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**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

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**HB 2276**

**Brief Description:** Concerning notification of wildlife transfer, relocation, or introduction into a new location.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Eslick, Haler and Young.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Directs the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to hold a public hearing before transferring, relocating, or introducing wildlife into a new location.
- Requires the WDFW to provide 30 days public notice in advance of a public meeting on a wildlife relocation, transfer, or introduction.

**Hearing Date:** 1/11/18

**Staff:** Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

**Background:**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has been delegated the responsibility to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage Washington's wildlife, food fish, game fish, and shellfish resources. As a part of this responsibility, the WDFW may regulate the transportation and possession of fish and wildlife in the state, and authorize the removal, relocation, or introduction of wildlife when it is necessary for wildlife management or research. The WDFW also sometimes has a role both in wildlife removal, relocation, or introduction decisions, and in implementing such decisions.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) must hold a public hearing before WDFW personnel may transfer, relocate, or introduce any wildlife into a new location in the state. The

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meeting must occur in the community most likely to be impacted by the relocation. Members of the public may not be required to register their names or other information as a condition of attendance. The presiding official or WDFW staff must present the details of the WDFW's proposed action, and the public must be afforded the opportunity to comment. Written or electronic comments may be included in the hearing record.

Public notice of the meeting must be provided at least 30 days prior to the date of the meeting and must state the date, time, and location of the public hearing and a summary of the proposed action. The summary must include:

- the species of wildlife to be introduced, transferred, or relocated;
- the estimated number of animals;
- the general location where the wildlife will be released; and
- the potential range where the wildlife is likely to roam.

A press release of the hearing notice must be provided to media outlets in the communities most likely to be impacted, posted on the DFW's web site, posted on the website of the community or local government near where the wildlife will be introduced or relocated, and provided in writing to members of local legislative and executive bodies of any location impacted by the wildlife relocation or introduction.

Removing an animal from an urban or residential area to an area where the same species reside, relocation of beavers, and activities occurring at existing hatcheries are exempt from the public meeting and notice requirement.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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