

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6231

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Improving the coordination of marine protected areas.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen and Shin).

Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on Ecology & Parks

House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government & Audit Review

Background: The federal government, through Executive Order, has defined the term "marine protected area" (MPA) as any area of the marine environment that has been reserved by federal, state, tribal, territorial, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural and cultural resources therein.

Washington State contains 74 areas identified in the federal marine managed areas (MMA) database, including federal, state, and locally managed areas. An MMA refers to areas established for some conservation purpose in the marine environment and is more inclusive than the term MPA.

Several state agencies have authorities relevant to establishing marine protected areas. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has the authority to establish aquatic reserves, allowing it to withhold from leasing aquatic lands with significant natural values. Through the Natural Areas Program, DNR manages sites with significant natural resource features, such as areas that have retained their natural character or contain important plant or geological features, as Natural Area Preserves or Natural Resource Conservation Areas.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) manages the state's fish and wildlife resources. Specifically, DFW may adopt rules specifying the areas and waters in which the taking and possession of fish and wildlife is lawful or unlawful.

The Legislature has set aside the Seashore Conservation Area along Washington's coast for the recreation and enjoyment of the public. The Seashore Conservation Area is managed by the State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks), which also has the duty to manage parks and parkways for the benefit and enjoyment of all the people of the state.

Summary: The MPA work group (work group) is established. The Director of DFW must chair the work group. The work group must consist of representatives of state agencies and local governments with jurisdiction over MPAs, including DFW, DNR, State Parks, and appropriate marine resources committees. The Chair must also invite representatives of

appropriate federal agencies and tribal governments, and may invite other appropriate state agencies, to participate.

The work group must:

- examine the current inventory and management of Washington's MPAs;
- develop recommendations to improve coordination and consistency regarding MPA management goals, criteria for establishment, management practices, terminology, and monitoring;
- develop recommendations to improve the integration of science into MPA establishment and management;
- develop recommendations to further integrate local governments and nongovernmental organizations into the establishment and management of MPAs; and
- provide any other recommendations to improve the effectiveness of MPAs.

By December 1, 2009, the work group must report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

The work group must work jointly with the Puget Sound Partnership regarding MPAs in Puget Sound.

The term MPA is defined as a geographic marine or estuarine area designated by a state, federal, tribal, or local government in order to provide long-term protection for part or all of the resources within that area.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0	
House	68	26	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House	63	32	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House	96	0	(House receded)

Effective: June 12, 2008