

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6118

PARTIAL VETO

C 264 L 04

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating a cougar control pilot program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Parks, Fish & Wildlife (originally sponsored by Senators Morton, Stevens, Deccio, Mulliken, Roach and Swecker).

Senate Committee on Parks, Fish & Wildlife
House Committee on Fisheries, Ecology & Parks

Background: In 1996, an initiative was passed by the voters to limit the hunting of bear and some other species with the aid of bait or with the use of hunting hound dogs. The initiative also included other species, such as cougar, bobcat and lynx. The initiative did allow the state to authorize the use of hounds to control populations for public safety.

Studies recently have shown that there is an increase in cougar numbers and in cougar sitings in populated areas in the state of Washington. The present authority to control cougars rests with the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Summary: A three-year pilot program is established to be administered by county government and the Fish and Wildlife Commission to allow for limited hound hunting as a means to better control the cougar population, provide population numbers and reporting.

The county commissioners of Chelan, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Stevens, and Ferry counties will establish a three-year pilot program to control the cougar population in cooperation with the commission.

Fish and Wildlife Department reports on the cougar pilot project are required, and additional counties may participate in the pilot project. All hunting must be to protect public safety or property.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	33	15	
House	90	5	(House amended)
Senate	34	14	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 10, 2004

Partial Veto Summary: The section allowing additional counties to join the pilot program is eliminated.