

HB 1696-S.E - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Increases penalties for the violation of certain fish and wildlife provisions.

Creates the fish and wildlife enforcement reward account in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from criminal wildlife penalty assessments under RCW 77.15.420 must be deposited into the account.

Provides that expenditures from the account may be used only for investigation and prosecution of fish and wildlife offenses, to provide rewards to persons informing the department about violations of Title 77 RCW and rules adopted under Title 77 RCW, and for other valid enforcement uses as determined by the commission. Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

Provides that a person is guilty of unlawful recreational fishing in the first degree if the person fishes for or possesses a fish listed as threatened or endangered in 50 C.F.R. Sec. 17.11 (2002), unless fishing for or possession of such fish is specifically allowed under federal or state law.

Provides that, upon conviction of an offense involving killing or possession of big game taken during a period of time when hunting for the particular species is not permitted, or in excess of the bag or possession limit, the department shall revoke all hunting licenses and tags and order a suspension of hunting privileges for two years.

Declares that the criminal wildlife penalty assessments provided in this act shall be doubled in the following instances:

(1) When a person is convicted of spotlighting big game under RCW 77.15.450;

(2) When a person commits a violation that requires payment of a wildlife penalty assessment within five years of a prior gross misdemeanor or felony conviction under this title;

(3) When the person killed the animal in question with the intent of bartering, selling, or otherwise deriving economic profit from the animal or the animal's parts; or

(4) When a person kills the animal under the supervision of a licensed guide.