

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6150

As Reported By House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to evaluating selective fishing methods.

Brief Description: Requiring recommendations concerning selective fishing strategies.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Parks (originally sponsored by Senator Swecker).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/25/98, 2/27/98 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Butler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Anderson; Chandler and Eickmeyer.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Hatfield and Pennington.

Staff: Carole Richmond (786-7114).

Background: In 1993, the Department of Fish and Wildlife was required to report to the Legislature on its recommendations for selective fishery methods that would minimize fishing impacts on critical and depressed wild stocks that are part of mixed stock fisheries. The department was also required to prepare a schedule for implementing those strategies.

In addition, the department was required to evaluate commercial and recreational salmon fishing gear types, and to provide status reports on its findings in 1993, 1994 and 1995. A final report was due on December 31, 1996. None of these reports were completed and presented to the Legislature.

The need to implement selective fishing methods has increased in recent years due to the occurrence of more threatened or endangered fish stocks.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Fish and Wildlife must complete a study of selective salmon fishing capabilities of existing fishing gear and of current fishing techniques. The department must seek input from commercial, recreational, and tribal fishing interests. The study must present final recommendations to the Legislature by December 31, 1998.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The Department of Fish and Wildlife needs to target particular groups of fish for management through mesh size [of nets], and time and area closures. Money has already been spent to study this issue. This is an old issue related to by-catch. What is different about this bill?

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Barb Lindsay, Northwest Sport Fishing Industry Association (in favor); Brian Edie, Department of Fish and Wildlife (in favor); and Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries, Purse Seine Vessel Owners, and Puget Sound Gillnetters (concerns).