

SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2220

Regarding shellfish aquaculture

PROGRAM IMPACTS

This bill:

- Creates a Shellfish Aquaculture Advisory Committee (Committee) to design recommendations on permitting oversight of shellfish aquaculture, including specific recommendations on intertidal geoduck farming;
- Requires Ecology to update their Shoreline Master Program Guidelines (SMP Guidelines) rule to address intertidal geoduck farming;
- Sets up a scientific research project on intertidal geoduck farming impacts; and
- Requires modifications in Department of Natural Resource (DNR) tidelands leasing for geoduck farms and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) shellfish farmer registration program.

Specific Ecology responsibilities under the bill are:

1. Staff the Shellfish Aquaculture Advisory Committee.
2. Update the SMP Guidelines related to geoduck aquaculture.
3. Lead external oversight of the Sea Grant science outlined in the bill.

RESOURCE IMPACTS

As identified in the Ecology fiscal note, about one FTE of staff effort will be required over the biennium to meet the objectives of the bill. This funding was included in the adopted budget.

WORK PLAN

Summary of the three principal Ecology work elements under this bill:

1. Staff the Shellfish Aquaculture Advisory Committee.

The Committee will develop recommendations for an integrated regulatory process for all current and new shellfish aquaculture projects. We anticipate this work will involve monthly or twice monthly committee meetings from July 2007 until early or mid 2008. There will be significant staff work to prepare for committee meetings, including coordination with

other agencies, compiling information, setting up field trips, and meeting notes.

We anticipate a very open process with committee materials and notes available on the web. The legislation requires the Committee to report its recommendations and findings to the legislature by December 1, 2007, with a further report, if necessary, by December 1, 2008.

2. Update the SMP Guidelines related to geoduck aquaculture.

The Committee will provide recommendations on geoduck farming. Ecology must adopt, by rule, new intertidal geoduck aquaculture guidelines into the existing SMP Guidelines.

Significant staff work will be involved in this rulemaking process during the second year of the biennium. During this time, we anticipate occasional Committee meetings to advise Ecology on drafting and revising the rule in response to comments.

3. Lead external oversight of the Sea Grant science outlined in the bill.

The bill authorizes oversight of the Sea Grant Intertidal Geoduck Scientific Research Program. Ecology will lead the oversight effort of the Committee to advise Sea Grant on research topics and priorities. Oversight is specifically intended to ensure that the research meets planning, permitting, and data management needs. This will be an important topic in the initial months of the project (last half of 2007), with updates and continued dialogue anticipated with Sea Grant through mid-2009.

Contact person: Tom Clingman, Shoreland & Environmental Assistance Program; 360/407-7448; tcli461@ecy.wa.gov