
SENATE BILL 6265

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Senators Ranker, Chase, Rolfes, Palumbo, Van De Wege, and Keiser

Read first time 01/11/18. Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a pinto abalone recovery initiative;
2 adding a new section to chapter 77.12 RCW; and creating a new
3 section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that abalone
6 populations worldwide have been in serious decline due to overharvest
7 and habitat degradation. Pinto abalone (*Haliotis kamtschatkana*) is an
8 abalone species with a distribution ranging from Baja California,
9 Mexico to Alaska. It is the only abalone species commonly encountered
10 in Washington state, British Columbia, and Alaska and is therefore
11 also referred to as the "northern" abalone.

12 The legislature further finds that pinto abalone were first
13 classified in Washington as shellfish in 1959 when a daily personal
14 harvest possession limit of three was imposed. In 1980, a three and
15 one-half inch minimum harvest size was implemented. In the early
16 1990s, fisheries biologists responded to signs of pinto abalone
17 population decline by imposing harvest gear restrictions, reducing
18 the daily possession limit, and increasing the minimum harvest size
19 to four inches. Despite these management measures, populations
20 continued to decline and in 1994 the fishery was closed and has

1 remained closed ever since. A commercial fishery for pinto abalone
2 was never authorized in Washington state.

3 The legislature finds that, despite the harvest closure in 1994,
4 Washington state abalone populations continued to decline. This
5 prompted cooperative pinto abalone restoration efforts between the
6 state, federal government, tribes, and nongovernmental organizations,
7 beginning in 2002. The overall goal of the abalone recovery efforts
8 has been to halt the decline of abalone populations in the Pacific
9 Northwest and to return populations to self-sustainable levels. Steps
10 toward achieving this overall goal include hatchery program
11 expansion, recovery planning and implementation, and public education
12 and outreach.

13 Building on these previous efforts, the legislature intends to
14 initiate expanded efforts to achieve these worthy goals and recovery
15 of the pinto abalone.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 77.12
17 RCW to read as follows:

18 (1) A pinto abalone recovery initiative is established by the
19 legislature, building on the previous efforts of the state and
20 federal, tribal, and nongovernmental partners identified in section 1
21 of this act.

22 (2) In implementing the pinto abalone recovery initiative, the
23 department must coordinate with its federal, tribal, and
24 nongovernmental cooperating partners and develop an action plan. At
25 minimum, the action plan must: Include steps and necessary funding to
26 develop a new or expanded hatchery program building on previous and
27 current hatchery operations and studies; identify an implementation
28 plan and timeline; and identify any legislative policy and funding
29 recommendations to promote the pinto abalone recovery initiative.

30 (3) The department must provide initial updates to the
31 legislature on the implementation of this section, and provide any
32 legislative recommendations, by September 1, 2018, and September 1,
33 2019.

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