

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5159

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, February 16, 1995  
Ways & Means, February 23, 1995

**Title:** An act relating to a warm water game fish enhancement program.

**Brief Description:** Creating the warm water game fish enhancement program.

**Sponsors:** Senators Owen, Oke, Haugen and Hochstatter.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources: 1/24/95, 2/16/95 [DPS-WM].  
Ways & Means: 2/22/95, 2/23/95 [DP2S].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5159 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Drew, Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; A. Anderson, Haugen, Morton, Oke, Owen, Snyder, Strannigan and Swecker.

**Staff:** Ross Antipa (786-7413)

**Background:** The Department of Fish and Wildlife manages warm water game fish. Warm water fish species in Washington include: bass, catfish, crappie, perch, bluegill, walleye, pumpkinseed, sunfish and others. These fish do not receive a great deal of management emphasis from the department.

The creation of a warm water fish enhancement program would increase the fishing opportunities for warm water fish.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** A warm water game fish enhancement program is created within the Department of Fish and Wildlife. A combined approach of habitat improvement and fish culture is utilized to improve warm water fish populations. The new program is funded by a warm water fish stamp with an annual fee of \$5, which is required to fish for bass, channel catfish, walleye, crappie, and tiger musky. A dedicated account is established in the state wildlife fund, subject to legislative appropriation.

The warm water fish stamp takes effect January 1, 1996.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Persons over the age of 70 are required to purchase a warm water stamp to fish for warm water fish. The use of private land is not restricted to protect warm water fish. Fishing license fees are not placed in the warm water game fish account. The department may purchase warm water fish from private aquatic farmers. The department must investigate the potential for striped bass introduction.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 18, 1995.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 1995, except for fees which are effective January 1, 1996.

**Testimony For:** The Department of Fish and Wildlife could increase the fishing opportunities for warm water fish with additional funding.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Jim Owens, WA State B.A.S.S. Federation; Jack Swanberg, NW Marine Trade Assn.; Ron Sawyer, Central WA Fish Advisory.

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5159 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; Bauer, Cantu, Drew, Finkbeiner, Fraser, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Johnson, Long, Pelz, Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Strannigan, West and Winsley.

**Staff:** Tracy Cox (786-7437)

**Summary of Second Substitute Bill:** A warm water game fish enhancement program is created within the Department of Fish and Wildlife. A combined approach of habitat improvement and fish culture is utilized to improve warm water fish populations. The new program is funded by a warm water fish stamp with an annual fee of \$5, which is required to fish for bass, channel catfish, walleye, crappie, and tiger musky. The warm water fish stamp takes effect January 1, 1996. A dedicated account is established in the state wildlife fund, subject to legislative appropriation. The revenue from the new surcharge shall not replace funding for warm water fish projects existing on December 31, 1994.

**Second Substitute Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** Revenue from the warm water fish stamp does not replace funding for warm water fish projects existing on December 31, 1994.

**Testimony For:** The additional fee provides the resources that will enable the Department of Fish and Wildlife to implement and run this program. Funding is not taken away from saltwater fish programs.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Bruce Crawford, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife; Jack Swanberg, Northwest Marine Trade Assn.