
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2307

Brief Description: Requiring confidentiality in the release of sensitive fish and wildlife data.

Sponsors: Representatives Van Werven and Young.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires release of sensitive fish and wildlife data to be subject to a confidentiality agreement.

Hearing Date: 1/17/18

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

The Public Records Act (PRA) requires state and local agencies to make their written records available to the public for inspection and copying upon request, unless the information fits into one of the various specific exemptions in the PRA or otherwise provided in law. The stated policy of the PRA favors disclosure and requires narrow application of the listed exemptions.

The PRA exempts from public disclosure certain sensitive fish and wildlife data that is collected and shared by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for research and management purposes. Sensitive fish and wildlife data generally includes location data or nesting sites of endangered or threatened wildlife as designated by the Fish and Wildlife Commission or the WDFW, or other location data that could compromise the viability of a certain fish or wildlife population. Sensitive fish and wildlife data does not include reported predatory wildlife interactions.

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.

Release of sensitive fish and wildlife data may be subject to a confidentiality agreement. There is an exception for the release of sensitive fish and wildlife data to the owner, lessee, or right-of-way or easement holder of private land who initially provided the data.

Summary of Bill:

Release of sensitive fish and wildlife data must, instead of may, be subject to a confidentiality agreement. The exception for release of such data to the owner, lessee, or right-of-way or easement holder of private land who initially provided the data is maintained.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section 2 relating to fish and wildlife data exempt from public disclosure, which takes effect June 30, 2022, to account for a double amendment created in 2017.