

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**HOUSE BILL 1631**

Chapter 45, Laws of 2025

69th Legislature  
2025 Regular Session

STATE MARINE FOREST

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 27, 2025

Passed by the House March 4, 2025  
Yeas 97 Nays 0

LAURIE JINKINS

**Speaker of the House of  
Representatives**

Passed by the Senate April 5, 2025  
Yeas 47 Nays 1

DENNY HECK

**President of the Senate**

Approved April 16, 2025 10:03 AM

BOB FERGUSON

**Governor of the State of Washington**

CERTIFICATE

I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **HOUSE BILL 1631** as passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

BERNARD DEAN

**Chief Clerk**

FILED

April 16, 2025

**Secretary of State  
State of Washington**

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**HOUSE BILL 1631**

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Passed Legislature - 2025 Regular Session

**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2025 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Nance, Mena, Griffey, Salahuddin, Low, Parshley, Hunt, Walsh, Ramel, Paul, Duerr, Bernbaum, Chase, Peterson, Shavers, Ryu, McEntire, Richards, Reed, Kloba, Simmons, Tharinger, Zahn, Thomas, and Timmons

Read first time 01/27/25. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing bull kelp forests as the official  
2 state marine forest; adding a new section to chapter 1.20 RCW; and  
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) As the foundational species of the  
6 evergreen state's underwater forests, bull kelp is vital to  
7 Washington's culture, commerce, and ecology. Together with understory  
8 kelp, other floating kelps, and eelgrass meadows, bull kelp forests  
9 provide a mosaic of habitats and food that support the state's marine  
10 species like orcas, salmon, rockfish, and pinto abalone, and serve to  
11 sustain commercially and culturally important marine fisheries. Bull  
12 kelp holds deep cultural significance for tribal nations, continuing  
13 to sustain and support tribal communities today as it has for  
14 generations. For tribes, access to healthy bull kelp ecosystems  
15 within their usual and accustomed grounds, stations, and traditional  
16 areas is essential not only as a source of food and traditional  
17 materials, but also for spiritual, cultural, and economic practices  
18 that have long depended on the kelp forest's vitality. Recognizing  
19 this, this act explicitly respects and upholds the treaty rights of  
20 Indian tribes. Nothing within this act is intended to alter or  
21 infringe upon these inherent rights.

1           (2) Bull kelp has declined dramatically throughout south and  
2 central Puget Sound in recent years, endangering its crucial role in  
3 our marine and coastal ecosystems. The Washington state legislature  
4 provided initial funding to implement priority actions identified in  
5 the Puget Sound kelp conservation and recovery plan during the 2021  
6 and 2023 legislative sessions. Continuing this work, the department  
7 of natural resources established the statewide kelp and eelgrass  
8 health and conservation plan in 2023 to conserve and recover at least  
9 10,000 acres of kelp forests and eelgrass meadows by 2040, driving  
10 collaborative efforts to preserve and restore our bull kelp forests  
11 on Washington's coast and in Puget Sound.

12           (3) Conserving and recovering this vital species relies on  
13 awareness that our bull kelp forests are critical to Washington's  
14 identity, culture, economy, and ecology. In recognition of this  
15 important habitat, the state legislature hereby designates bull kelp  
16 (*Nereocystis luetkeana*) forests as the official state marine forest.

17           NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 1.20 RCW  
18 to read as follows:

19           Bull kelp (*Nereocystis luetkeana*) forests are hereby designated  
20 to be the official marine forest of the state of Washington.

Passed by the House March 4, 2025.

Passed by the Senate April 5, 2025.

Approved by the Governor April 16, 2025.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State April 16, 2025.

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