

6870

Sponsor(s): Senator Morton

Brief Description: Managing stocks of anadromous salmonids.

SB 6870 - DIGEST

Declares that the purpose of this act is to establish policies and strategies necessary to assure that stocks that have been listed under the federal endangered species act will be protected from overharvest and restored, while maintaining to the extent possible, the continued harvest of stocks from watersheds with abundant populations.

Provides that each year the department shall identify each anadromous salmonid stock that has been listed as threatened or endangered under the federal endangered species act. For each of these identified stocks, the department shall report the best available estimates of the following: (1) The run size of adult fish available for harvest within the stock's migratory range and for spawning escapement;

(2) the rate of harvest-induced mortality in the waters of each state and province through which the fish migrate and a delineation of the rate by sports, nontribal commercial, and tribal harvest. Harvest induced mortality shall include such sources as by-catch and hook mortality;

(3) the total cumulative rate and number of harvest-induced mortality for each listed stock;

(4) the minimum escapement goal that would be necessary to remove the stock from its endangered or threatened status;

(5) the optimal escapement goal that would provide sufficient spawners to use the available spawning and rearing habitat fully; and

(6) the number of fish that escaped harvest and continue to migrate through state waterways for spawning.

Provides that, until June 30, 2002, to the extent not inconsistent with federal law, there shall be a moratorium placed on implementation of orders issued by federal fishery agencies that do not comply with the provisions of this act. During the period the moratorium is in effect, representatives of the executive and the legislative branches of the state of Washington shall consult with their counterparts in the states of Oregon, Idaho, and Montana and involved federal fishery agencies, to examine the basis for federal policies that order destruction of significant populations of salmonids and their eggs and sperm, and to evaluate alternatives that have less impact to the salmonid resource, to dependent and affected communities, and to each state's economy.

Provides that, to the extent not inconsistent with federal law, all fish reared in state-funded hatcheries and fish reared in mitigation hatcheries approved by the department under RCW 75.20.090 (as recodified by section 129, chapter 107, Laws of 2000), surplus of the operational needs of the hatchery, shall be allowed to continue to spawn under natural conditions and the eggs and sperm from those fish shall not be destroyed pursuant to orders or other requirements of the federal government unless designated

conditions apply.

Requires that a study shall be conducted on ways to increase the returns of stocks of anadromous fish listed as threatened or endangered under the federal endangered species act.

Requires the results of the study to be included in a report to the governor and the legislature by December 1, 2000.

Directs the state fish and wildlife commission to establish escapement goals for each stock of anadromous salmonids that has been listed as threatened or endangered under the federal endangered species act.