling for a national biodiversity strategy.

Sponsors: Senators Lovelett, Das, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Lovick, Rolfes, Saldaña, Stanford, Trudeau, Wellman and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 2/24/22.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the federal government to establish a national biodiversity strategy to ensure the conservation and restoration of the nation's biodiversity.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: In 2002 the Legislature passed SB 6400, which created a temporary Biodiversity Conservation Committee to develop recommendations for the establishment of a framework for the development and implementation of a statewide biodiversity conservation strategy that replaces existing single-species or single-resource protection programs.

In 2004 the Governor issued an executive order creating Washington Biodiversity Council (Council) through the year 2007. The Governor extended the Council through June 30, 2010, through a later executive order. The Council consisted of representation, including the Governor, state agencies, local governments, federal agencies, tribal governments, private landowners, and non-governmental organizations. The executive orders assigned the Council with duties including:

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- developing a 30 year, comprehensive biodiversity strategy for the state;
- completing an assessment of landowner incentives programs; and
- conducting outreach and education on biodiversity.

The Council submitted its Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy in December 2007. The Council defined biodiversity as the full range of life in all its forms and includes the habitats in which life occurs, the ways that species and habitats interact with each other, and the physical environment and the processes necessary for those interactions. The Council submitted a Biodiversity Scorecard in the fall of 2010 shortly after the Council expired at the end of June 2010.

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2015, provides a blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet and includes 17 sustainable development goals, such as addressing poverty, hunger, health and education, inequality, and economic growth, together with climate action and preservation of oceans and forests.

In January 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14008, which in part provides that the U.S. should aim to conserve “at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030.”

Summary of Bill: The Joint Memorial calls on the federal government to:

- establish a National Biodiversity Strategy to ensure the conservation and restoration of the nation's biodiversity;
- secure and restore the ecosystem services provided by nature for current and future generations;
- deliver on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals;
- set ambitious yet necessary goals for protecting biodiversity in the coming decades;
- promote social equity and justice in the conservation of the nation's biodiversity;
- coordinate the actions of federal agencies to advance the conservation of biodiversity;
- promote collaboration among the federal, state, and tribal governments, nongovernmental stakeholders, civil society, and internationally to advance conservation;
- honor the federal trust obligations to tribal nations and Native Americans; and
- provide global leadership in addressing the biodiversity crisis.

The federal government should develop the National Biodiversity Strategy with significant public input and in collaboration and coordination with federal and state agencies, including those in Washington, tribes, communities of color, low-income communities, private landowners, and other nongovernmental stakeholders. The Joint Memorial calls on the federal government to include direction on the following in the National Biodiversity Strategy:

- supporting the national goal of conserving at least 30 percent of United States lands and waters to protect biodiversity by 2030;
- setting other goals necessary to reduce the threats to biodiversity as indicated by the best available scientific information;

- taking action to protect threatened, endangered, and at-risk species from further imperilment or extinction;
- reviewing existing laws, plans, programs, and strategies that are relevant to addressing threats to biodiversity to assess how they can contribute to the objectives of National Biodiversity Strategy and, as necessary, to recommend new laws, plans, programs, and strategies; and
- funding existing conservation programs and developing new funding sources.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.