

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6161

As Passed Senate, February 7, 2006

Title: An act relating to group fishing permits for outdoor education programs working with the department of fish and wildlife.

Brief Description: Concerning group fishing permits.

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

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 1/12/06, 1/16/06 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 2/7/06, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6161 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair; Oke, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Morton, Spanel and Stevens.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: According to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), the agency has sponsored and conducted more than 70 on-the-water fishing events involving young people, almost all of whom are age 14 and younger, since 2002.

For those age 14 and under, no license is needed to fish in Washington. Those age 15 are required to have a youth fishing license in order to fish, which allows both freshwater and saltwater fishing. Those young people age 16 and older must have an annual combination license, an annual freshwater or saltwater license, or a short-term combination license in order to fish.

Current law recognizes group fishing permits which allow a group of individuals to fish and harvest shellfish without individual licenses or the payment of individual license fees. The Director of DFW must issue a group fishing permit on a seasonal basis to state-operated facilities or state-licensed nonprofit facilities or programs for certain disabled persons, ill persons, or senior citizens in the care of such a facility.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission must adopt rules that provide the conditions under which a group fishing permit must be issued.

Summary of Bill: In addition to current authority, the Director of DFW may set conditions and issue a group fishing permit to groups working in partnership with and participating in DFW outdoor education programs. At the discretion of the Director, a processing fee may be applied.

The adoption of rules that set conditions under which group fishing permits are issued by DFW is made discretionary.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: Expanding the use of group permits would be a tool to provide young people over age 14, who currently must have individual fishing licenses, the opportunity to fish and participate in outdoor education events and programs. The DFW, schools, and other organizations have developed education programs for youth and the ability to obtain a group permit would assist such programs. These outdoor education opportunities prove very beneficial to young people, improving physical conditioning, attitude, and performance in school.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Terry Rudnick, DFW; Kayleen Pritchard, Pacific Ed. Institute; Corey Freeman, RFA/PSA; Dawn Wakeley, Tahoma School District; Tara Samborn, Tahoma School District; Tyler Pierce, Tahoma School District; Jeff Henkel, Tahoma School District; John Aultman, New Market Skills Center.