

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

SSB 5619

Title: An act relating to forest fire protection assessment.

Brief Description: Modifying the forest fire protection assessment process

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senator Jacobsen; by request of Office of Financial Management).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Meeting Date: March 31, 1999.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Bill Lynch, Counsel (786-7092)

Background: Owners of forest land within forest protection zones are required to pay assessments to the Department of Natural Resources for fire protection. A landowner who has paid assessments on two or more parcels, each of which contain less than 50 acres in the same county, is eligible for a refund. The landowner must submit an application for a refund to the department each year in which the assessments were paid. The department may not provide a refund unless sufficient verification is provided that all assessments and property taxes on the property have been paid.

Summary of Bill: Owners of small parcels of forest lands who are eligible for a refund from the Department of Natural Resources for fire protection assessments are no longer required to submit an annual application for a refund. Once the owner has received a refund on the property, the county assessor is required to automatically send the refund to the property owner annually. The property owner is required to notify the county assessor of any changes in ownership of the parcels.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Passed Senate: 3/16/99, 46-0

