
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5334 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING RIPARIAN AREAS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to use FY 27 funds that are available for preserving riparian areas to hire an employee to train inland wetland commissions. The training must be on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act (IWWA), including preserving riparian areas.

*House Amendment "A" replaces the underlying bill, which would have made various changes to the IWWA, including: (1) requiring anyone proposing certain activities in a wetland or watercourse to demonstrate that the activity would not adversely impact the wetland or watercourse; (2) expanding the number of factors the DEEP commissioner and inland wetlands agencies must take into account when regulating, licensing, and enforcing activities under the IWWA; (3) adding the removal of natural vegetative cover in riparian areas to the list of regulated activities that generally require a permit under the IWWA; and (4) modifying whether certain activities involving removing or conserving natural vegetation are considered "as of right" or "nonregulated." It also changes the effective date to July 1, 2026.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 23 Nay 11 (03/13/2026)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 37 Nay 9 (04/14/2026)