

**FINAL BILL REPORT**

**SSB 5056**

**C 283 L 93**

**SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED**

**Brief Description:** Regulating seaweed harvesting.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Senator Haugen)

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES & WILDLIFE**

**BACKGROUND:**

Marine aquatic plants in Washington include seaweed, eelgrass, and 600 other species. Over 500 species of seaweed exist in Washington's waters. Most are attached to the substrate, but some are free-floating.

As an economic commodity, seaweed is a food used in Japan, Indonesia, and other Asian countries, and by native cultures in the Pacific Northwest. Liquid seaweed extracts are used as soil additives and plant foods. Pharmaceutical products such as agar and carrageenan are produced from seaweed extracts. Phycocolloids are derived from seaweeds.

Marine aquatic plants attached to state-owned aquatic lands are the property of the state Department of Natural Resources or the State Parks and Recreation Commission. Marine aquatic plants attached to private tidelands are the property of the private landowner.

The Department of Natural Resources regulates the harvest of seaweed for personal use on state-owned aquatic lands. An individual may receive a permit from the Department of Natural Resources to take up to 50 pounds annually. The Department of Natural Resources currently has in place a moratorium on commercial harvest of seaweed. Enforcement of the taking of valuable materials from state-owned aquatic lands is the responsibility of law enforcement officers. Violations are a criminal offense.

The Department of Fisheries regulates marine aquatic plant harvest indirectly as a component of habitat through its permitting processes. Regulation of marine aquatic plant harvest is dependent on its direct impact on a fishery.

**SUMMARY:**

The maximum daily wet weight harvest or possession of seaweed for personal use from all private and state tidelands and state bedlands is 10 pounds per person. All law enforcement officers, including fisheries patrol officers, may enforce this law. Violating the harvest limit is punishable by a maximum penalty of \$100.

The act does not apply to commercial harvest of marine aquatic plants. Any state agency can prevent harvest from its lands.

The development of a process and budget for an inventory and management plan and an identification of the respective state and tribal roles in managing the seaweed resource will be developed. The process and budget are to be developed with interested parties, and submitted to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 31, 1993.

**VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:**

Senate	46	1	
House	96	2	(House amended)
Senate	41	0	(Senate concurred)

**EFFECTIVE:** July 25, 1993