

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6274

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to the Columbia river recreational salmon and steelhead endorsement program.

Brief Description: Concerning the Columbia river recreational salmon and steelhead endorsement program.

Sponsors: Senators Parlette, Takko, Pearson, Rolfes, Hargrove, Schoesler, Becker, Warnick and Hewitt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/18/16, 2/23/16 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Renames the "Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Pilot Stamp Program" to the "Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement Program" ("Endorsement Program"), extends the expiration date of the Endorsement Program from June 30, 2016, to June 30, 2022 and requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) to maintain updated Endorsement Program revenue and expenditure information on its website.
- Requires the Department and the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Recreational Anglers Board (Board) to develop, by December 1, 2016, a process for individuals and organizations to submit project proposals to the Board.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Walkinshaw, Vice Chair; Buys, Ranking Minority Member; Hurst, Lytton, Pettigrew, Schmick, Stanford and Van De Wege.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Orcutt.

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.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

Fishing Licenses Issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is responsible for the management of the state's fish and wildlife resources, and establishes basic rules and regulations governing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife. As a part of this responsibility, the Department issues licenses, tags, endorsements, and permits for hunting and fishing in Washington.

Individuals age 15 and older must purchase a fishing license. Categories of fishing licenses include freshwater licenses, saltwater licenses, and combination licenses. There are several endorsements, stamps, permits, or other surcharges required for particular activities in addition to a hunting or fishing license.

Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement Program.

The Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement Program (Endorsement Program) was created in 2009 and was originally called the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Pilot Stamp Program. Revenue from purchases funds activities related to continuing and expanding selective fisheries in the Columbia River Basin, such as data collection, fisheries enforcement, monitoring, and evaluation. Individuals age 15 and over must purchase an endorsement in order to fish for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River or its tributaries. The Endorsement Program expires on June 30, 2016.

Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Recreational Anglers Board.

The Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Recreational Anglers Board (Board) is comprised of six to 10 volunteer members, appointed by the Director of the Department, who represent the four Fish and Wildlife regions which make up the Columbia Basin. The Board meets twice per year, and advises the Department regarding activities and expenditures of the Endorsement Program. Endorsement Program-funded project proposals developed by the Department are vetted through the Board and community review in the community in which the proposed project would occur.

Summary of Bill:

References to the "Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Pilot Stamp Program" are changed to the "Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement Program" ("Endorsement Program"), and the Endorsement Program is no longer referred to as a pilot. The Department must post updated information on the revenues and expenditures of the Endorsement Program on its website.

The Department and the Board must develop a process, by December 1, 2016, for individuals and organizations to submit project proposals to the Board for review and consideration.

The expiration date of the Endorsement Program is extended from June 30, 2016, to June 30, 2022. By December 1, 2020, the Department must provide a summary of the Endorsement Program and recommendation regarding whether or not the Endorsement Program should be continued to the appropriate committees of the Legislature.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Endorsement Program is important to the Department and to recreational anglers. Since the inception of the Endorsement Program, an estimated \$7 million in revenue has been generated to support about one million angler days. Recreational anglers have contributed an economic benefit of approximately \$87 million to state and local economies.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Kelly Cunningham, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.