
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 2598

Brief Description: Improving statewide coordination in support of anadromous fish recovery.

Sponsors: Representatives Lekanoff, Bernbaum, Parshley, Ramel, Richards, Pollet, Ryu, Nance and Timmons.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Salmon Advisory Commission to develop recommendations regarding agency actions, legislation, and budget priorities to enhance salmon and steelhead recovery.

Hearing Date: 2/3/26

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

Anadromous Fish Management.

Several species of salmon, as well as Puget Sound steelhead trout, are listed as either threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is responsible for managing the state's fish and wildlife resources. Other state agencies are responsible for various other issues that relate to salmon recovery: for example, water quality, land management, and fish passage barrier removal. Those agencies include the Department of Ecology (Ecology), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office.

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (SRO) is responsible for coordinating the statewide

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strategy for salmon recovery to healthy, sustainable population levels. A primary purpose of the SRO is to coordinate and assist in the development, implementation, and revision of regional salmon recovery plans. For administrative purposes, the SRO is located within the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

Summary of Bill:

The Salmon Advisory Commission.

A Salmon Advisory Commission (Commission) is established to:

- improve the coordination and understanding of the factors that influence salmon and steelhead recovery;
- consider existing efforts and needs in all areas that influence salmon and steelhead recovery, in order to identify gaps; and
- develop recommendations to be submitted to the Governor and the Legislature regarding agency actions, legislation, and budget priorities to enhance salmon and steelhead recovery.

The members of the Commission are as follows:

- the Director of the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs;
- each elected tribal chair from federally recognized tribes whose lands and territories included parts of Washington, invited by the Governor, who may designate a tribal councilmember to serve as their alternate;
- the Director of WDFW;
- the Director of DNR;
- the Director of Ecology;
- the Director of the Puget Sound Partnership;
- the Director of WSDOT;
- the Director of the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation;
- the Director of the RCO;
- the Director of the State Conservation Commission;
- the Director of the Department of Agriculture;
- the Director of the Parks and Recreation Commission;
- the Director of the Department of Health;
- four legislators—one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives and the Senate; and
- two representatives of cities and counties, appointed by the Governor.

The Commission must meet twice per year, choose co-chairs from among its legislative membership, and be staffed by legislative staff. The Commission's first report to the Governor and Legislature containing recommendations regarding anadromous fish recovery is due October 1, 2026, and subsequent reports are due by June 1 and December 1 of each year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 29, 2026.

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