
SENATE BILL 6802

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2010 Regular Session

By Senator Rockefeller

Read first time 01/29/10. Referred to Committee on Environment, Water & Energy.

1 AN ACT Relating to adopting a sustainability groundwater policy;
2 and amending RCW 90.54.020.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 90.54.020 and 2007 c 445 s 8 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 Utilization and management of the waters of the state shall be
7 guided by the following general declaration of fundamentals:

8 (1) Uses of water for domestic, stock watering, industrial,
9 commercial, agricultural, irrigation, hydroelectric power production,
10 mining, fish and wildlife maintenance and enhancement, recreational,
11 and thermal power production purposes, and preservation of
12 environmental and aesthetic values, and all other uses compatible with
13 the enjoyment of the public waters of the state, are declared to be
14 beneficial.

15 (2) Allocation of waters among potential uses and users shall be
16 based generally on the securing of the maximum net benefits for the
17 people of the state. Maximum net benefits shall constitute total
18 benefits less costs including opportunities lost.

1 (3) The quality of the natural environment shall be protected and,
2 where possible, enhanced as follows:

3 (a) Perennial rivers and streams of the state shall be retained
4 with base flows necessary to provide for preservation of wildlife,
5 fish, scenic, aesthetic and other environmental values, and
6 navigational values. Lakes and ponds shall be retained substantially
7 in their natural condition. Withdrawals of water which would conflict
8 therewith shall be authorized only in those situations where it is
9 clear that overriding considerations of the public interest will be
10 served.

11 (b) Waters of the state shall be of high quality. Regardless of
12 the quality of the waters of the state, all wastes and other materials
13 and substances proposed for entry into said waters shall be provided
14 with all known, available, and reasonable methods of treatment prior to
15 entry. Notwithstanding that standards of quality established for the
16 waters of the state would not be violated, wastes and other materials
17 and substances shall not be allowed to enter such waters which will
18 reduce the existing quality thereof, except in those situations where
19 it is clear that overriding considerations of the public interest will
20 be served. Technology-based effluent limitations or standards for
21 discharges for municipal water treatment plants located on the
22 Chehalis, Columbia, Cowlitz, Lewis, or Skagit river shall be adjusted
23 to reflect credit for substances removed from the plant intake water
24 if:

25 (i) The municipality demonstrates that the intake water is drawn
26 from the same body of water into which the discharge is made; and

27 (ii) The municipality demonstrates that no violation of receiving
28 water quality standards or appreciable environmental degradation will
29 result.

30 (4) The development of multipurpose water storage facilities shall
31 be a high priority for programs of water allocation, planning,
32 management, and efficiency. The department, other state agencies, and
33 local governments(~~(, and planning units formed under section 107 or 108~~
34 ~~of this act)~~) shall evaluate the potential for the development of new
35 storage projects and the benefits and effects of storage in reducing
36 damage to stream banks and property, increasing the use of land,
37 providing water for municipal, industrial, agricultural, power

1 generation, and other beneficial uses, and improving stream flow
2 regimes for fisheries and other instream uses.

3 (5) Adequate and safe supplies of water shall be preserved and
4 protected in potable condition to satisfy human domestic needs.

5 (6) Multiple-purpose impoundment structures are to be preferred
6 over single-purpose structures. Due regard shall be given to means and
7 methods for protection of fishery resources in the planning for and
8 construction of water impoundment structures and other artificial
9 obstructions.

10 (7) Federal, state, and local governments, individuals,
11 corporations, groups and other entities shall be encouraged to carry
12 out practices of conservation as they relate to the use of the waters
13 of the state. In addition to traditional development approaches,
14 improved water use efficiency, conservation, and use of reclaimed water
15 shall be emphasized in the management of the state's water resources
16 and in some cases will be a potential new source of water with which to
17 meet future needs throughout the state. Use of reclaimed water shall
18 be encouraged through state and local planning and programs with
19 incentives for state financial assistance recognizing programs and
20 plans that encourage the use of conservation and reclaimed water use,
21 and state agencies shall continue to review and reduce regulatory
22 barriers and streamline permitting for the use of reclaimed water where
23 appropriate.

24 (8) Development of water supply systems, whether publicly or
25 privately owned, which provide water to the public generally in
26 regional areas within the state shall be encouraged. Development of
27 water supply systems for multiple domestic use which will not serve the
28 public generally shall be discouraged where water supplies are
29 available from water systems serving the public.

30 (9) Full recognition shall be given in the administration of water
31 allocation and use programs to the natural interrelationships of
32 surface and groundwaters.

33 (10) The groundwaters of the state shall be managed sustainably so
34 that both the quantity and quality is maintained and protected for both
35 present and future generations. In all aspects of water resource
36 management, withdrawals that would deplete a groundwater source to an
37 extent that it would jeopardize the long-term yield and uses from that
38 source shall be discouraged.

1 (11) Expressions of the public interest will be sought at all
2 stages of water planning and allocation discussions.

3 (~~(11)~~) (12) Water management programs, including but not limited
4 to, water quality, flood control, drainage, erosion control and storm
5 runoff are deemed to be in the public interest.

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