

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJR 8208

As of January 18, 2024

Brief Description: Enshrining the right to hunt and fish in the state Constitution.

Sponsors: Senators Wagoner, Boehnke, Fortunato, Keiser, Schoesler, Short and Wilson, L..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 1/22/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Proposes a Constitutional amendment to preserve the right to forage, hunt, fish, trap, and harvest wildlife and fish.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7428)

Background: The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) operates under a statutory mandate to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage Washington's wildlife, food fish, game fish, and shellfish. The Department of Fish and Wildlife has been delegated the responsibility to carry out this mandate at the direction of the Commission, which includes establishing basic rules and regulations governing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife.

To amend the Constitution, the amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the members elected to each house of the Legislature, and then approved by a majority of the voters in the next general election.

Summary of Bill: A Constitutional amendment is proposed adding that all the people of this state shall have an inalienable right to forage, hunt, fish, trap, and harvest wildlife and fish, subject only to reasonable regulation as prescribed by the Washington State

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Legislature and executive branch. The amendment provides that traditional methods, practices, and procedures of harvest are the preferred means of managing game and fish. The amendment may not be construed to modify any provision of common law or statutes relating to trespass, eminent domain, or any other property rights. The amendment does not supersede, limit, interpret, or infringe upon any established tribal treaty rights.

The Secretary of State must give proper notice of the constitutional amendment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 17, 2024.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.