H-0635.1

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**HOUSE BILL 1270**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Buys, Blake, and Haler

AN ACT Relating to increasing salmon populations in Washington through the implementation of a new fish hatchery management structure that is modeled on the proven, successful structure utilized by the state of Alaska for the past forty years; amending RCW 77.04.160, 77.95.210, 77.95.290, and 77.100.050; adding a new section to chapter 77.50 RCW; adding a new chapter to Title 77 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Certified hatchery manager" means the manager of a permitted hatchery who has received certification from the department under section 4 of this act.

(2) "Hatchery-affected area" means the delineated areas of state waters identified by the department under section 2 of this act where the permitted hatchery is expected to have a significant positive effect on fishing opportunities.

(3) "Permit" means a permit issued to a qualified regional aquaculture association under section 2 of this act to operate a salmon hatchery.

(4) "Permitted hatchery" means a hatchery operated by a qualified regional aquaculture association that possesses a permit issued under section 2 of this act.

(5) "Qualified regional aquaculture association" means a private, nonprofit organization that is governed by a board of directors composed of salmon recovery stakeholders, at least half of which represent native American tribes with treaty salmon harvesting rights, and is organized for the purpose of managing salmon hatcheries under this chapter.

(6) "Salmon recovery stakeholder" means a person who, either directly or as a representative of a group, has been identified by the department as having been involved in the state's ongoing salmon recovery efforts, such as participating in a regional fisheries enhancement group authorized under RCW 77.95.060 or a commercial salmon fishery.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the department must issue at least three permits to qualified regional aquaculture associations to construct and operate individual salmon hatcheries. After the first three permits are issued, the department may issue additional permits at its discretion.

(2) The department may only issue a permit under this section to a qualified regional aquaculture association that has actively applied to the department for a permit and that satisfies the requirements for a permit under this chapter.

(3) A hatchery that was permitted as an educational hatchery on the effective date of this section must, upon application, automatically receive permitting as a commercial production hatchery under this section if all other requirements of this chapter are satisfied.

(4) As part of the permitting process, the department must delineate the areas of state waters where the permitted hatchery is expected to have a significant positive effect on fishing opportunities. Only one permit may be issued in each of these hatchery-affected areas.

(5) The department may only issue less than three permits under this section if there are too few qualified regional aquaculture associations that satisfy the requirements for a permit under this chapter and that have actively applied for a permit.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Prior to being approved for a permit under this chapter, a qualified regional aquaculture association must submit a business plan to the department.

(2) The business plan submitted by the qualified regional aquaculture association must include, at a minimum:

(a) The identification of the amounts and proposed sources of capital contributions necessary to initiate and maintain hatchery production;

(b) The identification of the approximate cost of each production harvest allocation as apportioned amongst the various harvest groups participating in the qualified regional aquaculture association;

(c) Evidence of an agreement among harvest groups participating in the qualified regional aquaculture association to apportion operations costs;

(d) Evidence of an agreement of all applicable nontribal stakeholders to not compete for grants against tribal organizations; and

(e) A planned method for equitably resolving any inadvertent allocation overharvesting amongst harvest groups participating in the managing qualified regional aquaculture association that relies on a system of cash payments from overharvesting groups to the underharvesting groups in the year that the misallocation occurs.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Each qualified regional aquaculture association awarded a permit under this chapter must have in its employ, or under contract, a hatchery manager that has been certified by the department.

(2) The department shall develop standards for hatchery manager certification and accept applications from individuals interested in being certified to operate a hatchery on behalf of a permitted qualified regional aquaculture association.

(3) An individual who can demonstrate that he or she actively managed a state, tribal, or federal hatchery on the effective date of this section must, upon application, be provided a certification under this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department must provide a permitted hatchery with adequate production limits that emphasize the production of pink and chum salmon intended to rebalance the food chain for native coho, chinook, and steelhead species. The department must also, if requested by a permitted hatchery, provide permitted hatcheries with an adequate production limit for coho salmon to encourage recreational fishing opportunities.

(2) Hatcheries that existed prior to the effective date of this section, if later permitted under a qualified regional aquaculture association, must receive priority application review for an expedited production increase.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department must restrict harvest opportunities in hatchery-affected areas to fishers who are financially participating in the capitalization and operating expenses of the enhanced fishing opportunities provided by the permitted hatchery and the associated qualified regional aquaculture association.

