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**Natural Resources, Ecology &  
Parks Committee**

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**SSB 6439**

**Brief Description:** Concerning coastal crab fisheries licenses.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senators Doumit, Oke, Jacobsen, Schoesler and Delvin).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Restricts Dungeness crab coastal fishery license holders to one vessel designation change for certain larger vessels, rather than one change in any five consecutive seasons.

**Hearing Date:**

**Staff:** Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

**Background:**

The Fish and Wildlife Commission has the authority to adopt rules for commercial fisheries, including specifying the gear and equipment that may be used to take fish and shellfish. A Dungeness crab coastal fishery license is required to commercially fish for coastal Dungeness crab in Washington waters.

The Legislature created a limited entry Dungeness crab coastal fishery license that became effective on January 1, 1995. As part of the limitation program, there are certain length restrictions on vessels designated for use under a license. A license holder may not change designation to a vessel whose hull length exceeds 99 feet.

Also, a license holder may not change designation to a vessel that exceeds the length of the currently designated vessel by more than 10 feet. Additionally, a license holder may generally change designation to a vessel between one and 10 feet longer than the currently designated vessel no more than once in any five consecutive coastal crab seasons. In determining vessel hull length, a person may use United States Coast Guard documentation, a marine survey, or manufacturer's specifications.

**Summary of Bill:**

A Dungeness crab coastal fishery license holder may request that the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) change designation to a vessel between one and 10 feet longer than the designated vessel no more than once, rather than once in any five consecutive coastal crab

seasons. Vessel hull length means the length overall of a vessel's hull as shown by marine survey or manufacturer's specifications, and not by United States Coast Guard documentation.

The DFW, in cooperation with the coastal crab fishing industry, must evaluate the effectiveness of the hull restrictions and recommend any changes to the Legislature by December 31, 2010.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.