
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2472

Brief Description: Regarding the sea urchin and sea cucumber license limitation programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Quall and Blake; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the expiration of the fees and taxes used to retire the Sea Cucumber and Sea Urchin dive fishery licenses' until 2013 or until the number of licenses is reduced to 20.

Hearing Date: 1/12/10

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

Background:

A closed fishery is a fishery with a set number of licenses held by defined participants. The commercial sea urchin and sea cucumber fisheries have been closed since the year 2000. The Director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is authorized only to issue licenses for these fisheries to individuals who held a license for the fishery in the previous year. The issuance of a license to a new applicant has been prohibited since 2000.

Along with closing the sea urchin and sea cucumber commercial fisheries, the WDFW manages a program to buyback, or retire, licenses from qualified participants in these fisheries. The WDFW is required to retire these licenses if the license holder voluntarily agrees to not renew his or her license the following year. The WDFW must retire licenses until the number of fishers participating in either the sea cucumber or sea urchin fishery drops to 25. When that number is achieved, the money collected from the remaining licenses must be used for management and enforcement in the sea urchin or sea cucumber fishery.

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.

Through the 2010 season, each license renewal for either fishery is assessed an annual fee of \$100. In addition, a fee of either \$500 or \$2,500 is assessed if the license holder either designates a different person, known as an alternate operator, to fish under his or her license, or if the license holder transfers the license outright to another person.

The two dive accounts also receive revenue from specific excise taxes. For sea cucumbers and sea urchins, the commercial fishers are required to pay in tax the value of their harvest multiplied by 4.6 percent, multiplied by the additional tax of 7 percent.

Summary of Bill:

The Sea Cucumber dive fishery license's surcharge is extended until 2013 or until the number of licenses is reduced to 20, whichever occurs first.

The Director of WDFW, or the Director's designee must notify the Department of Revenue within 30 days when the number of licenses is reduced to 20.

The Sea Urchin dive fishery license's surcharge is extended until 2013 or until the number of licenses is reduced to 20, whichever occurs first.

The Director of WDFW, or the Director's designee must notify the Department of Revenue within 30 days when the number of licenses is reduced to 20.

The excise tax on commercial possession of enhanced food fish is extended until 2013 for both sea cucumbers and sea urchins.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 12/22/09.

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