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**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

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**HB 1646**

**Brief Description:** Authorizing department of fish and wildlife employees to sample fish, wildlife, and shellfish.

**Sponsors:** Representative Blake.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Increasing the ability of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to collect samples of fish, wildlife and shellfish.
- Expanding the gross misdemeanor of "interfering in department operations" to include preventing or interfering with the collection of samples of fish, wildlife and shellfish.

**Hearing Date:** 2/5/07

**Staff:** Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

**Background:**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is mandated to manage fish, shellfish, and wildlife in state waters and offshore waters [RCW 77.04.012]. As part of this mandate, the DFW is authorized to regulate many aspects of fishing, harvesting and hunting [RCW 77.12.047].

In order to carry out their duties, the DFW has the authority to inspect fish, wildlife, shellfish and seaweed at check stations for requirements such as licenses, permits, tags, stamps, or catch record cards [RCW 77.12.620].

**Summary of Bill:**

Employees of the DFW are given express authority to collect samples of fish, wildlife and shellfish located on public lands or state waters. In order to collect samples, employees of the

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

DFW may board vessels in state waters with the permission of the owner or agent of the vessel. If permission is denied, the DFW employee is authorized to apply for a search warrant in order to board the vessel and take samples of fish, wildlife, or shellfish.

If a person prevents or interferes with a WDFW employee collecting samples of fish, wildlife and shellfish they are guilty of interfering in WDFW operations. Unlawful interfering in WDFW operations is a gross misdemeanor.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 1, 2007.

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