

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 6613

---

---

C 216 L 20  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning the inspection of marine aquatic farming locations.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Senators Rolfes, Lovelett and Saldaña).

**Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks**  
**House Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources**

**Background:** Aquaculture is the process of growing, farming, or cultivating aquatic products in marine or freshwater environments. Aquatic products include plants, shellfish, and finfish. There are four main state permits or approvals necessary to conduct net pen aquaculture in Washington's marine waters:

- a national pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) permit through the Department of Ecology (Ecology);
- an aquatic farm registration through the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW);
- a marine finfish aquaculture permit through DFW; and
- fish transport permits through DFW.

The federal Clean Water Act establishes NPDES, which regulates discharges of pollutants to surface waters. In Washington, NPDES permitting authority is delegated to the state, allowing Ecology to issue NPDES permits.

An aquatic farmer must obtain a marine finfish aquaculture permit from DFW to raise any species of marine finfish in net pens in Washington's marine waters. The aquatic farmer must include an operations plan, escape prevention plan, and an escape reporting and recapture plan with the permit application. The permit is valid for five years.

The director of DFW may develop rules for implementing, administering, and enforcing marine finfish aquaculture programs in cooperation with finfish aquatic farmers. The rules must include procedures for inspecting marine aquatic farming locations on a regular basis to determine conformity with laws and rules relating to operation of marine aquatic farms.

**Summary:** The director of DFW must develop rules that provide for the recovery of actual costs incurred for required inspections, monitoring, and compliance testing of marine aquatic farms by DFW.

---

*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.*

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	36	12
House	73	24

**Effective:** June 11, 2020