

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2920

As of February 18, 2004

Title: An act relating to special economic recreational fisheries.

Brief Description: Allowing the creation of special economic fishery advisory committees.

Sponsors: House Committee on Fisheries, Ecology & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives Pearson, Sump, Mielke, Boldt, Hinkle, Condotta and Buck).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Parks, Fish & Wildlife: 2/23/04.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON PARKS, FISH & WILDLIFE

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

Background: The Washington State Fish and Wildlife Commission has the authority to set seasons for the harvest of food fish and game fish. This authority includes the ability to establish the times and places when the taking of fish is lawful.

For salmon and steelhead, however, a larger and more complex management framework exists. Salmon and steelhead are managed in cooperation with the federal government, treaty tribes, Canada, and other states through several forums. Through the Pacific Salmon Commission and the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, annual salmon fisheries levels for Washington are established. State harvest must be consistent with these levels. The 1974 federal court case *U.S. v. Washington* (Boldt Decision) re-affirmed tribal rights to harvest salmon and steelhead and established them as co-managers of Washington fisheries. In Washington, the North of Falcon process and the Columbia River Compact are used to allocate fisheries in state waters. These fisheries must also be consistent with the federal Endangered Species Act in areas where listings occur.

Summary of Bill: Recreational fishing stakeholders within a department administrative region may form a Special Economic Fishery Advisory Committee. A committee must have at least five and no more than 15 members representing a balance of recreational fishers, sportfishing organizations, commercial fishing interests, and local business owners. A committee may review and provide guidance on proposed recreational and commercial fishing seasons and advise the department of significant economic impacts to local economies of proposed fishing seasons. The committee may work with the department and the commission to develop alternative fishing seasons that accomplish fishery management objectives and maximize economic benefits to local communities. The committee may not meet with the department more than three times per year unless additional meetings are approved by the director of the department.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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