

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6308

As of January 28, 2016

Title: An act relating to migratory bird hunting fees.

Brief Description: Concerning migratory bird hunting fees.

Sponsors: Senators Takko, Warnick and Ranker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 1/27/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Bonnie Kim (786-7316)

Background: A small game hunting license is required to hunt for all classified and unclassified wild animals and wild birds, except big game. The fee is \$35 for residents, \$165 for nonresidents, and \$15 for youth. In addition to a small game hunting license, a supplemental permit is required for all persons 16 years or older to hunt migratory birds. The migratory bird permit fee is \$15 for residents and nonresidents.

Based on hunter survey results, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) determines the relative proportion of waterfowl and non-waterfowl migratory bird hunters. The portion of permit revenue from waterfowl hunters is used for migratory waterfowl habitat acquisition and development, and for enhancement, protection, and propagation of migratory waterfowl. The portion of revenue from non-waterfowl migratory bird hunters is used for the same project types benefitting non-waterfowl migratory birds.

Summary of Bill: The migratory bird permit fee is increased from \$15 to \$25. A migratory bird account is created for revenue collected from the migratory bird permit. Expenditures from the account may be used only for purposes relating to WDFW's migratory game bird program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Revenue will go to improve habitat. If we don't have habitat, then we won't have birds to hunt. WWRP funds are not covering habitat needs as they used to. The WDFW Waterfowl Advisory Group recommended and has endorsed this bill. WDFW has established a backload of projects related to waterfowl habitat that we would like to see funded. WWRP-related legislation being heard this session reduces funding for riparian habitat. Ducks Unlimited also supports SB 5380, the duck stamp bill. Drought, urban sprawl, and increasing costs of procuring public hunting lands are all challenges to migratory bird hunting.

CON: We believe fee increases should be used as a last resort.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Takko, prime sponsor; Mark Smith, Ducks Unlimited; Genna Dorow, City of Othello.

CON: Tom Echols, Hunters Heritage Council.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.