
**Natural Resources, Ecology &
Parks Committee**

HB 2054

Brief Description: Protecting salmon and steelhead spawning beds.

Sponsors: Representatives McDermott and Chase.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to adopt rules that prohibit all activities that harm or disturb the spawning beds of salmon, steelhead, and all other fish.

Hearing Date: 3/10/05

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Legislature found while enacting the Salmon Enhancement Program that a state of emergency exists in regards to salmon stocks in Washington and immediate action is needed to restore the fishery. The Salmon Enhancement Program was created in 1995 to address this situation. The Salmon Enhancement Program created regional fisheries enhancement groups, the regional fisheries enhancement salmonid account, the fish passage barrier removal task force, the Skagit River salmon recovery plan, and other programs designed to restore the salmon fishery in Washington.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is required to adopt rules that prohibit all activities that harm or disturb the spawning beds of salmon, steelhead, and all other fish. The rules must prohibit, at a minimum, the following activities:

- Wading on spawning beds;
- Using high-powered jet or propeller-driven boats over spawning beds;
- Dragging anchors through spawning beds;
- Removing gravel from spawning beds; and
- Any other physical activity that damages the nests of incubating eggs.

The rules adopted by the Department must be published in brochures that are distributed to license applicants and to retail outlets. Persons that violate a rule of the Department are subject to a natural resources infraction.

Activities that are necessary to be conducted in a river may be allowed through a permit issued by the Department.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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