

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6289

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record cards.

Brief Description: Regarding Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record cards.

Sponsors: Senators Spanel, Swecker, Jacobsen, Morton and Shin; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/20/08, 2/27/08 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)

- Authorizes the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to issue an administrative penalty for individuals that fail to return their Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record card.
- Exempts the failure to return a Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record card as a misdemeanor violation.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Van De Wege, Vice Chair; Kretz, Ranking Minority Member; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Grant, Lantz, McCoy, Nelson and Newhouse.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Eickmeyer, Kristiansen, Loomis and Orcutt.

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Catch record card rules are adopted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission). There is no charge for an initial catch record card. Each subsequent or duplicate catch record card costs \$10.

In order to catch Dungeness crab, a fisher must possess a valid catch record card officially endorsed for Dungeness crab. A license to take and possess Dungeness crab is only valid in Puget Sound waters east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line. The endorsement costs no more than \$3 when purchased for a personal use saltwater, combination, or shellfish and seaweed license. The endorsement costs no more than \$1 when purchased for a temporary combination fishing license.

The funds received from the sale of catch record cards and the Dungeness crab endorsements are deposited into the State Wildlife Account. The funds received from the Dungeness crab endorsement are used for the sampling, monitoring, and management of the catch associated with the Dungeness crab recreational fisheries.

Every person issued a Puget Sound crab catch record card must return their catch record card to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) no later than the required return date printed on the catch record card or report their catch record card information on the internet site designated on the catch record card by the same date.

Anyone failing to return their catch record card to the WDFW is guilty of the crime of "violating rules requiring reporting of fish or wildlife harvest," a misdemeanor.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The Commission may set an administrative penalty for failure to return to the WDFW a Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record card. The Commission may also require fishers who did not return their Puget Sound crab catch record card the previous year to complete a report and pay an administrative penalty before a new catch record card is issued. The penalty may not exceed \$10.

The WDFW will report each year to the House of Representatives and the Senate the rate of fisher compliance with the Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record card reporting requirements, the administrative penalties imposed, and the amount of administrative penalties collected.

The failure to return a Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record card is exempt from a misdemeanor violation.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

This bill makes the administrative penalty for failure to comply with the rules requiring the reporting of data from catch record cards endorsed for Puget Sound Dungeness crab not to exceed \$10, instead of \$25.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 27, 2008.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It is to the advantage of all parties to have an accurate crab count. The crab fishery in Puget Sound is fully exploited. The WDFW has done quite a bit to get a response on the catch cards from the public without a lot of success. The WDFW has support from a number of organizations on this bill.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Spanel, prime sponsor; and Morris Barker, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.