
**Fisheries, Ecology & Parks
Committee**

SJM 8004

Brief Description: Requesting that British Columbia refrain from releasing grizzly bears near our common border.

Sponsors: Senators Morton, Haugen, Hargrove and T. Sheldon.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requests the political leaders of British Columbia to refrain from releasing Grizzly Bears in locations where the bears range may extend into Washington.

Hearing Date: 3/27/03

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

The Grizzly Bear is considered to be a threatened species on both the federal and state species list in the United States. In British Columbia, the Grizzly Bear is has a provincial status of special concern.

According to the British Columbia Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection ("Ministry"), the province of British Columbia is implementing a Grizzly Bear recovery plan for the North Cascades region of the province. This region of British Columbia, which borders the northern Washington state line, is reported by the Ministry to have a Grizzly Bear population of less than 25 individuals, with transportation corridors blocking migration from adjacent populations. The proposed recovery plan developed by the Ministry attempts to recover the population in both the long and short term. One of the short-term approaches of the recovery plan the introduction of individual bears from neighboring regions of the province into the North Cascade region.

In Washington, the Legislature has directed the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to protect Grizzly Bears and to develop management programs on public lands to promote natural population regeneration. Although the DFW is directed to participate in federal Grizzly Bear management discussions, the introduction of Grizzly Bears into Washington is

expressly prohibited (RCW 77.12.035).

Summary of Bill:

British Columbia's Premier and Minister of Land, Water, and Air Protection, and the British Columbia Legislative Assembly, is asked by the Washington Legislature to refrain from releasing Grizzly Bears in locations where the bears range may extend into Washington. If bear release is deemed necessary by British Columbia, the province is asked to obtain and share DNA samples from each released bear, and implant each bear with a microchip containing specific information about that individual bear.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.