

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 3052

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Agriculture & Natural Resources

**Title:** An act relating to the role of the department of fish and wildlife in the management of the state wildstock geoduck resource.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the management of the wildstock geoduck resource.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Appleton, Sells, Flannigan, Roberts, Haigh, Dickerson and Williams.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/30/08, 2/5/08 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Requires in statute that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have the primary responsibility to identify commercial geoduck tracks, conduct all geoduck fishery assessments, and set the total allowable catch limits for the harvest of geoducks from state-owned aquatic lands.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Van De Wege, Vice Chair; Kretz, Ranking Minority Member; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Eickmeyer, Grant, Kristiansen, Lantz, Loomis, McCoy, Nelson, Newhouse and Orcutt.

**Staff:** Jason Callahan (786-7117).

**Background:**

Wildstock geoduck resources and the commercial geoduck fishery are generally managed jointly by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU gives the WDFW primary responsibility for conducting resource assessments and setting the total amount of geoducks that can be harvested annually. The DNR has primary

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responsibility, according to the MOU, for managing the state harvest and sale of geoducks, including the planning and location of state sales.

The WDFW and the DNR agreed in the MOU to jointly represent the state delegation in conversations with area tribes concerning the state-tribal management of the subtidal geoduck fishery. Both state agencies agreed to work together in adopting a unified state position on geoduck management prior to presenting the state position to the tribal co-managers. The signatures of both state agency directors appear on management plans entered into by the state and tribes.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The role of the WDFW as the entity with the primary responsibility to identify commercial geoduck tracks, conduct all geoduck fishery assessments, and set the total allowable catch limits for the harvest of geoducks from state-owned aquatic lands is required in statute.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The original bill included a provision that prohibited the DNR from substituting information from sources other than the WDFW when determining geoduck information.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**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 only way that the Legislature can assure that the current working relationship between the DNR and the WDFW continues on into the future is by codifying the current geoduck MOU in statute. A geoduck is a fish, and fishery biologists should be the ones making decisions about the health of the biomass.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Appleton, prime sponsor; and Rich Doenges, Department of Natural Resources.

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