

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1491

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation, March 28, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to recodification of aquatic lands statutes.

**Brief Description:** Reorganizing aquatic lands statutes.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks (originally sponsored by Representatives B. Sullivan, Kretz, Upthegrove, Orcutt, Eickmeyer and Buck; by request of Commissioner of Public Lands).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/08/05, 98-0.

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 3/23/05, 3/28/05 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair; Oke, Ranking Minority Member; Morton, Spanel and Swecker.

**Staff:** Vic Moon (786-7469)

**Background:** The Legislature created the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in 1957, and assigned it the responsibility for managing the state's aquatic lands for the benefit of the public. The DNR manages over two million acres of tidelands, shorelands, and bedlands. This includes the beds of all navigable rivers and lakes, along with the beds below the Puget Sound.

The management of aquatic lands must support a balance of goals, including the encouragement of public access, the fostering of water-dependent uses, the utilization of renewable resources, and the generation of revenue. Revenues generated from the state's aquatic lands are generally directed to be used for public benefits, such as shoreline access, environmental protection, and recreational opportunities. Under current law, the DNR may lease aquatic lands, and exchange state-owned aquatic lands for privately owned lands. The DNR may also accept gifts of aquatic lands.

Most of the structure that outlines the DNR's duties and responsibilities is codified in Title 79 of the Revised Code of Washington, which was last rewritten in 1982.

**Summary of Bill:** Statutes governing the DNR's management of aquatic lands are reorganized without substantive change. Non-substantive revisions eliminate outdated terms and antiquated provisions, create gender neutrality, and regroup like subjects.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** The aquatic lands statutes need to be reorganized so that they can be more clear and so the public will understand them. There are no substantive changes and no policy issues are addressed.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** Representative Brian Sullivan, prime sponsor; Fran McNair, Department of Natural Resources.