

# **HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS**

## **HB 1700**

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**Title:** An act relating to regional fisheries enhancement groups.

**Brief Description:** Requiring the department of fish and wildlife to facilitate groups applying to be regional fisheries enhancement groups.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Buck, DeBolt, Doumit, Sump, Miloscia, Regala, Radcliff, Barlean, Tokuda, Schoesler, Hatfield, Eickmeyer, Kessler, Mielke, Pennington, Clements, Mastin and Dunn.

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### **HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Meeting Date:** February 16, 1999

**Bill Analysis Prepared by:** Carole Richmond, Analyst (786-7114)

**Background:** Regional fisheries enhancement groups were authorized by statute in 1989 for the purpose of encouraging organized volunteer efforts to improve anadromous fish populations. These groups must be incorporated as nonprofit organizations and are eligible for state financial support. The Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Fish and Wildlife Commission are directed to provide these groups with technical assistance. A key goal of the groups is to develop projects to supplement the fishery enhancement capability of the department (RCW 75.50.080). Enhancement projects must be submitted to the Fish and Wildlife Commission for approval prior to implementation.

A regional fisheries enhancement group account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer to help defray the costs of operating the groups. The account is funded through surcharges on recreational and commercial fishing licenses.

A regional fisheries enhancement group advisory board is created to make recommendations to the Fish and Wildlife Commission. The board is charged with developing a training and assistance plan for the groups, including developing a clearinghouse of information and a program to provide direct assistance to groups for the solicitation of funds and technical assistance.

At present, there are 12 regional fisheries enhancement groups in Washington.

**Summary of Bill:** The Department of Fish and Wildlife is directed to designate four more regions in eastern Washington for the formation of regional fisheries enhancement groups. The department is also directed to assist prospective groups that apply to

become a regional fisheries enhancement group. The advisory board reviews the applications and recommends to the director which group shall be selected as the regional fisheries enhancement group for a region.

*Appropriation:* None.

*Fiscal Note:* Not requested.

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