

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1896

C 307 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Limiting geoduck harvest in parts of Hood Canal.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Appleton, Eickmeyer, Chase and Haigh).

House Committee on Select Committee on Hood Canal

House Committee on Appropriations

Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

The state's geoduck resources and commercial geoduck fishery are generally managed jointly by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU gives the WDFW primary responsibility for conducting resource assessments and setting the total amount of geoduck that can be harvested annually. The DNR has primary responsibility according to the MOU for managing the state harvest and sale of geoducks, including planning and location of state sales.

Hood Canal is a glacier-carved fjord approximately 60 miles in length with approximately 180 miles of shoreline. Portions of Hood Canal have had low dissolved oxygen concentrations for many years. The University of Washington recorded low dissolved oxygen concentrations in the 1950s. In recent years, low dissolved oxygen concentration conditions and significant fish death events have been recorded on Hood Canal. The 2004 dissolved oxygen concentrations in southern Hood Canal were the lowest recorded concentrations for the water body.

Summary:

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) must conduct several studies regarding geoducks in Hood Canal. First, the DNR must conduct a study, by comparing prior population surveys with current surveys, to determine if changes to the Hood Canal geoduck populations have occurred over time. Second, the DNR must assess the relationship between the Hood Canal's geoduck population levels and its environmental conditions, including dissolved oxygen concentrations. Third, the DNR must conduct a study to establish an age profile and analyze the shell oxidation rate of Hood Canal geoduck.

For these studies the DNR must choose geoduck beds or establish index or sampling stations that are representative of the Hood Canal's northern, central, and southern areas. The index stations for the second study must be located near the Department of Ecology's water sampling

stations. The DNR must submit reports describing study results by January 1, 2006, for the first study and by December 1, 2007, for the second and third studies.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	91	3
Senate	42	0

Effective: July 24, 2005