

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HCR 4410

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Fisheries & Wildlife*

Brief Description: Establishing a joint select committee on salmon and steelhead recovery.

Sponsor(s): Representatives R. King, Wilson, Morris, D. Sommers, Winsley, Horn, H. Myers, Nelson and Orr.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Fisheries & Wildlife, March 5, 1991, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
FISHERIES & WILDLIFE**

Majority Report: *That Substitute House Bill No. 4410 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*
Signed by 10 members: Representatives R. King, Chair; Morris, Vice Chair; Fuhrman, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Cole; Haugen; Hochstatter; Orr; Padden; and Spanel.

Staff: Keitlyn Watson (786-7310).

Background:

Columbia River Salmon - Potential Listing of Five Stocks

In April and June of 1990 petitions were filed by the Shoshone-Bannock Indian Tribe from Idaho and by Oregon Trout under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) to list five wild stocks of Columbia River salmon as threatened or endangered. These stocks are: Snake River sockeye, Snake River spring, summer, and fall chinook, and lower Columbia River coho.

The ESA petitions are currently being reviewed by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). NMFS will make a preliminary determination on whether to list these stocks in mid-1991, and will issue a final decision by June of 1992. Listing will potentially influence actions that affect fish habitat, such as logging or dam operations, and actions that affect the fish themselves, such as harvest and hatchery production.

Salmon Summit

In 1990, following the listing petitions, Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon requested that the parties who use and manage the Columbia River develop a plan to enable the Northwest to protect and determine the future of these five stocks of fish. The planning process completed on March 4, 1991, has been dubbed the "Salmon Summit." The purpose of the summit was to prepare a consensus plan for the recovery of the five stocks prior to a NMFS decision on listing, with the objective of developing a plan that will be acceptable to NMFS. Parties to the summit included the tribes, environmental groups, the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and Montana, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Northwest Power Planning Council, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bonneville Power Administration, commercial and recreational fishing interests, federal land management agencies, irrigators, and others.

The summit focused on and made recommendations for managing four resource elements: migration and survival of fish, habitat, production, and harvest. The implementation plan establishes a special task force to oversee plan implementation and assigns the Northwest Power Planning Council the responsibility of coordinating the actions in the plan.

The Status of Other Salmon and Steelhead Stocks

Other wild stocks of salmon, and wild steelhead stocks, are in jeopardy, according to the American Fisheries Society and the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Oregon State University. According to an upcoming report by the Endangered Species Committee of the American Fisheries Society, 214 native, naturally spawning salmonid stocks in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and California are at high or moderate risk of extinction. In western Washington and the Columbia Basin over 117 salmonid stocks are identified as endangered, threatened, or of special concern.

Summary of Substitute Bill: HCR 4410 establishes a Joint Select Committee on Salmon and Steelhead Recovery to review the status of salmon and steelhead populations in Washington and to make recommendations for action needed to recover each population in Washington. The committee will include eight members, two from each of the House Fisheries & Wildlife Committee and the House Natural Resources and Parks Committee and four from the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. The committee is to request advice and information from a variety of interests from the public and private sectors. The committee will report its findings by December 1, 1991, and shall terminate on July 1, 1992.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill corrects a technical error; it replaces the duplicate reference to recreational fishers with a reference to recreational fishers and a reference to commercial fishers.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Working together to resolve these issues is the only way that the commercial fishing industry will survive.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Irene Martin, Columbia River Protective Fishermen's Union (in favor); and Steve Gray, Northwest Gillnetters Association (in favor).