

RCW 77.12.085 Liberalized bag limits for bass, walleye, and channel catfish. The commission shall adopt rules to liberalize bag limits for bass, walleye, and channel catfish in all anadromous waters of the state in order to reduce the predation risk to salmon smolts. [2019 c 290 § 2.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 290: "(1) The legislature finds that the population of southern resident killer whales has declined in recent years and currently stands at a thirty-year low of seventy-four animals.

(2) The governor convened the southern resident killer whale task force after the 2018 legislative session to study and identify actions that could be taken to help sustain and recover this important species. In the course of its work, the task force found that chinook salmon compose the largest portion of the whales' diet, and are therefore critical to the recovery of the species. Further, several runs of chinook salmon in Washington state are listed under the federal endangered species act, making chinook recovery all the more urgent.

(3) The task force identified four overarching southern resident killer whale recovery goals and adopted several recommendations for specific actions under each goal. Goal one identified by the task force is to increase chinook abundance, and actions under that goal relate to habitat protection, protection of chinook prey, such as forage fish, and reducing impacts of nonnative chinook predators.

(4) To address the need identified by the task force to increase chinook abundance, the legislature intends to take initial, important steps consistent with recommendations made by the governor's southern resident killer whale task force." [2019 c 290 § 1.]