

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5347

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Natural Resources

**Title:** An act relating to increasing fishing opportunities for juveniles.

**Brief Description:** Creating a program for juvenile fishing only waters.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Roach, Oke, Winsley, Snyder, Bauer, Swecker, Morton, Schow, Zarelli, Rossi, Strannigan and Rasmussen).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Natural Resources: 3/21/97, 4/3/97 [DPA].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Alexander; Anderson; Pennington and Sheldon.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler and Hatfield.

**Staff:** Rick Anderson (786-7114).

**Background:** The Fish and Wildlife Commission reserves certain fishing areas for juveniles under 15 years of age. Currently, 37 sites are exclusively reserved for juveniles. Four other sites are reserved for juveniles and other user groups. Resident juveniles (persons under the age of 15) are not required to purchase a fishing license.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** A legislative finding is made that youth under the age of 18 should be provided with additional fishing opportunities.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission is directed to identify, establish, and expand areas suitable for youth under the age of 18. These areas must emphasize long season length, accessibility to urban centers, and catch and retention of hatchery produced fish.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife must work with cooperative groups, regional fisheries enhancement groups, government agencies, Indian tribes, private fish farmers, and civic groups to increase youth recreational fishing opportunities. The department must make a progress report to the Legislature by January 31, 1998.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** The Senate bill expands the existing juvenile fish only program to include persons 15 through 17. The striking amendment directs the commission to create a youth program that is in addition to the juvenile only program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** The bill should direct the commission to establish a youth-program to allow a distinction between the proposed program and the existing juvenile-only program. Youth fishing should be encouraged and this bill will help.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Evan Jacoby, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (pro).