

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1883

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**As Passed House:**

March 11, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to collection and preservation of oral histories about Hood Canal.

**Brief Description:** Providing for collection of oral histories about Hood Canal.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Select Committee on Hood Canal (originally sponsored by Representatives McCoy, Pearson, Eickmeyer, Upthegrove and Haigh).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Select Committee on Hood Canal: 2/17/05, 2/24/05 [DPS].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 3/11/05, 94-0.

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill**

- Requires The Evergreen State College to conduct an oral history program for Hood Canal tribal elders and other long-term residents with historical information about Hood Canal's environmental conditions.
- Specifies a process for tribal review of material collected through this program and for exemption of material from public disclosure if it is related to the location of tribal archaeological sites.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOOD CANAL**

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Eickmeyer, Chair; McCoy, Vice Chair; Pearson, Ranking Minority Member; Sump, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Chase and Walsh.

**Staff:** Caroleen Dineen (786-7156).

**Background:**

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. In the 1950s the University of Washington recorded low dissolved oxygen concentrations in Hood Canal. In recent years, low dissolved oxygen concentrations 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.

Among other programs, the Secretary of State manages the Division of Archives and Records Management (Archives Division). The Archives Division is responsible for historical records preservation and public records management and ensures citizen and government accessibility to these records. The Secretary of State also manages the state's Oral History Program, which is responsible for documenting information related to Washington's political history.

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**Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:**

The Evergreen State College (TESC) must administer and conduct a program to record and document oral histories of tribal elders and other long-term residents of the Hood Canal area. The purpose of the interviews is to collect information and perspectives regarding the Hood Canal's historical conditions, including fish kill reports, marine species behavioral changes, fishing and harvesting histories, and other environmental health conditions. TESC must use college students to interview and record the oral histories. TESC also must consult with the appropriate tribal cultural and historical departments regarding the interviews of tribal elders under this program.

TESC must offer Hood Canal area tribes an opportunity to review the documents, information, photographs, or other materials collected through the oral history program to determine whether any of these materials relate to the location of tribal archaeological sites. Any such materials identified by a tribe as relating to a tribal archaeological site(s) are exempt from public disclosure under state law and must be provided to the tribe for its own archival purposes. Except for these materials exempt from public disclosure, tapes and transcripts must be indexed and made available through the state Archives Division, and transcripts and current and historical photographs may be published for distribution to libraries and for sale to the general public. TESC may retain no more than 5 percent of program funding for its cash related to program administration.

Legislative findings specify concerns associated with low dissolved oxygen concentrations in Hood Canal and identify a need for investigation. Legislative findings recognize the importance of the historical perspectives from tribal elders and other long-term residents of the Hood Canal area. Legislative intent is specified to initiate a process for interviews of Hood Canal tribal elders and other long-term residents and to preserve the information as part of the state's oral history.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. The program provisions expire on July 1, 2008.

**Testimony For:** (Original bill) The Legislature is trying through various avenues to determine what is happening in Hood Canal. This bill provides one source of information. Oral history is a very rich and vibrant part of a community's fabric. There is a lot of anecdotal information regarding Hood Canal given the lack of scientific data, this anecdotal information can be valuable. This bill will allow the gathering of oral histories to provide a flavor from tribal elders and others regarding what Hood Canal was like when they were young.

This bill takes advantage of the historical information from tribal elders and other elders and will help preserve stories and recollections of changes over time. The bill will help to provide access and secure the information for the future. The tribes should have the ability to review any documents to avoid disclosure of sensitive tribal archaeological information before publication and should receive copies of any documents or publications.

The Secretary of State has indicated it cannot manage this project. TESC is interested in conducting this program. The Legislature will have to provide some funding for this project.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Persons Testifying:** (On original bill) Representative John McCoy, prime sponsor; Keith Dublanica, Skokomish Tribal Nation; and Loren Stern, Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.