

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 6575

---

---

C 284 L 02  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning the designation of certain lands as natural area preserves or natural resource conservation areas.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines (originally sponsored by Senator Hargrove).

**Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines**  
**House Committee on Natural Resources**

**Background:** The state of Washington has two natural resource conservation programs. The first is the natural resources conservation areas which are established for their outstanding scenic and ecological values, and provide low impact public use. The second is the natural area preserve system which has more limited public access and is an attempt to preserve the best remaining examples of Washington's native ecosystems. There are 47 natural area preserves protecting approximately 26,000 acres in the state of Washington.

**Summary:** The Department of Natural Resources must develop standards for regulating public access to natural area preserves and provide buffer zones with a higher level of public access allowed around environmentally sensitive areas. The department must develop management plans for each area and identify the significant resources to be conserved in that area. The plan must identify specific types of management activities and public uses that are permitted and the plans must be available for public review and comment.

The Natural Heritage Advisory Council must recommend whether new natural areas proposed for protection should be established as natural area preserves, or as natural resources conservation areas, or as a combination of both. The council must also review and comment on management plans proposed by the department.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	47	0	
House	97	0	(House amended)
Senate	46	0	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** June 13, 2002