

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1922

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to hydraulic project approval mitigation after natural events.

Brief Description: Concerning hydraulic project approval mitigation after natural events.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunt, Callan and Parshley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/12/25, 2/19/25 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Adds factors for consideration in woody debris mitigation of a hydraulic project approval after certain natural events.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Reeves, Chair; Morgan, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Engell, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bernbaum, McClintock, Nance, Orcutt, Richards, Schmick and Springer.

Staff: Lily Smith (786-7175).

Background:

Hydraulic Project Approvals.

Any activity that will use, divert, obstruct, or change the natural flow or bed of any of the waters of the state must first obtain a Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) from the

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

Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Conditions attached to approval of an HPA may include specific mitigation requirements, such as the placement of woody debris to compensate for woody debris removed in the initial work. The adequacy of the proposal for the protection of fish life is the only ground upon which an HPA may be approved, denied, or conditioned.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The WDFW must consider the following factors when requiring the placement of woody debris as a condition of an HPA for work needed after an extreme weather event or natural disaster:

- the emergency nature of the work;
- limitations on appropriate placement sites due to development;
- any potential increased risk of flooding;
- whether the placement increases the potential for problematic log jams; and
- the proportionate benefits to fish life from prioritizing substantial rather than exact replacement, and from not requiring replacement of debris accumulated after the initial occurrence.

The WDFW must seek to apply these factors equally to achieve similar time and expense outcomes for different areas that may experience these events.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill directs the WDFW to seek to apply the new factors equally to achieve similar time and expense outcomes for different areas that may experience these events.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 19, 2025.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill was inspired by recent events in a locality that was hit hard by the bomb cyclone this past fall. High winds came from an unusual direction and brought down a large number of trees. As most of this area is in a flood plain, response work needs to be careful not to create new flooding risks for peoples' homes. This bill introduces factors for WDFW to consider when regulating the response to events like this. There is currently a

requirement for habitat restoration, and salmon are very important in this area. There is a lot of complexity involved in ensuring that habitat recovery is done properly. The impacted locality has estimated very high costs to comply with the restoration requirements, and cities are currently struggling to provide basic services. This bill allows for restoration in line with an appropriate baseline.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Victoria Hunt, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.