

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1656

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Puget Sound, Select

**Title:** An act relating to establishing a Puget Sound scientific research account.

**Brief Description:** Establishing the Puget Sound scientific research account.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Rolfes, Upthegrove, B. Sullivan, Appleton, Chase, Santos, Dickerson and Sells.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Select Committee on Puget Sound: 1/31/07, 2/20/07 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Creates a scientific research account to fund research programs and projects to protect and restore Puget Sound and the Aquatic Rehabilitation Zone One.
- Tasks the Puget Sound Action Team, or its successor agency, to identify Puget Sound science gaps, and to formulate a research plan to narrow those gaps.

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### HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUGET SOUND

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Upthegrove, Chair; Eickmeyer, Vice Chair; Rolfes, Vice Chair; Sump, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; O'Brien, Pearson and Springer.

**Staff:** Karen Rogers (786-7388).

**Background:**

Puget Sound is a 2,800-square-mile inland water connected to the Pacific Ocean via the Strait of Juan de Fuca in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. It extends from Admiralty Inlet in the north, to Olympia, Washington, in the south. It includes: open marine waters; inland

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marine waters; Hood Canal, a glacially scoured fjord; numerous river and stream channels; and 2,500 miles of shoreline.

Aquatic Rehabilitation Zone One (ARZ-1) is an area within Jefferson, Kitsap, and Mason Counties. The ARZ-1 includes watersheds that drain into Hood Canal from south of the line projected from Tala Point in Jefferson County, to Foulweather Bluff in Kitsap County.

The Puget Sound Action Team (PSAT) is a partnership of state agencies and tribal and local governments charged with developing and coordinating conservation programs to protect and restore Puget Sound. The PSAT staff guide the implementation of the *Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan*, and work with tribal and local governments, community groups, citizens and businesses, and state and federal agencies to develop and carry out two-year work plans. The Legislature created the PSAT in 1996.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

A scientific research account is created to fund research programs and projects in Puget Sound and in the ARZ-1. The PSAT, or its successor agency, identifies scientific research gaps in environmental protection and restoration of Puget Sound and ARZ-1, formulates a research plan to narrow those science gaps, and strategically prioritizes programs and projects.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The amended bill changes the original bill in two ways. One, it requires the PSAT to establish criteria to strategically prioritize programs and projects that narrow key science research gaps. Two, it explicitly adds the ARZ-1 as a geographic area of research focus.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The bill clearly specifies an entity that is responsible for identifying where science gaps exist, and sets up a process, or mechanism, to address those gaps in an organized manner. Focusing on needed scientific information is a good idea, and acquiring such information will help inform public policy.

(With concerns) The bill is supported; however, language should be adjusted to clearly specify who controls the account, that the priorities are strategically made, and what subjects are researched.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Rolfes, prime sponsor; Jerry Smedes, Northwest Environmental Business Council; and Bill Dewey, Taylor Shellfish Company.

(With concerns) Naki Stevens, People for Puget Sound.

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