
HOUSE BILL 1681

State of Washington

56th Legislature

1999 Regular Session

By Representatives Buck, Grant, Sump, Schoesler, Boldt, Mastin and
McMorris

Read first time 02/02/1999. Referred to Committee on Natural
Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to state purchase of privately grown trout for
2 planting in state waters; adding new sections to Title 77 RCW; and
3 making an appropriation.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that declining
6 opportunities to catch anadromous salmon and steelhead trout has
7 resulted in an opportunity to improve trout fishing in order to satisfy
8 the public's demand for recreational fishing. During 1998, a private
9 Okanogan county fish farm supplied sixty thousand one to two-pound
10 rainbow trout to the department of fish and wildlife, Colville
11 Confederated Tribes, and volunteer groups. These catchable trout
12 provided enhanced recreational fishing opportunities in central
13 Washington lakes. The program was viewed as a huge success.

14 The same private fish farm planted Rufus Woods lake in the Columbia
15 river above Chief Joseph dam with triploid rainbow trout, which
16 resulted in the capture of a new state record rainbow trout of 25.45
17 pounds in February of 1998. The farmed rainbow trout have the
18 potential to grow to trophy size because they are sterile, feed
19 aggressively, and continue to grow through their life cycle.

1 A relatively small investment by the legislature in purchasing
2 privately grown catchable triploid trout has the potential to be a
3 major program for rural economic development. Catchable-sized trout
4 between one to one and a half pounds each can be produced by private
5 sector fish farmers for approximately two dollars per fish. Fish
6 farmers can produce these fish in a triploid genetic configuration for
7 the purpose of certifying that the fish are sterile and that they
8 cannot interbreed with wild trout. These privately produced catchable
9 trout are ideally suited to planting into public lakes and ponds to
10 provide immediate recreational fishing at a reasonable cost.

11 The effect of planting large-sized catchable trout will be
12 increased fishing and hunting license sales, increased angler
13 participation, increased tourism activities, and a boost to local
14 economies. In essence, a catchable trout program will be an economic
15 development measure for rural areas. The planting of catchable trout
16 can be conducted in any water body that has water quality sufficiently
17 high to support fish life.

18 Additional benefits of the catchable trout program will result from
19 producing additional fishing opportunity without adding to the number
20 of state employees, by providing jobs in the private sector, and by
21 having no adverse impact on wild trout populations.

22 The state purchase of privately produced trout is not intended to
23 replace trout produced by hatcheries of the department of fish and
24 wildlife. Rather, the purchase of private farmed trout by the
25 department is intended to supplement existing department trout hatchery
26 programs.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The fish and wildlife commission shall
28 institute a program to purchase catchable-sized trout from private fish
29 farmers in order to increase the recreational fishing opportunities
30 within state waters.

31 (2) The fish and wildlife commission shall purchase up to one
32 hundred thousand catchable trout during the 1999 calendar year from
33 private fish farmers located within Washington state, for the purpose
34 of planting the trout into public freshwater lakes and ponds to improve
35 recreational fishing.

36 (3) The fish and wildlife commission shall purchase up to one
37 million catchable trout during calendar year 2000 from private fish
38 farmers located within Washington state, for the purpose of planting

1 the trout into public freshwater lakes and ponds to improve
2 recreational fishing.

3 (4) The fish and wildlife commission shall not, because of the
4 response to the purchase of privately grown trout, reduce the
5 appropriation for hatcheries operated by the department of fish and
6 wildlife or reduce the number of hatchery employees.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of three million dollars, or as much
8 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium ending
9 July 30, 2001, from the general fund to the department of fish and
10 wildlife for the purposes of this act.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 and 2 of this act are each added
12 to Title 77 RCW.

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