

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**ESSB 5940**

**AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 13, 1993**

**Brief Description:** Creating the department of fish and wildlife.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Senators Owen, Haugen, Spanel, Snyder, Oke, McAuliffe, Sutherland and Franklin; by request of Governor Lowry)

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5940 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Owen, Chairman; Hargrove, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Erwin, Franklin, Haugen, Oke, Sellar, L. Smith, Snyder, and Spanel.

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

**Hearing Dates:** March 2, 1993

**BACKGROUND:**

Governor Lowry has proposed merging the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Wildlife into a single agency for the purposes of eliminating duplication and providing improved service.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife is created effective July 1, 1994. The Director of Fisheries and the Director of Wildlife shall provide a plan, by November 15, 1993, to the Governor for the smooth transition into a combined agency.

The Wildlife Commission is retained and its rule-making powers are not altered. A food fish and shellfish advisory council is created to advise the director on food fish and shellfish issues. The wildlife fund is transferred to the new agency and it may be utilized to fund only wildlife and game fish programs.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested February 23, 1993

**Effective Date:** July 1, 1994 except for the reporting section in new Section 9.

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

Combining of the agencies would provide better resource management and eliminate duplication.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

The Wildlife Commission must be retained, and its powers should not be diminished in order to protect the interests of the recreational fisher and hunter.

**TESTIFIED:** Greg Shoemaker, Washington State Hound Council (con); Ted Orr, citizen (con); John Frost, Washington State Sportsmen's Council (con); John Kelly, King County Outdoor Sports Council (con); Frank Stricklin, citizen (con); Randy Frisvold, Washington State Council FFF; Kathey Adams, citizen; Bruce M. Ferguson, Wildlife Commission Budget and Revenue Review; John Sager, Federation of Flyfishers, Steelhead Commission (con); Rob Kavanaugh, citizen (con); Howard Johnson FFF Steelhead Commission (con); J.K. Johnson, Washington State Muzzleloaders (con); Chuck Tyler, Tacoma Sportsmen's Club (con); Ed Owens, Coalition of Washington Ocean Fishermen; Joe LaTourvette, Washington Wildlife Federation (con); Ron Holtcamp, NWSSC, Trout Unlimited; Sylvia Thorpe, citizen (con)