
**Fisheries, Ecology & Parks
Committee**

HB 1476

Brief Description: Reducing dangerous wood debris from the state's rivers and streams.

Sponsors: Representatives Pearson, Grant, Sump, Kristiansen, Boldt, Mielke, Armstrong, Condotta, Buck and Campbell.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Fish and Wildlife to authorize property owners to remove log jams if the removal will reduce an intrusion on a navigational channel or is a threat to recreational users.

Hearing Date: 2/21/03

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

Background:

A person is required to obtain a hydraulic project approval for any project or work that will use, divert, obstruct, or change the natural flow or bed of any state waters before beginning the construction or work. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) issues hydraulic project approval (HPA) permits to ensure the proper protection of fish life. The DFW must grant or deny approval of a HPA within 45 calendar days.

The DFW may issue oral approval for removing obstructions in cases of an emergency arising from weather or stream flow conditions, or other natural conditions. Emergency is defined as an immediate threat to life, the public, property, or environmental degradation. Oral approval for removing obstructions do not require written approval prior to commencing work.

Summary of Bill:

Wood debris that poses a threat to recreational users of a waterbody is added as an emergency condition that requires the DFW to issue an oral approval for removing the obstruction.

The DFW shall authorize property owners to remove tree snags and log jams if the removal will reduce an intrusion on the navigation channel, correct an adverse redirection of a river course, or remove a serious threat to recreational users of a waterbody.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.