
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 1257

Brief Description: Concerning the release of wild beavers.

Sponsors: Representatives Kretz, Blake, Taylor, Fitzgibbon and Buys.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Specifies that wild beavers from western Washington may be relocated only to another location in western Washington.

Hearing Date: 1/24/17

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) may authorize the removal or killing of wildlife that is destroying or injuring property. The ultimate disposition of the removed wildlife is determined by the Director of the Department (Director). The Director may also enter into written agreements with landowners designed to protect the subject property from further wildlife damage. The Department may permit the relocation of wild beavers on public or private land with the permission of the landowner. Private individuals may trap beavers if they hold a state trapping license. All trapping must be conducted in accordance with the trapping seasons established by the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

The Department may condition beaver relocations to maximize the success and minimize the risk of the relocation. Release site conditions that the Department may consider include the gradient of the stream, the adequacy of food sources, the elevation, and the stream geomorphology. In addition, the Department may condition how the capture and release occurs and require specific training for the capture, handling, and transport of wild beavers. Capture and release conditions may include: establishing the timing of the capture and release; specifying the amount and ages

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of the beavers involved; and the requirements for providing supplemental food and lodging materials. Beavers may only be relocated between two geographic areas in eastern Washington, or from an area in western Washington to an area in eastern Washington.

Summary of Bill:

Beavers captured in western Washington may only be relocated to another area in western Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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