(2) Permanent harvest allocations for harvest within a hatchery-affected area, which may include individual harvest quotas, must be agreed to in a written contract amongst the fishers authorized to operate within a hatchery-affected area. The agreed-to harvest allocations are considered permanent until or unless voluntarily renegotiated by the signatories to the contract.

(3) All nontribal fishers authorized to harvest in a hatchery-affected area must be legally licensed by the department under this title.

(4) The department must condition all nontribal fishers operating in a hatchery-affected area with harvest requirements for gear type that encourage the best available technology for environmentally sensitive selective harvesting.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Any certified hatchery manager may request broodstock from the department as necessary to operate a permitted hatchery. The department must fulfill all broodstock requests, when practicable, in the time and manner requested by the certified hatchery manager.

(2) The department must monitor actual broodstock survival rate performance at permitted hatcheries and replace, as necessary, broodstock if the existing broodstock demonstrates low survival.

(3) Any necessary licenses for receiving broodstock must be issued in the name of the qualified regional aquaculture association responsible for managing the permitted hatchery and not in the name of the certified hatchery manager.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The department must, in its implementation of this title, fully and expeditiously cooperate with the goals of each qualified regional aquaculture association awarded a permit under this chapter and with the intent of this chapter.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The department must, prior to selling or decommissioning a surplus hatchery owned or managed by the state, offer to sell or contract the operations of the hatchery to a qualified regional aquaculture association that has been permitted under this chapter or that could qualify for permitting under this chapter.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The commission shall adopt rules to implement the requirements of this chapter. In adopting rules, the commission must study and, when appropriate, model the mature, tested, and robust legal structure adopted for private, nonprofit hatcheries by the state of Alaska that has led to significant increases in the numbers of both wild and hatchery fish in Alaska waters over the last forty years. All rules adopted under this section must be designed to minimize the interaction among fish produced by permitted hatcheries and any wild stocks that occur in a hatchery-affected area.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Initial rule making under section 10 of this act must be completed by December 31, 2016.

(2) This section expires June 30, 2017.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 77.50 RCW to read as follows:

The commission must condition all commercial salmon licenses that authorize harvest in a hatchery-affected area, as that term is defined in section 1 of this act, as necessary to comply with the requirements of chapter 77.--- RCW (the new chapter created in section 17 of this act).

**Sec.**  RCW 77.04.160 and 2001 c 337 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department shall prepare an annual surplus salmon report. This report shall include the disposition of adult salmonids that have returned to salmonid hatchery facilities operated under the jurisdiction of the state and by permitted hatcheries, as that term is defined in section 1 of this act, that:

(a) Have not been harvested; and

(b) Were not allowed to escape for natural spawning.

(2) The report shall include, by species, the number and estimated weight of surplus salmon and steelhead and a description of the disposition of the adult carcasses including, but not limited to, the following categories:

(a) Disposed in landfills;

(b) Transferred to another government agency for reproductive purposes;

(c) Sold to contract buyers in the round;

(d) Sold to contract buyers after spawning;

(e) Transferred to Native American tribes;

(f) Donated to food banks; and

(g) Used in stream nutrient enrichment programs.

(3) The report shall also include, by species, information on the number of requests for viable salmon eggs, the number of these requests that were granted and the number that were denied, the geographic areas for which these requests were granted or denied, and a brief explanation given for each denial of a request for viable salmon eggs.

(4) The report shall be included in the biennial ((~~state of the salmon~~)) report required by RCW 77.85.020 and other similar state reports on salmon.

(5) The report shall include an assessment of the infrastructure needs and facility modifications necessary to implement chapter 337, Laws of 2001.

**Sec.**  RCW 77.95.210 and 2001 c 337 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the department may supply, at a reasonable charge, surplus salmon eggs to a person for use in the cultivation of salmon. The department shall not intentionally create a surplus of salmon to provide eggs for sale. The department shall only sell salmon eggs from stocks that are not suitable for salmon population rehabilitation or enhancement in state waters in Washington after the salmon harvest on surplus salmon has been first maximized by both commercial and recreational fishers.

(2) The department shall not destroy hatchery origin salmon for the purposes of destroying viable eggs that would otherwise be useful for propagation or salmon recovery purposes, as determined by the department and Indian tribes with treaty fishing rights in a collaborative manner, for replenishing fish runs. Eggs deemed surplus by the state must be provided, in the following order of priority, to:

(a) Voluntary cooperative salmon culture programs under the supervision of the department under chapter 77.100 RCW;

(b) Regional fisheries enhancement group salmon culture programs under the supervision of the department under this chapter;

(c) Salmon culture programs requested by lead entities and approved by the salmon funding recovery board under chapter 77.85 RCW;

(d) Hatcheries of federally approved tribes in Washington to whom eggs are moved, not sold, under the interlocal cooperation act, chapter 39.34 RCW; ((~~and~~))

(e) A permitted hatchery, as that term is defined in section 1 of this act; and

(f) Governmental hatcheries in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

The order of priority established in this subsection for distributing surplus eggs does not apply when there is a shortfall in the supply of eggs.

