
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 1189

Brief Description: Ensuring a balanced representation of interests on the fish and wildlife commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Lytton, Morris, Blake and Takko.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes mandatory the currently suggested direction to the Governor that a balanced representative of stakeholders be appointed to the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

Hearing Date: 1/30/13

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) serves as the supervising authority for the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Commission has a variety of duties, including: the establishment of hunting and fishing seasons; prescribing the time, place, and manner of fish and wildlife harvest; establishing provisions regulating food fish and shellfish; adopting rules to implement the state's fish and wildlife laws; and having the final authority over any tribal, interstate, or international fish and wildlife agreements.

The Commission consists of nine members serving six-year terms. Three members must reside east of the summit of the Cascade Mountains, three must reside west of the summit, and the remaining three are "at large", meaning that they may reside anywhere in the State. Commissioners must have a general knowledge of the habits and distribution of fish and wildlife and may not hold any publicly elected office in the State.

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 members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. In making appointments, the Governor must seek to appoint commissioners reflecting a balance of fish and wildlife stakeholders, including: sport fishers, commercial fishers, hunters, private landowners, and environmentalists. The direction to the Governor on balancing interests is permissive.

Summary of Bill:

The direction to the Governor suggesting that a balanced representative of stakeholders be appointed to the Commission is made mandatory. The Governor is required to appoint balanced representation on the Commission reflecting, at a minimum, the interests of organized groups representing sport fishers, commercial fishers, hunters, private landowners, and environmentalists.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.