

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5793

As of February 23, 2007

Title: An act relating to the composition of the fish and wildlife commission.

Brief Description: Regarding the composition of the fish and wildlife commission.

Sponsors: Senator Morton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 2/26/07.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Current law directs the Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) to establish policies regarding fish and wildlife species and to monitor the Department of Fish and Wildlife's implementation of those policies. Among other duties, the Commission also classifies wildlife and establishes the basic rules and regulations governing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife.

The Commission consists of nine members who serve six-year terms. Members are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Three members must reside east of the summit of the Cascade mountains, three must reside west of the summit, and three are appointed at-large. No two Commissioners may be residents of the same county.

Persons eligible for appointment as members of the Commission must have general knowledge of the habits and distribution of fish and wildlife and must not hold another state, county, or municipal elective or appointive office. In making appointments to the Commission, the Governor must seek to maintain a balance reflecting all aspects of fish and wildlife, including representation recommended by sport fishers, commercial fishers, hunters, private landowners, and environmentalists.

Each odd-numbered year, the Commission must elect one of its members as chair and another member as vice-chair.

Summary of Bill: The geographic requirements governing appointments to the Fish and Wildlife Commission are amended. At least one Commissioner must reside within the boundaries of each of the six current administrative regions of the Department of Fish and Wildlife. No more than two Commissioners may reside in any single administrative region. No two Commissioners may be residents of the same county.

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.

The criteria for selecting Fish and Wildlife Commissioners is further specified. The Commission must be composed of:

- two members recommended by hunting organizations;
- two members recommended by sport fishing organizations;
- one member recommended by commercial fishing organizations;
- three members recommended by agricultural organizations; and
- one member recommended by conservation organizations.

With each new appointment, the Governor must incrementally bring membership into conformance with these requirements.

If a Commissioner is not confirmed by the Senate within one year of appointment, that member's position is considered vacated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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