
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2417

Brief Description: Concerning southern resident orca recovery.

Sponsors: Representatives Blake, Walsh, Muri, Buys and Appleton.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Appropriates funds to increase hatchery production of salmon for the purpose of promoting recovery of southern resident orcas.
- Establishes a southern resident orca recovery task force.

Hearing Date: 1/16/18

Staff: Robert Hatfield (786-7117).

Background:

Southern Resident Orcas.

Southern resident orca whales are the only known resident population of orcas in the United States. They spend the spring and summer months primarily in the inland marine waters of Washington and British Columbia, and spend the winter months primarily in the coastal waters of the Pacific Ocean between northern California and British Columbia. The diet of southern resident orcas consists almost entirely of salmon, primarily Chinook salmon.

Southern resident orcas are listed as an endangered species under federal, state, and Canadian law. The current population of southern resident orca whales is approximately 76, which represents the lowest population level of southern resident orcas over the past three decades.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) protects and manages the state's fish and wildlife resources. The WDFW operates approximately 80 hatchery facilities throughout the

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state, with about 75 percent of facilities raising salmon or steelhead and 25 percent rearing trout and other game fish.

Summary of Bill:

The sum of \$1,550,000 is appropriated from the state general fund to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, for the purpose of increasing the production of Chinook salmon and other salmon by 10,000,000 fish at certain specified hatcheries.

A legislative task force on the recovery of southern resident orcas is established. The task force must make recommendations regarding the recovery of southern resident orcas to the Legislature by November 15, 2019.

Appropriation: The sum of \$1,555,000 is appropriated from the state general fund in FY 2019.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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