

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

ESB 5613

Title: An act relating to salmon recovery measures and planning.

Brief Description: Identifying a statewide salmon recovery strategy.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen and Fraser.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Meeting Date: March 26, 1999.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Bill Lynch, Counsel (786-70929)

Background: The Legislature created a framework for salmon recovery with passage of SHB 2496 during the 1998 legislative session. This legislation established a process for funding and implementing salmon habitat restoration projects, created an independent science panel, and created the Salmon Recovery Office in the Governor's Office.

The Salmon Recovery Office is responsible for coordinating and assisting in the development of salmon recovery plans, and submits those plans to the appropriate federal agencies. The specifics concerning the development of a state-wide recovery strategy were not identified in the 1998 salmon recovery legislation.

Summary of Bill: A statewide salmon recovery strategy must be submitted by the Governor to the appropriate federal agencies by September 1, 1999. When the salmon recovery strategy is developed, the Governor and the Salmon Recovery Office must consider: (1) statewide initiatives and responsibilities, with regional and local watershed initiatives as the principle mechanism for implementing the strategy; (2) collaborative and incentive-based approaches which rely on the existing strategy enforcement structure; (3) addressing habitat, water quality degradation, harvest and hatchery management, inadequate streamflows, and barriers to fish passage; (4) identifying immediate actions that need to be taken such as establishing performance measures and effective monitoring and data management; (5) a public involvement process; (6) reliance on the best scientific information; (7) a fair allocation of the recovery costs; and (8) a phased relaxation of restrictions as salmon populations recover.

Actions taken pertaining to salmon recovery planning prior to the effective date of this legislation remain valid.

Habitat projects that include the use of side channels, off-stream rearing enhancement, improvement in over-wintering habitat, or use of acclimation ponds must be considered for funding when compiling and reviewing the habitat project list.

Before the interagency review team finalizes funding decisions of habitat projects, it must consult with representatives of irrigated and non-irrigated agriculture, sport and commercial fishing interests, large and small timber interests, conservation districts, and city and county governmental interests.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 2, 1999.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Passed Senate: 3/15/99, 49-0