
SENATE BILL 5129

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Senators Rasmussen and Swecker

Read first time 01/11/2001. Referred to Committee on State & Local Government.

1 AN ACT Relating to preserving a variety of natural environments on
2 private lands in a voluntary program of natural landmarks; and adding
3 a new section to chapter 36.70A RCW.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 36.70A RCW
6 to read as follows:

7 (1) The legislature finds that the creation of a natural landmark
8 designation is an essential step in preserving unique and scarce
9 parcels of land for future generations. This status should offer the
10 property owner a tax benefit equivalent to the timber open space tax
11 rate for the portion of property protected. Natural landmarks would be
12 protected from destruction by future property owners and government
13 projects such as road widening.

14 (2) Each county or city required to or choosing to plan under RCW
15 36.70A.040 shall establish a voluntary natural landmark registry. The
16 registry must be open to participation to any landowner who wants to
17 preserve a natural feature including, but not limited to, a mature
18 grove of trees, interesting combinations of natural vegetation, or
19 unusual geologic features. This status may also be extended to notable

1 cultivated gardens at the discretion of the local governmental
2 authority.

3 (3) Any parcel within a property of twenty thousand square feet or
4 greater may be submitted for designation as a natural landmark. In
5 order to be approved, the natural landmark status must be supported by
6 a federal, state, or local natural resource management agency, or a
7 private environmental organization.

8 (4) Natural landmark status may only be granted to a parcel after
9 a satisfactory conservation easement has been developed for the parcel.
10 The easement must be for perpetuity. The county or city of
11 jurisdiction is to assist the landowner in preparing the conservation
12 easement to protect the natural landmark.

13 (5) The landowner may not be required to provide public access to
14 or use of the property so designated.

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