

6092

Sponsor(s): Senators Fraser and Swecker

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to public water systems.

SB 6092 - DIGEST

Declares that, in order to assist in the recovery of salmonid species that are listed or proposed for listing under the federal endangered species act while maintaining the economic vitality of the state of Washington, it is the intent of the legislature to improve water resource management laws. The intent of this act is to: (1) Provide clarity and certainty regarding the legal status of public water system water rights that document a combination of water that has been put to beneficial use and water that has not been put to beneficial use. Clarity and certainty is necessary for purposes of planning for water supply, land use, watershed management, and growth management;

(2) provide for the concurrent development of public water system inchoate water right permits and the restoration and protection of instream flows in geographic areas with salmonid stocks listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under the federal endangered species act, or with salmonid stocks listed as critical or depressed under the state salmon and steelhead stock inventory;

(3) encourage municipal water supply management to occur on a regionally coordinated basis, where practicable, in a fashion that balances the use of currently developed and future municipal water resources with protection of the natural environment and instream resources, including fisheries. Regional integrated management areas and regional water supply utilities are encouraged as an alternative means to achieve many of the objectives of this act. The objectives of preserving and enhancing the natural environment, including fishery resources, and of providing reliable and efficient water supplies to expanding populations, especially in urban areas, can be met in a complementary manner through the use of regional integrated management areas or by regional water supply utilities;

(4) provide more flexibility for the movement of water from where it is available to where it is needed and provide a more certain future municipal water supply; and

(5) promote an increase in the conservation and efficient use of water by public water systems.