

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5442

As Passed Senate, March 9, 2001

Title: An act relating to salmon fishing gear.

Brief Description: Allowing the use of certain salmon fishing gear with an experimental fishery permit.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines (originally sponsored by Senators Snyder, Jacobsen, Morton and Oke; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines: 2/7/2001, 2/19/01 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/9/01, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5442 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; Constantine, Hargrove, Morton, Oke, Snyder and Stevens.

Staff: Ross Antipa (786-7413)

Background: Fish traps were prohibited for commercial fishing purposes by Initiative 77 which was approved by the voters in 1934. Fish traps include fish wheels (both shore based and floating platform), weirs across streams, set nets, and other forms of fixed commercial fishing appliances. Reef nets are the only authorized form of commercial fishing gear which is fixed to a particular location.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife desires to test fixed commercial fishing methods under experimental fishery permits to assist in salmon recovery.

Summary of Bill: The director may issue a trial or experimental fishery permit that authorizes pound nets, round haul nets, lampara nets, fish traps, fish wheels, scow fish wheels, set nets, weirs, or other fixed appliances for catching salmon or steelhead in order to assist salmon recovery.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 26, 2001.

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

Testimony For: The director should have the flexibility to test experimental fishery methods that could prove to be more selective than conventional fishing gear.

Testimony Against: Fixed fishing gear was outlawed years ago and reauthorizing it would cause competition with currently legal gear.

Testified: Richard E. Anderson, Kitsap Audubon (pro); Shari Stoican (pro); Daniel L. Cody, Puget Sound Anglers; Ricky D. Bryan, Kitsap Poggie Club; Bruce Crookshanks PSGA (con); Frances Clark, Northwest Gillnetters Assn. (pro).

House Amendment(s): When an emerging commercial fishery is designated using otherwise prohibited gear types, the director must include in its report regarding the fishery: information regarding the extent to which mass marking and supplementation programs have been utilized in the areas authorized for the selective fishing gear; information on the effectiveness of this gear in providing more fishing opportunity within mixed salmon stocks; information on the effectiveness of selective fishing gear in minimizing postrelease mortality for nontarget stocks and aiding the creation of niche markets; and information on the department's efforts at operating hatcheries in an experimental fashion by managing wild and hatchery origin fish as a single run as an alternative to mass marketing and the utilization of selective fishing gear.