

HB 2286 - DIGEST

Finds that Dungeness crab fishing is a major component of the recreational fishing experience in Puget Sound and the opportunity for quality recreational fisheries has steadily declined partially due to the continued inaccuracy of harvest estimates and a lack of timely receipt of harvest estimate data.

Finds that the department of fish and wildlife has chosen to impose restrictions on the recreational crab fishery in Puget Sound rather than to focus on the problem of improving data accuracy and timeliness of obtaining that data.

Finds that a reduction in the endorsement fee collected by the department of fish and wildlife is necessary to maintain a reasonable fee amount for the level of opportunity provided.

Declares that a license to take and possess Dungeness crab is only valid in Puget Sound east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line if the fisher has in possession a valid catch record card officially endorsed for Dungeness crab. The endorsement costs one dollar and fifty cents, including any fees authorized under RCW 77.32.050, and deposited into the recreational Dungeness crab endorsement account created in this act.

Creates the recreational Dungeness crab endorsement account in the state treasury.

Provides that expenditures from the account may be used only for costs associated with the sampling, monitoring, and management of catch associated with the Dungeness crab recreational fisheries. Moneys appropriated under this act must supplement and not supplant other federal, state, and local funds used for Dungeness crab recreational fisheries management. Under no circumstances may moneys from the account be used to backfill shortfalls in other state funding sources.