

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1148

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources & Marine Waters, March 24, 2011

Title: An act relating to the establishment of a license limitation program for the harvest and delivery of spot shrimp originating from coastal or offshore waters into the state.

Brief Description: Concerning the establishment of a license limitation program for the harvest and delivery of spot shrimp originating from coastal or offshore waters into the state.

Sponsors: House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Blake and Kretz).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/01/11, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Marine Waters: 3/14/11, 3/24/11 [DP, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & MARINE WATERS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Ranker, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove and Swecker.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Fraser.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Emerging Commercial Fisheries. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) may authorize emerging commercial fisheries. An emerging commercial fishery refers to:

- the commercial taking of a newly classified species of fish or shellfish;
- fishing with gear not previously used for a species; or
- fishing in an area in which a species has not been fished.

Along with an emerging commercial fishery license, DFW must issue either a trial fishery permit or an experimental fishery permit. Trial fishery permits are issued where there is no need to limit participation in the fishery. DFW issues an experimental permit where there is a need to limit the number of participants. The participation limitations must ensure habitat protection, conserve the resource, and prevent overharvesting.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

An emerging commercial fishery license is \$185 for residents and \$295 for non-residents.

Coastal Spot Shrimp. Coastal spot shrimp are the largest shrimp on the west coast. The large size and white spot on the abdomen distinguish the spot shrimp from other shrimp. The spot shrimp's range along the west coast stretches from Alaska to San Diego, California. DFW has maintained an emerging commercial fishery for coastal spot shrimp since 1999. The total number of allowed permits is 15, and there are currently eight permit holders. The fishery utilizes shellfish pots and is open from March 15 through September 15 each year. Harvest is limited to a total of 200,000 pounds.

Summary of Bill: Establishes a Coastal Spot Shrimp License (license). A new limited-entry license is established which is required to fish for, possess, and deliver spot shrimp. Only a participant in the emerging commercial fishery may receive a license; however, the license is transferrable. Beginning in 2013, DFW may issue a new license so long as the total number of fishery licenses does not exceed eight. A person may not own more than one license.

Like the current emerging commercial fishery license, the fee for a coastal spot shrimp license is \$185 for a resident and \$295 for a nonresident.

Establishes Requirements for Vessels in the Fishery. A license holder must designate a vessel to be used with the license. Beginning in 2012, a license holder may not designate a vessel that is either (1) more than 10 feet longer than the vessel associated with the license on March 31, 2003, or (2) that exceeds 99 feet.

Specifies the State's Management Authority Over the Fishery. DFW is not required to open the commercial coastal pot shrimp fishery in any given year. A license holder is not entitled to compensation if a license is modified or revoked. Additionally, the license does not create a right or interest in the coastal spot shrimp resource.

By January 7, 2016, DFW must provide a report to the Legislature on the coastal spot shrimp fishery. The report must take into consideration the resource's population, the impact of the fishery on the ecosystem, and the market for the resource and include any recommended changes to the license program.

Terms are defined.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: DFW has worked with the fishery participants and supports the bill. The fishery has progressed a great deal in its time as an emerging commercial fishery. DFW and the fishers have set a maximum catch level, imposed limits on

the number of fishers, and reduced the annual time period for fishing. The fishery has proven that it is manageable over time, and should be made a permanent fishery. This will bring continued economic benefits to the fishery and coastal communities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Craig Burley, DFW; Jerry Tilley, Larry Thevik, commercial fishers.