

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2865

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES,
FEBRUARY 26, 1992**

Brief Description: Regulating the harvest of wild mushrooms.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives Sheldon, Belcher, P. Johnson, Jacobsen, Fraser, Nelson, Scott, Winsley, Bowman and Anderson)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Metcalf, Chairman; Oke, Vice Chairman; Barr, Conner, Owen, Snyder, Sumner, and Sutherland.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Hearing Dates: February 26, 1992

BACKGROUND:

The harvest of wild edible mushrooms in Washington is both a popular recreational pursuit and an important commercial enterprise. Over the past decade, as commercial harvest has grown, there have been concerns about the potential over-harvesting of wild edible mushrooms. Accurate data on quantities harvested has been difficult to obtain making it difficult to determine if regulations on harvest quantities are warranted.

In 1988, the Legislature enacted the Wild Mushroom Harvesting and Processing Act in order to gather data on commercial harvest. The act was subsequently amended in 1990. The act created a licensing program for the commercial mushroom industry. Under the act, mushroom buyers and dealers are required to be licensed and report the quantity of mushrooms purchased by species to the Washington State Department of Agriculture. The act also encourages recreational harvesters to report their harvesting voluntarily. Because the reporting system depends on willingness of buyers to comply, rather than having an enforcement mechanism, there is concern that significant under-reporting occurs.

There have previously been proposals that mushrooms be treated as specialized forest products. Specialized forest products are specifically listed in current law. They include Christmas trees, native ornamental trees and shrubs, evergreen foliage, cedar products, cedar salvage, processed cedar products, and cascara bark. Harvest, possession, or transportation of specialized forest products above specified

minimum levels require a permit. Permits must be signed by the landowner and validated by the county sheriff. The county sheriff has primary responsibility for enforcement of these provisions.

SUMMARY:

Wild edible mushrooms are included under the definition of specialized forest products. A specialized forest products permit is required for harvest of more than three U.S. gallons of a single species of wild edible mushroom or more than an aggregate total of nine U.S. gallons of wild edible mushrooms, plus one wild edible mushroom.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

Technical changes are made to clarify the term edible mushroom.

TESTIMONY FOR:

Commercial harvest needs to be regulated in a manner similar to the Department of Natural Resources management of other specialized forest products.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Ralph Hayford, Tacoma Mushroom Society