

## HB 1547 - DIGEST

Requires the sea grant program at the University of Washington to, consistent with this act, commission a series of scientific research studies that examines the possible effects, including the cumulative effects, of the current prevalent geoduck aquaculture techniques and practices on the natural environment in and around Puget Sound, including the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The sea grant program shall use funding provided from the geoduck aquaculture research account created in this act to directly perform the research or to enter into and manage contracts with scientific organizations or institutions.

Provides that, except for contracts that have had a request for offer issued prior to the effective date of this act, the department is prohibited from entering into any leases that would permit the commercial aquaculture of geoducks on state-owned aquatic lands associated with Puget Sound, including the Strait of Juan de Fuca until one full calendar year after the sea grant program at the University of Washington reports to the legislature the results of the studies required by this act.

Declares that all geoduck aquaculture operations located or proposed to be located on lands or waters associated with Puget Sound or the Strait of Juan de Fuca, regardless of whether or not the operation would otherwise require permitting under chapter 90.58 RCW or whether or not the operation is included in an approved local master program, may only exist and operate if the operation receives a permit as a conditional use under RCW 90.58.090(5).

Declares that the permit conditions placed on geoduck aquaculture operations by this act are intended to serve as minimal, basic protections necessary to preserve the health and enjoyment of Puget Sound while the sea grant program at the University of Washington commissions a series of scientific studies on the effects of geoduck aquaculture on the natural environment as provided in this act. It is the intent of the legislature to revisit these protections after the sea grant program delivers its final report to the appropriate committees of the legislature.