(3) All sales, provisions, distributions, or transfers shall be consistent with the department's egg transfer and aquaculture disease control regulations as now existing or hereafter amended. Prior to department determination that eggs of a salmon stock are surplus and available for sale, the department shall assess the productivity of each watershed that is suitable for receiving eggs.

**Sec.**  RCW 77.95.290 and 1999 c 372 s 15 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department shall mark appropriate coho salmon that are released from department operated hatcheries and rearing ponds in such a manner that the fish are externally recognizable as hatchery origin salmon by fishers for the purpose of maximized catch while sustaining wild and hatchery reproduction.

(2) The department shall mark all appropriate chinook salmon targeted for contribution to the Washington catch that are released from department operated hatcheries and rearing ponds in such a manner that the fish are externally recognizable as hatchery origin salmon by fishers.

((~~The goal of the marking program is: (1) The annual marking by June 30, 1997, of all appropriate hatchery origin coho salmon produced by the department with marking to begin with the 1994 Puget Sound coho brood; and (2) the annual marking by June 30, 1999, of all appropriate hatchery origin chinook salmon produced by the department with marking to begin with the 1998 chinook brood.~~))(3) The department may experiment with different methods for marking hatchery salmon with the primary objective of maximum survival of hatchery marked fish, maximum contribution to fisheries, and minimum cost consistent with the other goals.

(4)(a) The department shall coordinate with other entities that are producing hatchery chinook and coho salmon for release into public waters to enable the broadest application of the marking program to all hatchery produced chinook and coho salmon and require the application of the marking program for all permitted hatcheries, as that term is defined in section 1 of this act.

(b) The department shall work with the treaty Indian tribes in order to reach mutual agreement on the implementation of the mass marking program.

(c) The ultimate goal of the program is the coast-wide marking of appropriate hatchery origin chinook and coho salmon, and the protection of all wild chinook and coho salmon, where appropriate.

**Sec.**  RCW 77.100.050 and 2001 c 337 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department shall:

(a) Encourage and support the establishment of cooperative agreements for the development and operation of cooperative food fish, shellfish, game fish, game bird, game animal, and nongame wildlife projects, and projects which provide an opportunity for volunteer groups to become involved in resource and habitat-oriented activities. All cooperative projects shall be fairly considered in the approval of cooperative agreements;

(b) Identify regions and species or activities that would be particularly suitable for cooperative projects providing benefits compatible with department goals;

(c) Determine the availability of rearing space at operating facilities or of net pens, egg boxes, portable rearing containers, incubators, and any other rearing facilities for use in cooperative projects, and allocate them to volunteer groups as fairly as possible;

(d) Make viable eggs available for replenishing fish runs, and salmon carcasses for nutrient enhancement of streams. If a regional fisheries enhancement group, lead entity, volunteer cooperative group, federally approved tribe in Washington, permitted hatchery as defined in section 1 of this act, or a governmental hatchery in Washington, Oregon, or Idaho requests the department for viable eggs, the department must include the request within the brood stock document prepared for review by the regional offices. The eggs shall be distributed in accordance with the priority established in RCW 77.95.210 if they are available. A request for viable eggs may only be denied if the eggs would not be useful for propagation or salmon recovery purposes, as determined under RCW 77.95.210;

(e) Exempt volunteer groups from payment of fees to the department for activities related to the project;

(f) Publicize the cooperative program;

(g) Not substitute a new cooperative project for any part of the department's program unless mutually agreeable to the department and volunteer group;

(h) Not approve agreements that are incompatible with legally existing land, water, or property rights.

(2) The department may, when requested, provide to volunteer groups its available professional expertise and assist the volunteer group to evaluate its project. The department must conduct annual workshops in each administrative region of the department that has fish stocks listed as threatened or endangered under the federal endangered species act, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq., in order to assist volunteer groups with egg rearing, share information on successful salmon recovery projects accomplished by volunteers within the state, and provide basic training on monitoring efforts that can be accomplished by volunteers in order to help determine if their efforts are successful.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 10 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 77 RCW.

**--- END ---**