

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1019

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines, March 21, 2001

Title: An act relating to the fish and wildlife commission.

Brief Description: Modifying the composition of the fish and wildlife commission.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Pennington, Hatfield, Mielke and Ogden).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines: 3/19/01, 3/21/01 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Hargrove, McDonald, Morton, Oke, Snyder and Stevens.

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Background: The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission consists of nine members serving six-year terms. Members are appointed by the Governor, and confirmed by the Senate. Three members must reside east of the summit of the Cascade mountains, three must reside west of the summit, and the remaining three are at large,– and may reside anywhere in the state. Currently, the commission has four members from western Washington, and five members from eastern Washington. The nine members are residents of the following cities: Olympia, Bellingham, Wenatchee, Bainbridge Island, Pullman, Spokane, Selah, Seattle, and Kettle Falls.

The commission serves as the supervising authority for the department. It received its authority from passage of Referendum 45 by both the Legislature and the public in 1995. The commission has a variety of duties, including: 1) the establishment of hunting and fishing seasons, 2) prescribing the time, place, and manner of game fish and wildlife harvest, 3) establishment of provisions regulating food fish and shellfish, 4) adoption of rules to implement the state's fish and wildlife laws, 5) and final authority over the department's budget proposals and any tribal, interstate, or international fish and wildlife agreements.

In 1986 the department organized six administrative regions, each with a regional supervisor, to implement programs in enforcement, habitat, and wildlife and fisheries management. The administrative regions are organized geographically, with three in western Washington and three in eastern Washington. These administrative regions are subject to change by the department.

Summary of Bill: Six of the nine members of the Fish and Wildlife Commission must be appointed to represent the six administrative regions of the Department of Fish and Wildlife as the regions existed on January 1, 2001. Each of the six members must represent a different administrative region. The department must formally adopt the six regions by rule and the Governor is required to achieve this balance by administrative region as the terms of current commissioners expire and vacancies occur. The other three members of the commission may reside in any region of the state.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: It has been almost 20 years since a resident of southwest Washington has served on the Fish and Wildlife Commission. The bill is needed to assure that all regions of the state have representation on the commission.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rob Kavanaugh; Russ Cahill, Chair, WDFW Commission (neutral); Gerald W. Rowland, Sr., President, Modern Firearm Hunters of WA (pro).