

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
Vote:	3 - 0 - 2
Yeas:	Kruse, Walker, Burdick
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Beyer, Prozanski
Prepared By:	Matt Kalmanson, counsel
Meeting Dates:	4/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires the Department of State Lands (DSL) to investigate the feasibility of establishing an Oregon certification program for professional wetlands scientists.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Wetland consulting services
- The need to ensure that wetland professionals have the appropriate level of expertise
- Approach of other states
- Department of State Lands' ability to study issue without fiscal impact

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Amendments replace the bill.

BACKGROUND: There currently are no education, training or certification requirements for persons who provide wetland consulting services in Oregon. "Wetland consulting services" typically include wetland delineations, development planning, preparing permit applications and designing and monitoring compensatory mitigation projects. To provide these services, wetland professionals must understand different scientific disciplines, such as botany, soil science, hydrology and ecology. SB 544 would require the Department of State Lands to investigate the feasibility of establishing an Oregon certification program for "professional wetland scientists." The bill would require the Department to consider: (1) the feasibility of a certification program; (2) the existence and validity of certification programs; (3) the methods and procedures about which wetland scientists should be knowledgeable; (4) the scope of a certification examination and continuing education; (5) an entity to administer the program; and (6) appropriate fees. The bill would require a report from DSL to the legislature no later than January 15, 2009.