

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESB 5661

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Regarding derelict fishing gear.

**Sponsors:** Senators Nelson, Pridemore, Swecker, White, Morton and Fain.

**Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Marine Waters**  
**House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources**

**Background:** Role of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). DFW serves as manager of the state's fish and wildlife resources. Among other duties, DFW must classify wildlife and establish the basic rules and regulations governing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife.

Northwest Straits Commission. Congress created the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative (Conservation Initiative) in 1998 as a conservation and restoration program serving the northwest portion of Puget Sound. The Conservation Initiative is charged with establishing community-based marine stewardship, conducting citizen-driven scientific studies on marine species and their habitat, and restoring marine habitat.

The Conservation Initiative has established seven Marine Resource Committees (MRCs), one for each of the following counties: Clallam, Island, Jefferson, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom. Each of these MRCs are citizen-based, with representatives from local government; tribal government; and the scientific, economic, recreational, and conservation communities.

Derelict Fishing Gear Database and Reporting. Current law requires DFW to work in partnership with the Northwest Straits Commission, the Department of Natural Resources, and other interested parties to ensure maintenance of a database containing information on known derelict fishing gear and shellfish pots.

A person who loses or abandons commercial fishing gear or shellfish pots is encouraged to report the location and gear type lost to DFW within 48 hours.

**Summary:** Requires Reporting of Lost Commercial Net Gear. A person who loses or abandons commercial net fishing gear must report the location and gear type lost to DFW within 24 hours. As under current law, a person who loses or abandons shellfish pots is encouraged to report the loss.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

By December 31, 2012, DFW must work with interested tribes to develop a program to assist coordination and communication on the location of lost or abandoned fishing nets from tribal fisheries.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	47	1	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** June 7, 2012