
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2528

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By House Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Buck, Hatfield, Pennington and Basich)

Read first time 02/02/96.

1 AN ACT Relating to studying harbor seal and sea lion predation on
2 anadromous fish; creating a new section; and making an appropriation.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The fish and wildlife commission shall
5 direct department staff to conduct a study on harbor seals and
6 California sea lions in Washington. In designing the specific
7 components of this study, the department shall use methodologies based
8 on scientifically valid resource management principles and techniques
9 and shall operate within the bounds of the marine mammal protection
10 act. The department shall work to coordinate its research efforts and
11 study designs with the national marine fisheries service and the
12 Pacific states marine fisheries commission to insure that this research
13 effort complements, rather than duplicates, other pinniped research
14 efforts in the region.

15 (2) The overall study shall consist of three components:

16 (a) The first component shall be designed to examine the food
17 habits of harbor seals and California sea lions, seeking to identify
18 the range and quantity of prey consumed by these seals and sea lions

1 and the effect of their consumption patterns on prey resources such as
2 salmon and steelhead.

3 (b) The second component shall focus on the potential for fecal
4 coliform bacteria contamination in important commercial shellfish
5 production areas that also have abundant populations of pinnipeds,
6 primarily harbor seals. This component of the study shall identify
7 such areas, review the situation in each area, and, if the seals and
8 sea lions are determined to be major contributors, develop necessary
9 mitigation measures to avoid contamination problems.

10 (c) As the third component of this study, the department shall
11 assess on an ongoing basis the populations of harbor seals and
12 California sea lions, in order to produce information that will be
13 essential for future seal and sea lion management decisions.

14 (3) Results of this study shall be distributed to the appropriate
15 committees of the legislature, the national marine fisheries service,
16 the member states of the Pacific states marine fisheries commission,
17 Native American tribes with fishing rights to anadromous fish, the
18 province of British Columbia, and other interested parties. Once the
19 study results are available, the department shall work with the Pacific
20 states marine fisheries commission to use these and other research
21 results in developing an appropriate management regime for harbor seals
22 and California sea lions.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The sum of three hundred fifty thousand
24 dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for
25 the biennium ending June 30, 1997, from the state general fund to the
26 fish and wildlife commission for the purpose of the study in section 1
27 of this act.

--- END ---