

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6120

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, FEBRUARY 4, 1994

Brief Description: Concerning fisheries enhancement.

SPONSORS: Senators Hargrove, Owen, Oke, Haugen, L. Smith, Erwin, Snyder and Winsley

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6120 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Hearing Dates: January 21, 1994; February 4, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Cooperative fish and wildlife enhancement projects were authorized by 1984 legislation (C 72 L 84). Regional fisheries enhancement groups were authorized by 1989 legislation (C 426 L 89), and are designed to enhance salmon resources. Both cooperative projects and regional fisheries enhancement groups have been very successful in conducting cost effective projects that improve fisheries resources and restore habitat.

The further development of cooperative projects and regional fisheries enhancement groups can be assisted by providing permits, eggs, information, materials and other necessities in a more expeditious manner.

SUMMARY:

The development of cooperative projects and regional fisheries enhancement groups is encouraged. The provision of fish eggs and fry to groups is prioritized at a level equal to department programs. Funding for cooperative projects and regional fisheries enhancement groups is dedicated. Three additional employees shall be provided to staff the regional fisheries enhancement groups. No permit fees are allowed for volunteer fish enhancement projects. Indian tribal joint venture salmon rearing projects are encouraged. A bimonthly fish enhancement newsletter shall be produced and distributed. A program is established to provide funding and low cost materials from public and private sources, and to recognize outstanding achievements. The Department of Transportation shall assess impediments to fish passage, provide gravel mining sites for fish rearing and for materials utilized in stream restoration. Local government entities shall inventory

land-locked salmon rearing sites and report to the Legislature. A fish enhancement public education program shall be developed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Department of Natural Resources shall develop a beaver dam habitat program for coho salmon. A farm group education program is established by the Department of Fish and Wildlife to educate farmers on fish enhancement issues. Landowners, who improve their lands for fish enhancement, shall not be required to comply with increased land use restriction due to the nature of the improvements. Regional fisheries enhancement groups shall be allowed to enhance streams with remnant runs utilizing available salmon egg stocks. The department shall inform regional groups of salmon enhancement facility closures, and make the facilities available for operation by regional groups. No fees shall be charged for permits to enhance fisheries resources. Shoreline permits are not needed for projects that improve fish habitat or fish passage if a hydraulic permit is granted.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

The scope of the legislation is greatly reduced, and elements of the legislation that creates the need for expenditures are largely removed. A working relationship between cooperative groups, regional enhancement groups, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife is fostered. A minimum of 10,000 salmon eggs must be planned for provision to cooperative groups annually, and a minimum of 30,000 salmon eggs must be planned for provision to regional salmon enhancement groups annually. A habitat incentives program is developed in the Department of Fish and Wildlife to assist improvement of food fish habitat on private property. The Department of Transportation is to work on proposals to eliminate anadromous fish migration blockages due to roads. The Department of Ecology is to develop proposals to provide permits at no cost to entities that rear fish for the public good. Projects designed to improve fish habitat are exempt from provisions of the shorelines permit process if they qualify for hydraulic permit insurance.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested

Effective Date: July 1, 1994

TESTIMONY FOR:

Cooperative projects and regional fisheries enhancement groups need assistance in planning and operation of enhancement projects.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

The original legislation is too far reaching and needs to be restricted to assure that cooperatives and regional groups are working in harmony with state and tribal enhancement goals.

TESTIFIED: Steve Robinson, NW Indian Fisheries Commission; Roger Attwood, WA Trollers Assn.; Steven Meacham, WA Dept. of Natural Resources; Linda Crerar, Dept. of Ecology; Dawn Vyvyan, Yakima Indian Nation; Dennis McBreen, Hood Canal Enhancement Group; David Stevens, Dept. of Transportation; PRO: Don Stuart, Salmon For WA; Butch Boad, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group; Robert Shinbo, Ten Million Salmon; CON: Ed Manary, WDF; Bob Lake, Willapa Bay Gillnetters Assn.; Mark Ashley, Willapa Reg. Enhancement Group; Eugene St. John, WA Public Employee Assn.; Jeff Parsons, National Audubon Society; Joe La Tourette, WA Wildlife Fed.; Lloyd Phinney