

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2463

As Reported By House Committee On:

Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to salmon restoration.

Brief Description: Requiring implementation of salmon restoration action plans.

Sponsors: Representatives Buck, Hatfield, Honeyford, Hymes, Boldt, Kessler and Benton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 1/24/96, 1/30/96 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Fuhrman, Chairman; Buck, Vice Chairman; Pennington, Vice Chairman; Basich, Ranking Minority Member; Regala, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Beeksma; Elliot; Hatfield; Jacobsen; Keiser; Sheldon; Stevens; B. Thomas; L. Thomas and Thompson.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: As a result of federal and state law as well as various federal court cases, the Department of Fish and Wildlife manages salmon fisheries in a manner that protects weak salmon stocks. For example, the department often limits a fishery in areas where healthy and weak stocks of salmon are intermingled. These fishery closures or curtailments have caused particular hardship in those areas of the state that are economically dependent on natural resources.

Summary of Substitute Bill: By July 1, 1996, specified programs within the Department of Fish and Wildlife are directed to develop and implement a salmon enhancement plan for watersheds affected by fishery closures along the North Olympic coast, the Straits of Juan de Fuca, and Hood Canal.

The plan must identify factors limiting salmon production and develop short- and long-term plans to address them. The plan must also use volunteers; emphasize the restoration of coho, chinook, and other weak stocks; use all viable fishery

enhancement tools including remote site incubators, where appropriate; develop cost estimates for restoration activities; and identify opportunities to share the cost of restoration with other governmental and non-governmental entities.

By December 1, 1996, the department must submit a report to the Legislature on implementation of short-term plan activities and on the projected time frames for long-term activities.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill specifies the geographic areas in which the bill is to apply, authorizes restoration of salmon species other than chinook and coho, and clarifies that the report to the Legislature will include the status of short term activity implementation and an identification of long-term activities, the cost of the activities, and possible funding mechanisms.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The Olympic Peninsula has been very hard hit by laws relating to the management of natural resources. The closure of fishing seasons along the Straits has been particularly devastating. This bill is needed to open more areas for habitat. Chum salmon should be included in the restoration plans because of that species' ability to remove sediment build up. The restoration plan should use salmon stocks that originate from the river in which a project is located. The geographic scope of the original bill should be clarified.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Bob Lake, Willapa Bay Enhancement and Gillnetters; Ed Manary, Department of Fish and Wildlife; and Ric Abbett, Trout Unlimited (pro).