

6342-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Parks, Fish & Wildlife (originally sponsored by Senators Oke, Jacobsen, Parlette, Swecker, Finkbeiner, Winsley, Spanel, Berkey, Esser, Regala, Kline, T. Sheldon, Fraser, Doumit, Rasmussen, Haugen and Eide)

Brief Description: Recognizing important bird areas.

**SB 6342-S - DIGEST**

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Declares that it is the goal of the legislature to promote: Partnerships with volunteers; rural economic development; nature tourism; and conservation of biodiversity by encouraging partnerships between state government agencies, volunteers, and nonprofit organizations to designate and conserve natural assets that attract nature tourists and bird watchers to Washington's rural areas.

Recognizes the scientific work by Audubon Washington to use internationally recognized scientific criteria and protocols to identify, conserve, and monitor areas of the state that are important for migrating and resident birds. Scientists, ornithologists, and qualified volunteers have identified important bird areas. Audubon Washington is working with other wildlife conservation organizations and their volunteers to develop mutually agreed-upon bird conservation plans and monitoring plans in cooperation with public land managers and private landowners.

Declares an intent to have Washington state participate in the recognition portion of the important bird area program by directing the natural heritage program at the department of natural resources to officially recognize important bird areas.