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**HOUSE BILL 1225**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Kretz, Blake, Short, Wilcox, Scott, and Buys

AN ACT Relating to increasing the social acceptance of endangered species recovery by providing the fish and wildlife commission with the tools necessary to enact changes to the status of a species; amending RCW 77.12.020; and adding a new section to chapter 77.12 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 77.12.020 and 2014 c 202 s 302 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The director shall investigate the habits and distribution of the various species of wildlife native to or adaptable to the habitats of the state. The commission shall determine whether a species should be managed by the department and, if so, classify it under this section.

(2) The commission may classify by rule wild animals as game animals and game animals as fur-bearing animals.

(3) The commission may classify by rule wild birds as game birds or predatory birds. All wild birds not otherwise classified are protected wildlife.

(4) In addition to those species listed in RCW 77.08.020, the commission may classify by rule as game fish other species of the class Osteichthyes that are commonly found in freshwater except those classified as food fish by the director.

(5) The director may recommend to the commission that a species of wildlife should not be hunted or fished. The commission may designate species of wildlife as protected.

(6) If the director determines that a species of wildlife is seriously threatened with extinction in the state of Washington, the director may request its designation as an endangered species. The commission may designate, and remove the designation for, an endangered species consistent with section 2 of this act.

(7) If the director determines that a species of the animal kingdom, not native to Washington, is dangerous to the environment or wildlife of the state, the director may request its designation as deleterious exotic wildlife. The commission may designate deleterious exotic wildlife.

(8) Upon recommendation by the director, the commission may develop a work plan to eradicate native aquatic species that threaten human health. Priority shall be given to water bodies that the department of health has classified as representing a threat to human health based on the presence of a native aquatic species.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 77.12 RCW to read as follows:

(1) If the commission has listed a species statewide as endangered, threatened, or sensitive in Washington under RCW 77.12.020, it must consider any petitions for removing a species from classification under RCW 77.12.020, or changing the classification of the species, on a regional basis.

(2) Regional changes to the listing status of a species must, given the preponderance of scientific data available, be based on regional population numbers and the biological status of the species in the proposed region and not on the region's contribution to the overall statewide species recovery. However, the commission must consider the parallel federal endangered species act status of the species in question for the region where a change in status is petitioned.

(3) Upon a regional change in listing status, the commission must amend any relevant management plans, recovery plans, or administrative rules related to the subject species.

**--- END ---**