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SENATE BILL 6206

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State of Washington                      53rd Legislature                      1994 Regular Session

By Senators Owen, Oke, Hargrove, Erwin and Haugen

Read first time 01/17/94. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources.

1            AN ACT Relating to game fish; adding a new chapter to Title 77 RCW;  
2 and providing effective dates.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** A warm water game fish enhancement program  
5 is created in the department to be funded from the sale of warm water  
6 game fish stamps and the revenue attributed to the sale of department  
7 fishing licenses that are purchased by fishers who primarily fish for  
8 warm water game fish. The enhancement program shall be designed to  
9 increase the opportunities to fish for and catch warm water game fish  
10 such as: Largemouth black bass, smallmouth black bass, channel  
11 catfish, black bullhead, black crappie, yellow perch, bluegill,  
12 walleye, pumpkinseed, rock bass, sunfish, and other warm water game  
13 fish. The program shall be designed to use a practical applied  
14 approach to increasing warm water fishing. The department shall use  
15 the funds available efficiently to assure the greatest increase in the  
16 fishing for warm water fish at the lowest cost. This approach shall  
17 involve the minimization of overhead and administrative costs and the  
18 maximization of productive in-the-field activities.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    (1) A warm water game fish stamp allows a  
2 person to fish throughout the state for warm water game fish.

3        (2) The annual fee for a game fish stamp is ten dollars and the  
4 stamp is required in addition to an annual game fishing license.

5        (3) The department shall use the most cost-effective format in  
6 designing and administering the warm water game fish stamp.

7        (4) Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, "warm water game  
8 fish" includes the following species: Bass, catfish, walleye, sunfish,  
9 crappie, perch, bullhead, bluegill, and other species as defined by the  
10 department.

11       NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    The goals of the warm water game fish  
12 enhancement program are to improve the fishing for warm water game fish  
13 using cost-effective management. Development of new ponds and lakes  
14 shall be an important and integral part of the program. The department  
15 shall work with the department of natural resources to coordinate the  
16 reclamation of surface mines and the development of warm water game  
17 fish ponds. Improvement of warm water fishing shall be coordinated  
18 with the protection and conservation of cold water fish populations.  
19 This shall be accomplished by carefully designing the warm water  
20 projects to have minimal adverse effects upon the cold water fish  
21 populations. New pond and lake development should have beneficial  
22 effects upon wildlife due to the increase in lacustrine and wetland  
23 habitat that will accompany the improvement of warm water fish habitat.  
24 The department shall not develop projects that will increase the  
25 populations of deleterious fish species such as carp, squawfish,  
26 walking catfish, and others.

27        Fish culture programs shall be used in conditions where they will  
28 prove to be cost-effective. Consideration should be made for  
29 development of urban area enhancement of fishing opportunity for put-  
30 and-take species, such as channel catfish, which are amenable to  
31 production by low-cost fish culture methods. Fish culture shall also  
32 be used for stocking of high value species, such as walleye, smallmouth  
33 bass, and tiger muskey. Introduction of special genetic strains that  
34 show high potential for recreational fishing improvement, including  
35 Florida strain largemouth bass, shall be considered.

36        Transplantation and introduction of exotic warm water fish shall be  
37 carefully reviewed to assure that adverse effects to native fish and

1 wildlife populations do not occur. This review shall include an  
2 analysis of consequences from disease and parasite introduction.

3 Population management through the use of fish toxicants, including  
4 rotenone or derris root, shall be an integral part of the warm water  
5 game fish enhancement program. However, any use of fish toxicants  
6 shall be subject to a thorough review to prevent adverse effects to  
7 cold water fish, desirable warm water fish, and other biota.  
8 Eradication of deleterious fish species shall be a goal of the program.

9 Habitat improvement shall be a major aspect of the warm water  
10 enhancement program. Habitat improvement opportunities shall be  
11 defined with scientific investigations, field surveys, and by using the  
12 extensive experience of other state management entities. Installation  
13 of cover, structure, water flow control structures, screens, spawning  
14 substrate, vegetation control, and other management techniques shall be  
15 fully used. The department shall work to gain access to privately  
16 owned waters that can be developed with habitat improvements to improve  
17 the warm water resource for public fishing. Habitat improvements shall  
18 be conducted in such a manner as to have secondary benefits to  
19 waterfowl, other wildlife, and cold water fish.

20 The department shall use the resources of cooperative groups to  
21 assist in the planning and implementation of the warm water game fish  
22 enhancement program. In the development of the program the department  
23 shall actively involve the organized fishing clubs that primarily fish  
24 for warm water fish.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The warm water game fish account is hereby  
26 created in the state wildlife fund. Moneys in the account are subject  
27 to legislative appropriation and shall be used for the purpose of  
28 funding the warm water game fish enhancement program, including the  
29 development of warm water pond and lake habitat, culture of warm water  
30 game fish, improvement of warm water fish habitat, management of warm  
31 water fish populations, and other practical activities that will  
32 improve the fishing for warm water fish.

33 Funds from the sale of warm water game fish stamps shall be placed  
34 in the warm water game fish account. Once each year the director shall  
35 deposit into the warm water game fish account the amount of funds that  
36 are attributable to those persons who purchase game fish fishing  
37 licenses for the purpose of fishing primarily for warm water game fish.  
38 The director may estimate the proportion of game fish anglers who fish

1 primarily for warm water fish by using the most accurate angler survey  
2 data.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act shall  
4 constitute a new chapter in Title 77 RCW.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) Sections 1, 3, and 4 of this act shall  
6 take effect July 1, 1994.

7 (2) Section 2 of this act shall take effect January 1, 1995.

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