

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5869

As Reported by House Committee On:
Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks

Title: An act relating to fish planting.

Brief Description: Concerning planting of certain trout.

Sponsors: Senators Swecker, Jacobsen, Oke, Spanel, Hargrove, Morton, Doumit, Stevens and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks: 3/22/05, 3/31/05 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Repeals the statute that ties the Department of Fish and Wildlife's (Department) ability to purchase privately-produced triploid trout to the ability of the Department to recover the costs of buying the trout.
- Reinstates and makes permanent the authority that existed in 1999 and 2000 for the Fish and Wildlife Commission to determine which waters are appropriate for receiving triploid trout.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives B. Sullivan, Chair; Upthegrove, Vice Chair; Buck, Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, DeBolt, Dickerson, Eickmeyer, Hunt, Orcutt and Williams.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is authorized to purchase sterile privately-produced triploid trout to supplement trout populations raised in Department-operated hatcheries, but only if the cost of the program is less than the estimated increase in revenue from license sales and federal grants attributable to the planting of the privately-produced fish.

The privately-produced trout may not be released in waters where they have an adverse impact on wild trout. The maximum number of triploid trout that can be released is

determined by the Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission), and during the years 1999 and 2000, the Commission was authorized to make a determination as to which waters in the state were suitable for being used to receive planted triploid trout.

In 2005, the Department plans to release triploid trout in 91 lakes across 31 counties. The final release is planned to total almost 62,000 individual fish.

Summary of Bill:

The statute that ties the Department's ability to purchase privately-produced triploid trout to the ability of the Department to recover the costs from license sales and federal grants is repealed. The Department will be able to purchase privately-produced trout regardless of whether costs can be recovered.

The authority that existed in 1999 and 2000 for the Commission to determine which waters are appropriate for receiving triploid trout is reinstated and made permanent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill allows the Department to continue its popular triploid trout program by removing unnecessary technical language. Triploid trout are often record sized and their introduction causes many people to go fishing. The Department more than recoups its cost when it purchases these fish.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Swecker, prime sponsor; Jim Zimmerman, Washington Fish Growers Association; and John Kerwin, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.