

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6313

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Providing for the retrieval of derelict fishing gear.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines (originally sponsored by Senator Oke).

Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines
House Committee on Natural Resources

Background: Derelict gear is the term used for fishing nets, traps, or lines that are lost or abandoned in state waters. Derelict gear can continue to catch fish and other marine organisms for long after it is lost. There is currently no incentive to report the loss of gear, and no common procedures for gear removal.

The Northwest Straits Commission received a federal grant to develop protocols for the safe removal of derelict gear, and to inventory and remove derelict gear in the northwest straits of Puget Sound. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has indicated that a hydraulic project approval will be required for derelict gear removal.

Summary: The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources, the Northwest Straits Commission, and other interested parties, must publish guidelines for the safe removal and disposal of derelict gear. No hydraulic project approval is required for gear removed according to the guidelines.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife must also create a database of known derelict gear. Commercial fishers are encouraged to report the loss of gear to the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife must provide a report to the Legislature by January 1, 2003, on methods to reduce future losses of fishing gear.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0
House	96	0

Effective: June 13, 2002