

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5166

C 191 L 15
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning the management of forage fish resources.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rolfes, Ranker and Hasegawa).

Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Parks
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources
House Committee on Capital Budget

Background: The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), among other duties, must protect and manage fish and wildlife by establishing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife. Generally a recreational license is required to hunt, fish, or take wildlife or seaweed. A recreational fishing or shellfish license is not required, however, for carp, smelt, and crawfish, and a hunting license is not required for bullfrogs.

WDFW describes forage fish as a variety of small schooling fish that serve as food for many species of fish, birds, and marine mammals. Several forage fish species are fished recreationally and commercially in Washington. Forage fish species present in state waters include the northern anchovy, pacific sand lance – also known as candlefish, pacific herring, pacific sardine, and a variety of smelt species.

Summary: WDFW and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) must collaborate to conduct a survey of surf smelt and sand lance spawning grounds throughout the Puget Sound, including the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The habitat survey must be completed and accessible by the public by June 30, 2017. To the extent possible, the survey should be conducted using Veterans Conservation Corps crews. Provides legislative intent that DNR and WDFW complete the surf smelt and sand lance spawning grounds survey with funds specifically appropriated from the state's capital budget for the 2015-17 biennium.

Also by June 30, 2017, WDFW must conduct a mid-water trawl survey throughout the Puget Sound to evaluate the prevalence of adults of all species of forage fish. WDFW must integrate survey results into existing Puget Sound ecosystem assessments to assist in managing and conserving forage fish species and the species that prey on them.

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.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	45	4	
House	93	4	(House amended)
Senate	48	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 24, 2015