

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5327

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources & Parks, February 25, 1997

Title: An act relating to fish and wildlife enhancement.

Brief Description: Creating a habitat incentive program through the department of fish and wildlife.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove, Morton, Loveland, Rossi, Stevens, Snyder and Oke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 2/20/97, 2/25/97 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5327 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Oke, Chair; Rossi, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Jacobsen, Morton, Prentice, Roach, Snyder, Spanel, Stevens and Swecker.

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Background: Landowners who make improvements to fish habitat may face changing regulatory requirements over time as a result of the habitat improvements.

Landowners who make investments in fish habitat improvements desire not to be penalized by increased regulation of hydraulic permits or forest practice permits that result from the habitat improvements.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Private landowners may participate in a habitat incentives programs for food fish or game fish habitat improvement with the Department of Fish and Wildlife if they own less than 1,000 total acres. The department is not obligated to enter agreements unless they protect fish habitat. Landowners who enter agreements with the department are subject to hydraulic permit and forest practice regulations that were in effect prior to the time habitat improvements were made. The agreements are specified in writing and are not transferrable to subsequent owners.

A one half-time fisheries biologist is funded for the program.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The habitat incentives program is limited to small landowners.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 11, 1997.

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

Testimony For: The habitat incentive program will enhance fish resources with a cooperative approach.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rollie Geppert, WDFW; Willie O'Neil, Stilly/Sno Enhancement Gr. (pro); Dawn Vyvyan, Yakama Indian Nation (pro); Steve Robinson, NW Indian Fisheries Commission (pro).