88.80 ASPEN RECYCLING PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** The commissioner must establish and accelerate an aspen recycling program providing for the betterment of public lands owned by the state by clearing trees which because of age, disease, pests, or other cause are unmarketable or increase the hazard of forest fires or infestation, permitting the regeneration of stands of healthy aspen capable of economic management, harvesting, and marketing. The financing of this program is determined to be a necessary and proper public purpose for the issuance of state bonds under the provisions of article XI, section 5 of the constitution relating to the betterment of public land, the promotion of reforestation, and prevention and abatement of forest fires and the clearing and improving of wild lands. The program shall designate priority areas on state lands for aspen recycling.

Subd. 2. **Pilot project.** The commissioner shall establish an aspen recycling program pilot project in the highest priority area on state lands in order to develop effective program procedures and practices. With respect to the pilot project, the commissioner may restrict bidding on contracts for the cutting, removal, and disposal of aspens, and for related activities, to loggers and others residing in the pilot project area designated under the program that are financially distressed. The commissioner may establish standards and procedures for awarding logging contracts relating to eligibility for employment for conservation work projects.

Subd. 3. **Report.** The commissioner shall report to the legislature by January 1, 1987, the results of the pilot project and a plan to recycle the overmature aspen stands of the state.

History: *1Sp1985 c 13 s 218; 1986 c 383 s 11; 1988 c 690 art 1 s 3; 1997 c 187 art 1 s 8*