

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1485

C 205 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Prohibiting the sale of the Whidbey Island game farm.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Capital Budget (Originally sponsored by Representatives Barlean and Anderson).

House Committee on Capital Budget
Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

The Whidbey Island game farm encompasses approximately 170 acres. About 120 acres of the game farm are located inside the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve established by Congress in 1978.

The former Department of Game, using revenue from the sale of hunting licenses, purchased the Whidbey Island game farm in 1945 from a private party for the purpose of developing and operating a game farm. The department raised pheasants on the property for recreation there and elsewhere in the state. Over the past three biennia, the Legislature has appropriated \$2,175,000 in the Capital Budget to consolidate the department's game farms operations into Lewis County. Since then, the Whidbey Island property has been used for a game bird holding and distribution center.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife has proposed selling 130 acres of the former game farm that is surplus to the department's needs to address a shortfall in receipts to the Wildlife Account. The department's proposal retains 30 acres for game farm operations and 10 acres of native prairie habitat and its buffer.

Summary:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife must endeavor to sell the Whidbey Island game farm located in Island County. If the sale takes place within one year after the effective date of this act, the department may only sell the game farm to a nonprofit corporation, consortium of nonprofit corporations, or a municipal corporation for purposes of undeveloped open space and historical preservation. If the sale takes place more than one year after the effective date, this condition does not apply. In addition, the State Treasurer is directed to loan \$694,000 from the state general fund

to the Department of Fish and Wildlife if the property is not sold by June 30, 1999, to address a shortfall in receipts to the Wildlife Account. The loan shall be repaid by June 30, 2001, or when the department sells the property, whichever occurs earlier.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 0

Senate 44 1

Effective: May 7, 1999