

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 1389

PARTIAL VETO

C 302 L 91

Brief Description: Regulating aquatic plants.

By House Committee on Environmental Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Fraser, Winsley, Rust and Belcher).

House Committee on Environmental Affairs
House Committee on Revenue
Senate Committee on Agriculture & Water Resources

Background: Aquatic weeds are primarily non-native species of plants that cause damage through rapid, unchecked propagation. Well known examples include eurasian water milfoil and purple loosestrife.

Aquatic weeds pose a variety of problems in Washington lakes and rivers. Aquatic weeds affect water quality by promoting low dissolved oxygen and high alkalinity; these conditions are unfavorable to fish and other aquatic life. They cause expensive damage to power plants, irrigation equipment, and motors. Additionally, aquatic weeds can restrict swimming, boating, and other recreational opportunities.

Eurasian water milfoil is now present in the Pend Oreille, Okanagan, and the Columbia river systems. Several lakes in eastern and western Washington are infested with milfoil. Purple loosestrife is also known to be spreading, primarily in wetland areas.

Washington currently has a state milfoil program for the prevention, control, and eradication of the milfoil plant. Under the program, the U.S. Corps of Engineers provides approximately \$400,000 per year to the Department of Ecology. The department issues this money to local governments on a match basis. The program applies to milfoil only and is limited to navigable waters under the corps' jurisdiction. This requirement excludes many milfoil infested areas in the State. Federal milfoil dollars may be lost unless the Department of Ecology secures funds to pay for the state's administrative costs of the program.

Aquatic plant control is eligible to compete for funds under the clean water account under certain circumstances. To

date, few aquatic control projects have been funded from this account.

Summary: An aquatic weeds account is created. An annual \$3 licensing surcharge is assessed on boat trailers with proceeds deposited to the new account. The Department of Ecology is authorized to: 1) issue grants to local governments and state agencies to manage freshwater aquatic weeds; 2) develop public education programs to prevent the spread of aquatic weeds; 3) provide technical assistance to local governments and lake management districts; and 4) fund demonstration or pilot projects to manage aquatic weeds.

Grants issued to local governments and state agencies may be used on lakes, rivers, or streams where aquatic weeds are a problem. Lakes, rivers, or streams must have public boat launch as a condition of funding.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	87	9	
Senate	33	14	(Senate amended)
House	90	4	(House concurred)

Effective: July 1, 1991
September 1, 1991 (Section 3)

Partial Veto Summary: The provision rendering the bill "null and void" if not specifically referenced in the budget is vetoed.