
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

SSB 5054

Brief Description: Establishing a process for the acquisition of habitat and recreation lands by the state.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Honeyford, Smith, Schoesler, Benton, Pearson, Ericksen and Hewitt).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and State Parks to submit a request to the Legislature and obtain its approval prior to acquiring certain types of real property.

Hearing Date: 3/26/13

Staff: Cherlyn Walden (786-7296).

Background:

Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Lands.

The WDFW owns or manages nearly one million acres of conservation and recreation lands which are divided into 33 wildlife areas across the state. Additionally, the WDFW owns or manages approximately 700 water access sites that provide boating access to lakes, rivers, and marine areas.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Lands.

The DNR manages a number of different categories of land, each for a specific purpose and under different management requirements. Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCA) and Natural Areas Preserves (NAP) are the two types of natural areas managed by the DNR under the Natural Areas Program. NAPs were set aside to protect native ecosystems that are host to more sensitive and rare plant and animal specifics. The DNR manages 51 NAP sites state-wide,

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

totaling nearly 31,000 acres. NRCAs include lands identified as having high priority for conservation, scenic landscapes, and threatened wildlife. There are 31 NRCA sites totaling more than 88,000 acres.

Washington State Parks (State Parks) Lands.

The State Parks system includes 117 developed parks, 33 heritage sites and interpretative centers and more than 700 historic buildings stretching across approximately 120,000 acres throughout the state.

Summary of Bill:

The WDFW, DNR, and State Parks must submit a request to the appropriate committees of the state Senate and House of Representatives and the Office of Financial Management, and receive specific authorization from the Legislature prior to acquiring certain types of real property. Real property acquisitions requests must be submitted by: the WDFW to acquire land for purposes of wildlife areas, water access sites, or other habitats or recreation purposes; the DNR to acquire land for purposes of NRCA, NAP, or other habitat or riparian protection purposes; and the State Parks to acquire land generally. Legislative approval is not required for land acquisitions where the WDFW, DNR, or State Parks can determine that one-time and ongoing operations and maintenance costs and any applicable payments in lieu of real property taxes can be funded within existing appropriation levels.

A real property acquisition request must include:

- information on the real property, the purpose of the acquisition, and the intended use of the property;
- an operations and maintenance plan which provides the necessary ongoing and one-time actions and projects, the anticipated and range of potential operating and capital costs, and the anticipated funding source and availability of funding from each source; and
- if applicable, the anticipated and range of potential costs associated with payments in lieu of real property taxes, the anticipated funding sources, and the availability of funds from each source.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.