

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SSB 6264

As Reported By House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to mass marking of chinook salmon.

Brief Description: Providing for the mass marking of chinook salmon.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Oke, Rasmussen, Morton, Swecker and Anderson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/24/98, 2/27/98 [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 Department of Fish and Wildlife is required to externally mark coho and chinook salmon that are released from the hatcheries and rearing ponds it operates to enable fishers to determine which salmon are hatchery origin and which are wild stock. The department was directed to begin the marking program with coho stock, which is currently being done. If there was mass marking of chinook salmon, fishers would be able to distinguish between hatchery origin chinook salmon and wild chinook salmon. The department is required to coordinate with other entities that produce hatchery coho and chinook salmon for release into public waters in order to provide protection to wild coho and chinook salmon.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Department of Fish and Wildlife is directed to mass mark all appropriate hatchery origin chinook salmon produced by the department by June 30, 1999. The department is required to work with the treaty Indian tribes in order to reach mutual agreement on the implementation of the mass marking program. The department must report to the Legislature by January 1, 1999, on its progress in reaching

mutual agreement with the treaty Indian tribes and any Pacific coast state or province in achieving the goal of coast-wide marking of chinook and coho salmon.

Amended Bill Compared to Second Substitute Bill: The amended bill requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to report its progress on reaching mutual agreements on the mass marking of salmon.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Selective fisheries are the best hope for rebuilding salmon stocks. Time is of the essence. People need to be able to distinguish between wild stock and hatchery stock. Projections for returning chinook this year are dismal. If Puget Sound chinook are listed under the Endangered Species Act, little harvesting of hatchery fish will be allowed unless they are marked. The technology exists to mass mark chinook by machine. The agreement language about working with the tribes is important.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Mark Cedergreen, Charter Boat Association; Russ Warren, Everett Salmon Steelhead; Bruce Crawford, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Lee Blankenship, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Bill Hiblar, Trout Unlimited; and Randy Scott, Quinault Indian Nation.