

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2496

---

---

### As Reported By House Committee On:

Natural Resources

**Title:** An act relating to salmon recovery planning.

**Brief Description:** Developing the critical path schedule for salmon recovery.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Buck, Doumit, Anderson, Sump, D. Sommers, Clements, Butler, Schoesler, Honeyford, Thompson, D. Schmidt, Linville, Chandler, Johnson, Regala, Hatfield, O'Brien, Dickerson, Ogden, Cooper, Kessler, Gardner, Conway and Eickmeyer.

### **Brief History:**

#### **Committee Activity:**

Natural Resources: 1/20/98, 1/27/98 [DPA].

---

## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Butler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Anderson; Chandler; Eickmeyer; Hatfield and Pennington.

**Staff:** Bill Lynch (786-7092).

**Background:** The Fish and Wildlife Commission is responsible for developing a statewide salmon enhancement plan, including proposed enhancement projects. Criteria that must be considered by the commission in formulating the project proposals include, among others, preservation of native salmon runs, likely increase in resource productivity, and compatibility with regional plans. The commission is required to monitor the success of projects funded by the salmon enhancement plan. In addition, the commission is required to develop long-term regional policy statements which include an examination of existing resource needs and the potential for creating new resources.

Regional fisheries enhancement groups are authorized to develop projects to assist the Department of Fish and Wildlife in improving the salmon resources of the state. The projects must be consistent with the long-term policy regional policy statements developed by the commission. A Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group Advisory

Board provides information to and assists in obtaining technical assistance for the regional fisheries enhancement groups.

Salmon and steelhead runs in the state have been listed as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act. Critical path scheduling information is not required as part of the state salmon recovery efforts.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** Critical path scheduling information must be incorporated into salmon recovery efforts by the Fish and Wildlife Commission, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and regional fisheries enhancement groups.

The critical path schedule sets forth the time frames in which restoration activities may occur in the watershed. The schedule prioritizes recovery projects and sets the scope of the recovery projects. The department is required to provide information to facilitate the scheduling process regarding all hatchery broodstock and release activities, all wild run equilibrium brood broodstock and hatch activities, the predicted return times for all runs, and the identification of the species and weak stock water resource inventory areas (WRIAs) within the evolutionary significant unit (ESU) region.

The critical path schedule must portray all recovery efforts in the watershed and show the progress on the projects. Existing information in the watershed is to be used to the extent possible in developing the schedule. The schedule must set out, at a minimum, the restoration efforts of federal, state, local, and tribal governments as well as efforts of private organizations that address limiting factors that affect each watershed with endangered species and weak stock. Monitoring efforts and adaptive management activities must also be set forth in the schedule.

Each restoration effort, project, and activity must include a start date, duration, estimated date of completion, estimated cost, available resources, and if appropriate, the affected salmonid species, number of eggs required, and estimated run return forecast.

The critical path schedule for each WRIA must be updated on an annual basis in order to add new activities, report progress, show completion of scheduled activities, determine which recovery efforts were successful, and to address those recovery efforts which failed where adaptive management is required.

Individual critical path schedules should be prepared so that they can be combined with other schedules to create a report that shows the recovery effort within an ESU, the state, or for a specific run of fish.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission and the Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group Advisory Board must report to the Legislature on initial efforts for developing the critical path schedule by January 1, 1999.

**Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Technical amendments are added.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 14, 1998.

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

**Testimony For:** Efforts need to be coordinated so money and resources aren't wasted. A recovery effort on one creek resulted in 130,000 coho fry being destroyed. Restoration efforts need to be planned up front in order to utilize time effectively. Projects need to be prioritized so that we can get the fastest recovery possible. This is an important piece for salmon recovery, it helps ensure that the necessary tools are in place so efforts aren't misplaced with volunteers. Milestones which are important to adaptive management are included. This provides a high degree of accountability. Adding 25-30 miles of habitat restoration a year can make a major impact towards healthy salmon runs.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Jim Buck, prime sponsor; Bruce Crawford, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Bill Wilkerson, Washington Forest Protection Association; Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries; Steve Robinson, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission; Bruce Wishart, People for Puget Sound; John Kelly, King County Outdoor Sports Council; Doug Fricke, Washington Trollers; Josh Baldi, Washington Environmental Council; Joy Huber, Rivers Council of WA; and Paul Parker, WA State Association of Counties.