

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8030

As Passed Senate, February 19, 2002

Brief Description: Requesting recognition of the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Poulsen, Kline and Spanel.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines: 1/28/02, 1/31/02 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/19/02, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Poulsen, Vice Chair; Hargrove, McDonald, Morton, Oke, Snyder, Spanel and Stevens.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7437)

Background: The nearshore of Puget Sound is the area of shallow water from the top of coastal bluffs to a depth of about ten meters. The nearshore provides critical habitat for juvenile salmon, shellfish, groundfish, seabirds, and marine mammals. This area is also the site of a range of commercial, residential, and recreational activities.

In 2000, Congress approved the Puget Sound and Adjacent Waters Restoration Program, with an authorization of \$40 million in federal funding for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The program authorizes the Corps to work with state and local agencies to identify, prioritize, and construct environmental restoration projects. In 2001, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signed an agreement with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to initiate the assessment phase of the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project. The project is dependent on annual congressional appropriations to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Summary of Bill: The President and Congress are requested to recognize the importance of the Puget Sound Nearshore Restoration Project and the broad level of public support and involvement. Congress is requested to provide sufficient funding to complete the assessment phase of the project and begin the construction phases.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: The Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project will allow us to move forward with thoughtful restoration of Puget Sound. There is a broad coalition of

interests supporting this effort. The state has put a lot of emphasis on fresh water systems, but salmon also need marine and nearshore habitats to survive.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Willy O'Neil, AGC of WA; Tim Smith, WDFW; Duane Fagergren, Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team; Dan Evans, Gordon Thomas Honeywell.