

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5289

---

---

As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Energy & Water, March 5, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to watershed health monitoring.

**Brief Description:** Adopting a watershed monitoring plan and action strategy.

**Sponsors:** Senators Jacobsen, Oke and Fraser.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Energy & Water: 2/13/03, 3/5/03 [DPS-WM].

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY & WATER

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5289 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Morton, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Doumit, Fraser, Hale, Hargrove, Honeyford, Oke and Regala.

**Staff:** Richard Rodger (786-7461)

**Background:** The state of Washington has a long-term process for restoration of watersheds and the naturally occurring species that inhabit them. The Independent Science Panel, formed through the salmon restoration legislation in 1998, has provided recommendations for monitoring of salmon restoration and watershed health. In 1999, a ten-member Salmon Recovery Funding Board was created to make grants and loans for salmon habitat projects and salmon recovery activities. In addition, state agencies maintain a variety of other water quality activities.

In 2001, a Monitoring Oversight Committee (MOC) was established to review the progress of watershed-related monitoring, make recommendations to individual agencies to improve coordination of monitoring activities, and develop a comprehensive statewide strategy for monitoring watershed health, with a focus on salmon recovery. A four-member steering committee, composed of two members of the Senate and two members of the House, was also created.

MOC recently made recommendations regarding adaptive management, accessibility of monitoring information, accountability for investments, measuring habitat project implementation and effectiveness, measuring fish response to habitat improvement projects, and tracking status and trends in environmental conditions of habitat and water quality. MOC also developed an action plan and implementation schedule.

MOC recommendations must be fully implemented by the Department of Ecology and watershed planning units by June 30, 2007.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) must provide coordination and oversight of state agencies in the implementation of the comprehensive statewide watershed health monitoring strategy and action plan. The board may periodically revise the strategy and action plan to reflect changes in funding availability, monitoring activities by state or nonstate agencies or entities, and other considerations relevant to achieving a comprehensive strategy.

In allocating funds to state agencies or other entities, the board must be generally guided by the monitoring oversight committee's action plan. The board may make recommendations to state agencies for carrying out monitoring activities consistent with the strategy and action plan.

Where the state agency declines to implement the recommendation, the director of the agency must explain such refusal, including an identification of the funding, legal, or other constraints upon the agency to fully implement the recommendation.

The board must establish a monitoring policy implementation committee comprised of 11 members. The committee must make recommendations to the board on a variety of topics.

The board must report to the Governor and the Legislature every two years on its activities and on the progress of state agencies and other entities in implementing the monitoring strategy and action plan.

The Legislature does not intend this act to hinder any monitoring activities conducted by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) regarding fisheries or hatcheries.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** An implementation committee is created to make recommendations to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Technical and clarifying amendments are made. Intent of the Legislature is clarified with regard to any effects on the DFW.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** The Monitoring Oversight Committee did not complete its work and additional follow-up is needed to ensure further coordination and oversight of monitoring activities related to watershed health. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board is the logical choice to continue this work at this time because of its independence. The SRFB should be expanded to handle these duties, as it is currently only has five citizen members to do the work.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Steve Meyer, Salmon Recovery Office (pro).