

HB 2378 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Natural Resources

Action Date: 04/09/19

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 7-0-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Barreto, Gorsek, McKeown, Reardon, Smith DB, Sprenger, Witt

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/12, 4/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) establish and operate fish incubation box pilot program for 10 years in historically salmon-bearing waterways in Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine counties. Requires ODFW work with Oregon Hatchery Research Center, local salmon and trout enhancement program volunteer groups and others. Requires ODFW use certain types and numbers of fish eggs. Requires report to relevant interim legislative committees by September 15, 2020. Appropriates unknown amount to ODFW to establish and operate program beginning July 1, 2019. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2019.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Incubation box educational programs
- Difference between hatch box and incubation box
- Uncertainty regarding return rates of incubation box salmonids
- Incubation box salmonids considered native

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Removes requirement that ODFW establish a permanent fish incubation box program within unknown miles of the Pacific Ocean. Specifies fish incubation box program be piloted for 10 years. Includes Jackson County as pilot location. Requires ODFW work with Oregon Hatchery Research Center to develop pilot program. Requires certain type and number of fish eggs. Adds whereas clauses.

BACKGROUND:

Incubation devices are generally placed along streams, where newly hatched unfed fry can be released to augment fish populations. According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), production from incubation boxes has decreased since its peak in the late 1980s. A moratorium on all incubation device production programs was put in place during the mid to late 2000s, which resulted in elimination or reduction of unfed fry releases. Incubation devices are often used for public education.

House Bill 2378 A directs ODFW to establish and operate a fish incubation box pilot program for 10 years in historically salmon-bearing waterways in Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine counties and report to the Legislative Assembly. The measure also appropriates an unspecified amount of funds to ODFW to that end.