

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5254

As of January 20, 2023

Title: An act relating to the leasing of state lands.

Brief Description: Concerning the leasing of state lands.

Sponsors: Senators Van De Wege, Braun, Mullet, Muzzall, Rolfes, Wagoner and Wilson, L..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 1/23/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Board of Natural Resources to approve certain leases of state lands or state forestlands involving 250 acres or more of land.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7428)

Background: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages a number of different categories of land, each for a specific purpose and under different management requirements. These include approximately 3 million acres of federally-granted lands and state forest lands, which DNR manages to support common schools, counties, and other public institutions.

The DNR has the authority to lease state lands for various purposes, including commercial, industrial, residential, agricultural, and recreational uses, in order to obtain a fair-market rental return to the state or appropriate trust. The DNR also manages more than 600,000 acres of state forest lands, which were acquired primarily through tax foreclosures in the 1920s and 1930s, and to a lesser extent through purchases by the state or gifts to the state. State forest lands are managed for the benefit of the counties in which the lands are located.

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

The Board of Natural Resources (Board) sets policies to guide how DNR manages the state's lands and resources. The Board has several responsibilities including (1) approve or disapprove trust land timber and mineral sales, (2) establish the sustainable harvest level for forested trust lands, (3) approve or disapprove sales or exchanges of trust lands, and (4) guide DNR's stewardship of state Natural Area Preserves, Natural Resources Conservation Areas, and aquatic or submerged lands.

Summary of Bill: Except for agricultural or grazing leases, any lease involving 250 acres or more of state lands or state forestlands is subject to approval by the Board.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2023.

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

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