
SENATE BILL 6288

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1998 Regular Session

By Senators T. Sheldon, Roach, Jacobsen, Swecker, Rasmussen, Stevens, Benton and Anderson

Read first time 01/15/98. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources & Parks.

1 AN ACT Relating to the creation of fish and wildlife regional
2 advisory councils; adding new sections to chapter 77.04 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

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6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature acknowledges the challenge
7 facing fish and wildlife commission members as these part-time
8 commissioners strive to understand all of the different fish and
9 wildlife issues around the state. Within each region of the state
10 there are people with an understanding of the fish and wildlife issues
11 in that region and with a willingness to share their time and expertise
12 to assist the commission in the sound management of the state's fish
13 and wildlife resources. The legislature finds that the creation of
14 regional advisory councils will allow the commission to take advantage
15 of this local expertise and will provide an efficient way for the
16 commission to better understand the effects of fish and wildlife policy
17 proposals on different regions of the state.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 77.04 RCW
19 to read as follows:

1 (1) A fish and wildlife regional advisory council shall be
2 established in each administrative region of the department.

3 (2) Each regional advisory council shall be comprised of seven
4 members who are residents of the region and who are knowledgeable about
5 fish and wildlife issues in that region.

6 (3) To select regional advisory council members, the county
7 legislative authority in each county within the administrative region
8 shall designate one person as the county's representative on a
9 selection committee for the region. If a county is in more than one
10 administrative region, the county shall choose one region in which to
11 participate. The selection committee shall solicit qualified nominees
12 for the regional advisory council for that region from either (a)
13 organized groups representing sportfishers, commercial fishers,
14 hunters, private landowners, and environmentalists, or (b) organized
15 groups representing a mix of interests more tailored to fish and
16 wildlife interests in that particular region as determined by the
17 selection committee, provided that the commission has approved the
18 alternative list of interests prior to the selection committee's
19 solicitation of nominations. The selection committee shall consider
20 the nominees submitted and shall select a regional advisory council
21 representing a balance of interests in the region. The selection
22 committee shall submit its chosen panel to the respective county
23 legislative authorities for confirmation.

24 (4) Four of the initial members of each regional advisory council
25 shall serve two-year terms, and three shall serve four-year terms. The
26 selection committees shall determine which initial members serve two-
27 year and four-year terms. Thereafter each member shall serve a four-
28 year term. After a person has served a four-year term, four years must
29 elapse before that person is eligible to serve another term.

30 (5) Regional advisory council members shall not be compensated but
31 are eligible to receive reimbursement for travel expenses in accordance
32 with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. Members may decline to receive
33 reimbursement for travel expenses.

34 (6) The chair of an advisory council may remove a member from that
35 council if the member has missed three consecutive meetings without
36 having the absence excused in advance by the chair.

37 (7) The county legislative authorities in a region may reconvene a
38 selection committee to fill a vacancy on an advisory council. The
39 person selected to fill the vacancy shall serve the unexpired term.

1 (8) Each regional advisory council shall select from its members a
2 chair and a vice-chair. A majority of members constitutes a quorum.
3 Regional advisory councils shall conduct open public meetings in
4 accordance with chapter 42.30 RCW. Each council shall determine
5 meeting times, meeting places, and other procedural matters necessary
6 to fulfill its duties.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 77.04 RCW
8 to read as follows:

9 (1) The fish and wildlife regional advisory councils have the
10 following duties and responsibilities:

11 (a) When the commission is considering proposals to set hunting or
12 fishing seasons, bag limits, or other policy proposals that would
13 affect fish and wildlife resources in the administrative region, or any
14 general policy that would apply state-wide, the commission shall
15 forward these proposals to the regional advisory council with enough
16 time in advance for each council to solicit input on the proposals from
17 within the region. The commission shall actively solicit input from
18 the regional advisory councils on all policy decisions. Each council
19 shall solicit testimony from the general public and from experts in the
20 region on the possible impacts of the policy proposals to the region.
21 Each council shall also gather relevant information on the policies and
22 views of federal agencies and federally recognized Indian tribes in the
23 region. Each council shall synthesize the information collected and
24 shall provide a regional perspective on the policy proposals to the
25 commission. A regional advisory council may also make specific
26 recommendations to the commission about the policy proposals.

27 (b) Each regional advisory council shall keep the commission
28 informed on fish and wildlife issues emerging in or important to the
29 region and may make recommendations to the commission on policies that
30 the advisory council believes the commission should consider.

31 (c) Other duties as agreed to by the commission and the regional
32 advisory councils.

33 (2) The commission, before taking any formal action, shall consider
34 any input from and recommendations made by the regional advisory
35 councils. If the commission rejects a specific recommendation made by

1 a regional advisory council, the commission shall provide a written
2 explanation for the rejection to the council.

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