

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2496

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources & Parks, February 26, 1998
Ways & Means, March 2, 1998

Title: An act relating to salmon recovery planning.

Brief Description: Recovering salmon.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by 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 & Parks: 2/24/98, 2/26/98 [DPA-WM].
Ways & Means: 3/2/98 (DPA (NRP)).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Oke, Chair; Rossi, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Prentice, Roach and Swecker.

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended by Committee on Natural Resources & Parks.
Signed by Senators West, Chair; Deccio, Vice Chair; Strannigan, Vice Chair; Bauer, Fraser, Hochstatter, Kohl, Long, Loveland, McDonald, Roach, Rossi, Schow, Snyder, Spanel, Swecker, Thibaudeau and Zarelli.

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Background: The listing of threatened or endangered salmon under the Endangered Species Act will require the development of a recovery plan for each listing. Recovery plans frequently consist of measures that prevent the take of a species, and improve or protect the habitat necessary for the well being of a species. Washington State currently has four listings of threatened or endangered salmon species and more are expected in the near future.

A coordinated framework is needed to direct the state's response to threatened or endangered salmon listings.

Summary of Amended Bill: The state retains primary responsibility for salmon recovery planning and implementation. A Salmon Recovery Office is created within the Office of the Governor. The Governor must prepare a summary of salmon recovery recommendations to the Legislature and a biennial state of the salmon report. The Department of Fish and Wildlife is authorized to create three new regional fishery enhancement groups in eastern Washington and one new group in western Washington. The Department of Fish and Wildlife is authorized to establish regional councils for the purpose of developing regional salmon habitat restoration plans. Habitat projects include both fish habitat and water quality related efforts.

A wide variety of public and private entities may conduct habitat projects under the approval of regional councils. A critical pathways methodology is specified for development of habitat work plans and habitat work schedules.

A technical assistance group and an independent science panel are established to assist regional councils.

The Puget Sound Action Team is empowered to extend its authority to aquatic and upland habitats to assist salmon recovery. New members are added to the Puget Sound Action Team to represent Indian tribes and federal agencies.

The Puget Sound Council is enlarged by two members that represent commercial fishers and recreational fishers.

A work group is established to evaluate mitigation proposals for wetlands and aquatic habitat. Regional councils are authorized to implement aquatic resources mitigation opportunities.

A null and void clause is present.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The volunteer salmon restoration initiative is removed. The section on inclusion of salmon recovery plans in the budget of the Puget Sound Action Team and submission of a salmon recovery work plan by the Puget Sound Action Team to federal administrators is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For (Natural Resources & Parks): Salmon recovery planning needs a comprehensive framework under state, rather than federal, control. Habitat restoration projects are a prime element for salmon recovery and they need to be administered on a local basis with maximum public involvement. Habitat projects require prioritization for funding, monitoring, and statewide coordination. Volunteers and regional fisheries enhancement groups need to be an integral part of the salmon habitat restoration.

Testimony Against (Natural Resources & Parks): Concerns were expressed over who would control establishment of regional councils, who would be in charge of funding decisions, and who would be able to participate in habitat restoration activities.

Testified (Natural Resources & Parks): PRO: Steve Wehrly, Stanley Moses, Gilbert King George, Muckleshoot Tribe; Diane M. Ellison, Columbia/Pacific Resource Conservation Dir.; Rob Kavanaugh; Mike Hirko, Citizens' Advisory Board, Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups; Don Stuart, Washington Association of Conservation Districts; Ric Abbett, Trout Unlimited; John Kelly, King County Outdoor Sports Council; Lisa Pelly, Fish and Wildlife Commission; Shari Stoican; Bill Garvin, Washington State Farm Bureau; Ron Schultz, National Audubon Society; Tim Smith, Joint Natural Resources Cabinet; Dawn Vyvyan, Yakama Nation; Harris Teo, Tribal Council, Yakama Nation; Tony Meinhardt, Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts; Scott Hazlegrove, AWB; Joan Baldi, Washington Environmental Council; Tim Boyd, WFOA; Frank Uraback, NW Marine Trades Association; CONCERNS: Steve Lindstrom, Sno-King Water Districts; Sharyn Parker, King County; Paul Parker, WSAC; Kathleen Collins, Washington Water Policy Alliance; Dick Ducharme, BIAW/Yakima Growers & Shippers; Bruce Wishart, People for Puget Sound; John Rosapepe Sierra Club; Kristen Harte, Washington Public Utility Districts Association; Jim Miller; Everett; Karla Kay Fullerton, Washington Cattlemen's Association.

Testimony For (Ways & Means): Safeguards needs to be in place to assure that salmon recovery projects are prioritized, follow a predictable schedule, and result in cost effective salmon recovery.

Testimony Against (Ways & Means): None.

Testified (Ways & Means): PRO: Bruce Wishart, People for Puget Sound; Alan Woodbridge, Western Fish and Wildlife.