

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5032

AS OF JANUARY 11, 1993

Brief Description: Providing a mechanism to recover lost fishing nets.

SPONSORS: Senators Haugen and Spanel

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Hearing Dates: January 20, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Commercial fishing nets may become lost or abandoned in the aquatic environment. These "ghost nets" continue to catch and kill fish, marine mammals, marine birds, and crabs until they deteriorate. Modern nets are made of durable synthetic materials and lost nets may persist for years.

There is currently no state program for recovery of lost or abandoned fishing nets.

SUMMARY:

Abandoning or discarding a commercial fishing net is prohibited, except in cases in which the net is caught and cannot be freed, or is inadvertently lost. The Department of Fisheries must be notified of lost or abandoned nets.

The Department of Fisheries shall recover lost nets that are considered a threat to marine life, and they shall conduct education programs to reduce the incidence of lost nets and increase their reporting.

A 0.4 percent tax is placed on the manufacturing, wholesaling, and retailing of commercial fishing nets and net components to be collected by the Department of Revenue for the purposes of funding the net recovery program.

An appropriation of \$200,000 is made from the general fund for the 1993-95 biennium.

The entire act is repealed June 30, 1999.

Appropriation: \$200,000 from general fund

Revenue: yes

Fiscal Note: requested

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and Section 15 (state agency implementation) takes effect immediately. The tax and recovery program takes effect January 1, 1994.