

**SB 5610 - DIGEST**

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 1ST SUB)

Provides that the governor, with the assistance of the salmon recovery office, shall designate additional salmon recovery regions that generally are consistent with the areas within the state of evolutionarily significant units designated by the federal fish services for federal recovery planning. The designated regions must be incorporated into the statewide salmon recovery strategy and must guide state, regional, and watershed level recovery planning and activities.

Provides that, the governor, with the assistance of the salmon recovery office, may recognize regional salmon recovery organizations for the purpose of developing and implementing regional recovery plans. Organizations seeking such recognition shall demonstrate to the governor's satisfaction that the organization sponsors have invited the participation of local governments, tribes, and other significant governmental entities within the region, as well as representatives of stakeholders with interests in fish recovery and water management, including fishing and fish conservation organizations, landowners, utilities, agriculture, and business. The sponsors shall also demonstrate a willingness and capability to carry out the planning, plan implementation, and project review functions assigned to a regional recovery organization under this act.

Requires that, by December 31, 2005, the salmon recovery office and the department of ecology shall jointly submit a report to the appropriate committees of the senate and house of representatives that reviews and provides recommendations on the following: (1) Modifications to state programs and financial assistance to encourage improved coordination among entities preparing salmon recovery, water resources, or related plans within the same watershed or group of watersheds;

(2) Improving state guidance and assistance to entities implementing such plans once they are prepared;

(3) Reviewing the organizational structure and governance of the variety of regional recovery organizations and watershed-level entities that are currently preparing or implementing plans, and recommendations regarding whether consistent procedures and criteria for forming regional recovery organizations should be required;

(4) Reviewing the current habitat project planning under chapter 77.85 RCW and water resource planning under chapter 90.82 RCW, and recommendations on ways to consolidate plan implementation and establish state funding priorities for implementation activities statewide across both planning programs;

(5) Improving the allocation of mitigation funding on a watershed basis, consistent with the state's policies and programs of optimizing mitigation projects; and

(6) Aligning the geographic areas of regional fisheries enhancement groups with the salmon recovery regions of the statewide strategy and coordinating the work of these groups with that of regional recovery organizations.

Repeals RCW 77.85.070 and 77.85.210.