

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6072

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Appropriations

**Title:** An act relating to dividing the state wildlife account into the fish, wildlife, and conservation account and the limited fish and wildlife account.

**Brief Description:** Dividing the state wildlife account into the fish, wildlife, and conservation account and the limited fish and wildlife account.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rolfes, Braun and Becker; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife).

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Appropriations: 2/29/20 [DP].

#### **Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Replaces the State Wildlife Account with the Limited Fish and Wildlife Account and the Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Robinson, 1st Vice Chair; Bergquist, 2nd Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Rude, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Chandler, Chopp, Cody, Corry, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Hansen, Hoff, Hudgins, Kilduff, Kraft, Macri, Mosbrucker, Pettigrew, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Steele, Sullivan, Sutherland, Tarleton, Tharinger and Ybarra.

**Staff:** Dan Jones (786-7118).

#### **Background:**

##### State Wildlife Account.

The State Wildlife Account (SWA) is an account in the State Treasury that is appropriated to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and is primarily used for the operating costs of WDFW activities, such as recreational fishing and hunting regulations,

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land management, wildlife conservation efforts, and enforcement. The SWA receives revenue from a number of sources, some of which include:

- sales of a variety of recreational fishing and hunting licenses, permits, tags, and permits;
- fees from certain personalized license plates;
- sales of property;
- a portion of an excise tax on anadromous game fish; and
- a portion (8 percent) of Discover Pass sales revenue.

Many of the sources of revenue into the SWA may only be used for a specified purpose. For example, revenue from migratory bird stamps may only be used for the costs of producing the stamps and for migratory waterfowl habitat projects on certain lands. Because of these restrictions, the WDFW manages the SWA as having a restricted portion, including each of the dedicated revenue streams, and a non-restricted portion, which may be used for WDFW operations generally.

#### Special Wildlife Account and Warm Water Game Fish Account.

The Special Wildlife Account and the Warm Water Game Fish Account are two additional accounts administered by the WDFW that are appropriated separately from the SWA.

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### **Summary of Bill:**

#### State Wildlife Account.

The SWA is replaced by two new accounts: the Limited Fish and Wildlife Account (LFWA) and the Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account (FWCA). The revenue streams and authorized uses of the SWA are redirected to either the LFWA or the FWCA based on whether they are restricted or may be used for WDFW operations generally.

Revenue streams redirected from the SWA to the LFWA include concealed pistol license late renewal penalties, personalized license plate fees, migratory bird stamps, catch record cards, a portion of turkey tags, two-pole stamps, auctions and raffles, wildlife decals, Discover Pass revenue, and the portions of sales of licenses, permits, tags, stamps, endorsements, and application fees that are specified for a limited purpose.

Revenue streams redirected from the SWA to the FWCA include property sales, a portion of commercial license fees, sales of informational materials, a portion of turkey tags, a portion of the anadromous game fish tax, and the portions of sales of licenses, permits, tags, stamps, endorsements, and application fees that are not specified for a limited purpose.

The WDFW is directed to calculate the amount of money contained in the SWA on July 1, 2021, derived from non-restricted revenue sources. If the Office of Financial Management certifies this amount as correct, the State Treasurer must transfer this amount to the FWCA.

#### Special Wildlife Account and Warm Water Game Fish Account.

The Special Wildlife Account and the Warm Water Game Fish Account are amended to specify that they are separate accounts, rather than accounts that exist "in" the SWA.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2021.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The Legislature required the WDFW to do a zero-based budget and long-term planning in 2017, and this process revealed a structural flaw in WDFW's funding. This bill would help prevent that from happening again. The bill would make clear which funding streams are for the bills of the agency generally, and which are restricted.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Tom McBride, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife.

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