

SB 893 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

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Meeting Dates: 3/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Makes it a state policy to identify lands from counties that have limited performance potential as revenue-generating assets or that provide high-value recreational or conservation benefits. Authorizes Oregon Board of Forestry (Board) to identify these lands and submit proposal to Legislative Assembly for transfer of identified lands to other governmental entities or tribes to change land management. Requires Board to obtain approval of proposal from governing body of county where lands are located prior to submitting proposal to Legislative Assembly. Requires proposal include independent, third-party valuation of property to be transferred. Authorizes Board to adopt rules to carry out process.

No subsequent referral

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2017, the Oregon legislature authorized the State Land Board (Board), made up of the Governor, Treasurer, and Secretary of State, to identify and submit to the Legislative Assembly a list of state trust lands with limited performance potential as assets of the Common School Fund for transfer to another state or federal agency or tribe. The state Constitution directs the Board to "manage lands under its jurisdiction with the object of obtaining the greatest benefit for the people of this state, consistent with the conservation of this resource under sound techniques of land management" (Article VIII, section 5 (2)).

The state of Washington has operated a state Trust Land Transfer Program since 1989. Under the program, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reviews and prioritizes a proposed list of transfer properties with other state agencies and then submits an informational package to the Board of Natural Resources and then the Governor's office for submittal to the Legislature. The Legislature reviews the proposal, identifies a list of properties to transfer, and sets a funding level. Some properties are set for fee ownership transfer, others for a long-term lease. The DNR is responsible for carrying out the transfers within the biennium. Properties may not be transferred if they do not meet value expectations or for other reasons not known at the time of transfer approval.

Senate Bill 893 would authorize the Oregon Board of Forestry to identify certain lands that have limited revenue-generation potential or that provide high-value recreational or conservation benefits and submit a proposal to the Legislative Assembly for the transfer of lands to another state or federal agency, local government, or tribe.