

HB 2966 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Smith DB

Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Action Date: 04/12/23

Action: Do pass the A-Eng bill.

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Girod, Golden, Prozanski, Smith DB, Taylor

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 4/5, 4/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Authorizes the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to waive requirements related to fish health, immediate release, and the use of artificial baits for black bass or walleye angling competitions if the department determines that limiting a population of these species would benefit native fish species or the ecological health of the body of water. Authorizes ODFW to allow a person to remove and dispose of a nonindigenous aquatic species from a specified area if the department determines that the species is adversely affecting any population of native fish species within that area.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Invasive smallmouth bass consumption of juvenile salmon in the Coquille River
- Warming stream conditions increasingly favorable to certain invasive bass species
- Black bass as a colloquial and legal term
- Process for ODFW to make determination of "nonindigenous" species
- ODFW tools for managing invasive fish
- Collaborative opportunity for the department and angler community

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon sport fishing regulations prohibit anglers from wasting a fish after catching it. This means that any fish that is not caught for consumption must be released. Black bass and walleye are nonnative freshwater fish, whose diet consists of crayfish, amphibians, insects, and smaller fish, including juvenile Chinook salmon. During some parts of the sport fishing season, juvenile salmon have been found to make up approximately 18.5 percent of walleye diet. In Oregon, walleye populate the Willamette, Columbia, and Snake Rivers. Black bass can be found in most large rivers in Oregon as well as the lower sections of their tributaries.

House Bill 2966 A would authorize the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to waive certain requirements for black bass and walleye angling competitions and would permit the removal and disposal of a nonindigenous aquatic species from a specified area if the department determines that the species is adversely affecting any population of native fish species within that body of water.