

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 2055-S

May 28, 1993

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,

The House of Representatives of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to section 96, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2055 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to the creation of the department of fish and wildlife;"

I congratulate the Legislature for passing Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2055. This bill, like other agency consolidation measures enacted this year, will have a major positive impact on how we organize work and serve the public in our state agencies. The merger of fisheries and wildlife functions will save money, result in more accountable and efficient management, and eliminate overlap and duplication of effort. By improving management, we will be better able to focus the combined resources of the two departments on protecting the valuable fish and wildlife resources and habitat of this state for future generations.

However, a portion of section 96 would limit the ability of the new agency to wisely manage the resource under the new recreational salmon and marine fisheries enhancement program. The second sentence in that section constrains the Department of Fisheries and the new combined department from making decisions that may adversely affect a particular interest group. While decisions adverse to any interest group are never the preferred choice of the department, responsible stewardship and wise use of the resource occasionally require difficult decisions. The Governor and the department must retain the authority to make those decisions.

In order to maintain the intent of the remainder of section 96, I am directing the department to implement new recreational fishing enhancement activities prescribed by this act in a manner that clearly differentiates these activities from existing salmon programs of the department.

With the exception of section 96, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2055 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Lowry
Governor