

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2719

Title: An act relating to providing immunity for placement of large woody debris into streams.

Brief Description: Providing immunity for placement of large woody debris into streams.

Sponsors: Representatives Ericksen, Linville, Sump, Koster, Regala, Lambert, Morris, Eickmeyer, Anderson, Fortunato, Haigh, G. Chandler, Kagi and Rockefeller.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Meeting Date: February 2, 2000.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Bill Lynch, Counsel (786-7092)

Background:

Riparian areas benefit when trees are left unharvested. While they are standing, these trees provide shading for the stream and nesting places for birds and other wildlife. When the trees fall into the stream, they often provide large woody debris to help fish evade predators and to feed. Recognizing this benefit to the environment, the Legislature provided immunity to landowners who leave these trees standing along streams from any injuries or damages that may result from the trees being left.

The placement of large woody debris into streams is a project frequently undertaken by landowners, volunteers, and government agencies to assist in salmon recovery. There is no similar immunity provided in statute for people who are involved in these projects from injuries or damages that may result from the placement of the large woody debris.

Summary of Bill:

Any landowner, volunteer, state or local government agency personnel, or other person who is involved in the design or placement of large woody debris into a stream to enhance fish recovery, is not liable for any injuries or damages resulting from ordinary negligence associated with these actions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

