

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SJM 8009

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Agriculture & Natural Resources

**Brief Description:** Requesting Congress to provide the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries with sufficient resources to expedite its endangered species act and national environmental policy act review of Puget Sound hatchery and genetic management plans and that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries prioritize and conduct immediate review and approval of Puget Sound hatchery and genetic management plans.

**Sponsors:** Senator Chase.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 3/22/17, 3/29/17 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requests that Congress provide the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries with sufficient funding to expedite review and approval of Puget Sound Hatchery Genetic Management Plans under the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Buys, Ranking Minority Member; Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fitzgibbon, Lytton, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Robinson, Springer, Stanford and J. Walsh.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Chapman, Vice Chair; Chandler and Schmick.

**Staff:** Robert Hatfield (786-7117).

**Background:**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

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*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.*

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) protects and manages the state's fish and wildlife resources. The WDFW operates approximately 80 hatchery facilities throughout the state, with about 75 percent of facilities raising salmon or steelhead and 25 percent rearing trout and other game fish.

Endangered Species Act.

Salmon and steelhead hatchery programs operating in regions with populations listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) must be evaluated and permitted through the federal government to ensure consistency with the ESA. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Service oversees the ESA for salmon and steelhead. The ESA provides different permitting processes depending on the hatchery operator and the federal listing designation.

Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans.

Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans (HGMPs) are technical documents that describe the composition and operation of each hatchery program. The primary goal of an HGMP is to describe biologically based artificial propagation management strategies that ensure the conservation and recovery of ESA-listed salmon and steelhead populations.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries uses the information provided by HGMPs to evaluate impacts on ESA-listed salmon and steelhead species. Completed HGMPs may also be used for regional fish production and management planning by federal, state, and tribal resource managers.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The Senate Joint Memorial requests that Congress provide the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries with sufficient resources to expedite Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act review of Puget Sound Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans.

The Senate Joint Memorial requests that the NOAA Fisheries prioritize and conduct immediate review and approval of Puget Sound Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Washington has approximately 85 fish hatcheries that are doing their best to help in the recovery of various species. Every hatchery has a Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries uses that information to evaluate the hatchery's impact on endangered species. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries has not had enough resources to evaluate all of these plans to make sure they are doing what they are supposed to do.

Approximately 25 Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans for Washington fish hatcheries need to be reviewed by NOAA Fisheries. Without coverage under the Endangered Species Act, these hatchery programs are susceptible to litigation. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries needs more funding to complete the reviews.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Chase, prime sponsor; and Erik Neatherlin, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.