
Environment Committee

HB 2386

Brief Description: Designating Washington's shoreline as a state maritime heritage area.

Sponsors: Representatives Van De Wege, Appleton, Hayes, Moscoso, Pettigrew, S. Hunt, Takko, Zeiger, Muri, Tharinger, Ryu and Freeman.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designates Washington's saltwater coast as the state Maritime Heritage Area.
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Hearing Date: 1/28/14

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7291).

Background:

There are 49 designated National Heritage Areas (NHAs) throughout the United States. NHAs are places recognized by Congress as having nationally important heritage resources. NHAs are locally initiated, and it is recommended that a feasibility study based on ten criteria be completed by local entities. The feasibility study needs to demonstrate the national importance of the heritage resources and implementation ability by local communities. The feasibility study is followed by legislation to Congress.

NHAs are operated by local groups through public-private partnerships with the National Park Service (NPS). The NPS provides technical and financial assistance without establishing land ownership or control. The local entities involved maintain all decision-making authority. NHAs support festivals, operate museums and visitor centers, establish tour routes, create heritage maps, and administer web sites. A couple of examples of NHA's are:

- Blue Ridge NHA in North Carolina;
- Northern Rio Grande NHA in New Mexico; and
- Silos and Smokestacks NHA in Iowa

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Washington does not have any NHAs. The State Parks and Recreation Commission has a stewardship program in which natural and cultural heritage is preserved within state park boundaries, and the Washington State Historical Society manages various heritage capital projects around the state; however, there are no comparable state heritage areas.

Summary of Bill:

Washington's saltwater coast is designated as the state maritime heritage area. This includes all federal, state, local, and tribal lands that allow public access and are partly located within one-quarter mile inland of the saltwater shoreline.

The maritime heritage area may only be used for the purposes of heritage and tourism. The maritime heritage area does not:

- create any regulatory jurisdiction or authority;
- abridge the rights of any public or private landowner within the designated area; or
- establish any legal rights or obligations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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