

RCW 79.13.620 Purpose—Ecosystem standards. (1) It is the purpose of chapter 163, Laws of 1996 that all state agricultural lands, grazing lands, and grazeable woodlands shall be managed in keeping with the statutory and constitutional mandates under which each agency operates. Chapter 163, Laws of 1996 is consistent with section 1, chapter 4, Laws of 1993 sp. sess.

(2) The ecosystem standards developed under chapter 4, Laws of 1993 sp. sess. for state-owned agricultural and grazing lands are defined as desired ecological conditions. The standards are not intended to prescribe practices. For this reason, land managers are encouraged to use an adaptive management approach in selecting and implementing practices that work towards meeting the standards based on the best available science and evaluation tools.

(3) For as long as the chapter 4, Laws of 1993 sp. sess. ecosystem standards remain in effect, they shall be applied through a collaborative process that incorporates the following principles:

(a) The land manager and lessee or permittee shall look at the land together and make every effort to reach agreement on management and resource objectives for the land under consideration;

(b) They will then discuss management options and make every effort to reach agreement on which of the available options will be used to achieve the agreed-upon objectives;

(c) No land manager or owner ever gives up his or her management prerogative;

(d) Efforts will be made to make land management plans economically feasible for landowners, managers, and lessees and to make the land management plan compatible with the lessee's entire operation;

(e) Coordinated resource management planning is encouraged where either multiple ownerships, or management practices, or both, are involved;

(f) The department of fish and wildlife shall consider multiple use, including grazing, on lands owned or managed by the department of fish and wildlife where it is compatible with the management objectives of the land; and

(g) The department shall allow multiple use on lands owned or managed by the department where multiple use can be demonstrated to be compatible with RCW 79.10.100, 79.10.110, and 79.10.120.

(4) The ecosystem standards are to be achieved by applying appropriate land management practices on riparian lands and on the uplands in order to reach the desired ecological conditions.

(5) The legislature urges that state agencies that manage grazing lands make planning and implementation of chapter 163, Laws of 1996, using the coordinated resource management and planning process, a high priority, especially where either multiple ownerships, or multiple use resources objectives, or both, are involved. In all cases, the choice of using the coordinated resource management planning process will be a voluntary decision by all concerned parties including agencies, private landowners, lessees, permittees, and other interests. [2003 c 334 § 378; 1996 c 163 § 1. Formerly RCW 79.01.2955.]

Intent—2003 c 334: See note following RCW 79.02.010.