

2879-S2

Sponsor(s): House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Buck, Butler, Chandler, DeBolt, Sehlín, Hatfield, McCune, Doumit, Kessler, Morris, Kenney, Constantine, Ogden, Regala, Tokuda, Anderson, Thompson and Conway)

Brief Title: Facilitating the review and approval of fish habitat enhancement projects.

**HB 2879-S2 - DIGEST**

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Declares that the purpose of this act is to take immediate action to facilitate the review and approval of fish habitat enhancement projects, to encourage efforts that will continue to improve the process in the future, to address known fish passage barriers immediately, and to develop over time a comprehensive system to inventory and prioritize barriers on a state-wide basis.

Directs the department of ecology permit assistant center to immediately modify the joint aquatic resource permit application form to incorporate the permit process established in this act.

Directs the department of fish and wildlife, the conservation commission, local governments, fish habitat enhancement project applicants, and other interested parties to work together to continue to improve the permitting review and approval process. Specific efforts shall include the following: (1) Development of common acceptable design standards and best management practices for each type of fish habitat enhancement project;

(2) an evaluation of the potential for using technical evaluation teams in evaluating specific project proposals or stream reaches;

(3) an evaluation of techniques appropriate for restoration and enhancement of pasture and crop land adjacent to riparian areas;

(4) a review of local government shoreline master plans to identify and correct instances where the local plan does not acknowledge potentially beneficial instream work;

(5) an evaluation of the potential for local governments to incorporate fish habitat enhancement projects into their comprehensive planning process; and

(6) continued work with the federal government agencies on federal permitting for fish habitat enhancement projects.

Requires a report back to the legislature on the group's progress by December 1, 1998.

Requires that, by January 1, 1999, the fish passage barrier removal task force as specified in RCW 75.50.160 shall report to the legislature on its progress in implementing the provisions in this act. The report shall also include recommendations on future governance and administrative structures to coordinate local, state, and private fish passage correction projects and to administer state fish passage grants.