

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5439

As Reported by House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to fishing guides.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions concerning the licensing of fishing guides.

Sponsors: By Senators Jacobsen and Morton; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 3/23/01, 3/30/01 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)

- Separate salmon guide licenses and game fish guide licenses are combined into a single fishing guide license.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Doumit, Democratic Co-Chair; Sump, Republican Co-Chair; Pearson, Republican Vice Chair; Rockefeller, Democratic Vice Chair; Buck, Edwards, Jackley, Murray and Pennington.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 3 members: Representatives G. Chandler, Eickmeyer and Erickson.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife licenses both salmon fishing guides and game fishing guides. These two classifications of freshwater guides are carried over from the time when the Department of Fisheries had regulatory authority over salmon and the Department of Game had regulatory authority over steelhead.

Consolidating these two licenses would result in more efficiency for the department and make it easier for guides to become licensed.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Separate salmon guide licenses and game fish guide licenses are combined into a single fishing guide license. The annual fee for a fishing guide license for a resident is \$175 plus a \$20 surcharge for fisheries enhancement. Nonresidents pay an annual fee of \$620 plus a \$100 enhancement surcharge.

Individuals wishing to hold a professional fishing guide license must demonstrate to the Department of Fish and Wildlife that they have a current first aid card, a cardiopulmonary resuscitation card, a Washington business license, and adequate liability insurance. Liability insurance is adequate if it extends to both the guide and employees and is in an amount of at least \$300,000. The director of the department may specify by rule the requirements for identifying boats engaged in professional fish guiding.

Amended Bill Compared to Bill:

The original bill allowed the department to promulgate rules considered necessary for public safety. The amended bill requires individuals wishing to hold a professional fishing guide license to demonstrate to the Department of Fish and Wildlife that they have a current first aid card, a cardiopulmonary resuscitation card, a Washington business license, and adequate liability insurance. Liability insurance is adequate if it extends to both the guide and employees and is in an amount of at least \$300,000.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: Washington's current approach to this area is the worse approach in the Northwest. Two different licenses are required, but there is no regulation. As a result, most guides are operating out of compliance with the regulations.

There is a gap in marine safety protection. The State Parks and Recreations Commission regulates rafting, but not fishing guides. The U.S. Coast Guard does not regulate all waterways in the state, leaving a gap in protection.

The current scheme is a relic from when the Department of Fish and Wildlife's

jurisdiction was broken down into two different agencies. Combining the licenses does not result in a net loss or gain for the department.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Clancy Holt and Joe Little, Sport Fishing Guides of Washington; and Bruce Crawford, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.