

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SSB 5130**

**AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 14, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions relating to the department of wildlife.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Environment & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Senators Metcalf and Owen).

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5130 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

**Staff:** Ross Antipa (786-7413)

**Hearing Dates:** January 29, 1991; March 6, 1990

**BACKGROUND:**

The Department of Wildlife was initially formed as the Department of Game by an initiative to the people in 1933. Since that time the agency has changed greatly by assuming many new duties involving management of species which are neither hunted nor fished.

During periods of funding shortfalls the traditional hunting and fishing programs must compete for scarce funding with other department needs. Many people are concerned about the proper way in which to fund the programs of the Department of Wildlife.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department of Wildlife is divided into two major programs for the purposes of funding: the consumptive programs, consisting of hunting, fishing and trapping; and the nonconsumptive programs such as habitat and research. Consumptive programs shall be funded from fishing, hunting and trapping license and tag fees and the federal taxes on guns and fishing tackle. Nonconsumptive programs shall be funded from the general fund and personalized license plates.

The division of expenditures into consumptive and nonconsumptive programs is examined by the Legislative Budget Committee and guidelines are set for the director to segregate expenditures into consumptive or nonconsumptive programs. The director shall consult with legislative committees on department funding issues.

The director and commission shall conduct an ongoing analysis of the expenditures for consumptive and nonconsumptive programs and shall conduct at least three public hearings a year in order to involve user groups.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** yes

**Fiscal Note:** requested January 23, 1991

**Effective Date:** January 1, 1992

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

There needs to be additional funding for the department from sources other than hunting and fishing licenses and fees.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

There is uncertainty on how the department could be reorganized to improve efficiency.

**TESTIFIED:** Curt Smitch, Director, Department of Wildlife (pro); Arthur Solomon, Inland NW Wildlife Council; James Glick (pro); Jim King, Washington State Sportsmen's Council; Mitch Johnson, Tacoma Sportsmen's Club; Jeff Parsons, National Audubon Society