

Natural Resources

HB 1019

Brief Description: *Modifying the composition of the fish and wildlife commission.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Pennington, Hatfield, Mielke and Ogden.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Requires each of the six administrative regions designated by the Department of Fish and Wildlife to have at least one resident serve on the Fish and Wildlife Commission.*

Hearing Date: *1/29/01*

Staff: *Jason Callahan (786-7117).*

Background:

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (the Commission) consists of nine members serving six-year terms. Members are appointed by the Governor, and confirmed by the Senate. Three members must reside east of the summit of the Cascade mountains, three must reside west of the summit, and the remaining three are at large, and may reside anywhere in the state. Currently, the Commission has four members from western Washington, and 5 members from eastern Washington. The nine members are residents of the following cities: Olympia, Bellingham, Wenatchee, Bainbridge Island, Pullman, Spokane, Selah, Seattle, and Kettle Falls.

The Commission serves as the supervising authority for the Department of Fish and Wildlife (the Department). It received its authority from passage of Referendum 45 by both the Legislature and the public in 1995. The Commission has a variety of duties, including: 1) the establishment of hunting and fishing seasons, 2) prescribing the time, place, and manner of game fish and wildlife harvest, 3) establishment of provisions regulating food fish and shellfish, 4) adoption of rules to implement the state's fish and wildlife laws, 5) and final authority over the Department's budget proposals and any tribal, interstate, or international fish and wildlife agreements.

In 1986, the Department organized six administrative regions, each with a regional supervisor, to implement programs in enforcement, habitat, and wildlife and fisheries management. The administrative regions are organized geographically, with three in western Washington and three in eastern Washington. These administrative regions are subject to change by the Department. Currently, the administrative regions are arranged as displayed in Attachment 1.

Summary of Bill:

Six of the nine members of the Fish and Wildlife Commission shall be appointed to represent the six administrative regions of the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Each of the six members must represent a different administrative region. The department must formally adopt the six regions by rule and the governor is required to achieve this balance by administrative region as the terms of current commissioners expire and vacancies occur. The other three members of the Commission may reside in any region of the state.

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

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Not Requested.*