

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2650

As of February 22, 2012

Title: An act relating to state and private partnerships for managing salmonid hatcheries.

Brief Description: Regarding state and private partnerships for managing salmonid hatcheries.

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

Brief History: Passed House: 2/09/12, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Energy, Natural Resources & Marine Waters: 2/22/12.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, NATURAL RESOURCES & MARINE WATERS

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Role of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). DFW serves as manager of the state's fish and wildlife resources. Among other duties, DFW must protect and manage fish and wildlife including establishing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife.

Salmon Hatchery Partnership Agreements. In 2009 the Legislature passed a bill that required DFW to establish a program to utilize partnerships to resume or continue operation of salmon hatcheries closed or scheduled for closure during the 2009-2011 biennium.

The legislation established provisions for these agreements including:

- requirements for those wishing to partner with DFW, including that the partner has a long range business plan;
- prioritization for applications that would maximize hatchery production; and
- requirements that partnership agreements be consistent with existing law and policy relating to hatchery management.

Summary of Bill: The limitation on partnership agreements applying only to salmon hatcheries closed or scheduled for closure during the 2009-2011 biennium is removed, allowing such agreements to be used for any salmon hatchery.

The long-range business plan required of partners may allow the partner to harvest hatchery chum salmon in a designated area as provided by DFW permit or rule of the Fish and

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.

Wildlife Commission. All chum salmon harvested must be sold at a price commensurate with the current market, with proceeds used to operate the hatchery.

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: The bill expands the ability of DFW to form partnerships to keep hatcheries operating. The bill narrowed the cost recovery language to cover chum because of concerns raised by the recreational fishing community, and the commercial fishing community supports this change. The bill presents a common sense approach to supporting ongoing needs for fish. DFW supports these partnerships and the bill's attempt to help support the entities that are supporting the continued funding of the hatcheries.

CON: Alaska has seen problems with cost recovery including abuse and cheating the system. There should be plans in place before this concept is enacted.

OTHER: There is support for the concept of cost recovery, but this should not be the only or primary tool to support hatchery partnerships. The current bill only resolves the issues relating to chum salmon production and for hatcheries in Hood Canal. Concerns remain about partner selection, chain of custody, and consultation with tribes.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries; Rob Zuanich, Purse Seine Vessel Owners; Ray Honea, Puget Sound Harvesters; Heather Bartlett, DFW.

CON: Paul Matsun, commercial fisher.

OTHER: Daniel Luzzo, Steve Robinson, Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement and Harvest Assn.