

RCW 36.125.005 Findings—Intent. (1) The legislature finds the challenge of developing realistic, effective, and efficient solutions to the conservation and management issues facing Puget Sound and Washington's outer coast requires calling on all available sources of knowledge and creative thinking available in the collective wisdom of Washington's citizens. The legislature further finds that both Puget Sound and the outer coast are dynamic and localized water bodies with unique local challenges and unique local solutions. As such, it is essential for the future management of these ecosystems that citizens, through their local government, have a voice and an opportunity to share their dedication and interest in the well-being of their community's unique marine waters, while providing a valuable contribution to the statewide efforts aimed at restoring the outer coast and Puget Sound as a whole.

(2) The legislature further finds that federally led efforts to establish marine resources committees have proven to be an exciting vehicle for involving local citizens and community leaders in the future discussions, decisions, and restoration commitments in the waters most important to the community. The existing model of using a community-based, nonregulatory organization to examine issues particular to a community's corner of Puget Sound, applying for grants, and thoroughly and fairly investigating available options and solutions has proved to be a valuable asset to Puget Sound and its communities, and is worthy of replication throughout the Puget Sound basin and the outer coast.

(3) In this chapter, the legislature intends to establish a structure on which interested local communities can harness the dedication, creativity, and wisdom of their residents in the form of marine resources committees. These committees are intended to complement, and not compete with or undermine, any other governmental efforts to restore and manage the Puget Sound. The legislature further intends that the department of fish and wildlife should apply the lessons learned from Puget Sound to work with county governments on the outer coast to establish marine resources committees. [2007 c 344 § 1.]