

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 6262-S

March 30, 1996

To the Honorable President and Members,
The Senate of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, Substitute Senate Bill No. 6262 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to transport tags for game;"

Substitute Senate Bill No. 6262 provides the Fish and Wildlife Commission the authority to authorize the purchase of cougar transport tags subsequent to a harvest without hounds. Although the bill only provides the commission with the authority to take such action, the policy itself is not an appropriate game management tool. Allowing tags to be sold following the taking of a cougar sends an inappropriate message regarding the value of cougars as big game animals, threatens the integrity of cougar harvest data, and will cause enforcement problems for the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

While I understand concerns about increasing cougar, human, and livestock interactions, there are other cougar control options which should be examined prior to enacting this type of legislation. I would encourage the commission and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to work with the public and the legislature to explore all options for the management of cougars in the state.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Substitute Senate Bill No. 6262 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Lowry
Governor