

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 2860

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## AN ACT

To reauthorize the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Act to promote the protection of the resources of the Northwest Straits, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Northwest Straits Ma-  
3 rine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act of 2025”.

4 **SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF NORTHWEST STRAITS MA-**  
5 **RINE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE ACT.**

6 The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative  
7 Act (title IV of Public Law 105–384; 112 Stat. 3458) is  
8 amended—

9 (1) in section 402, by striking “Commission (in  
10 this title referred to as the ‘Commission’).” and in-  
11 serting “Commission.”;

12 (2) by striking sections 403, 404, and 405; and

13 (3) by inserting after section 402 the following:

14 **“SEC. 403. DEFINITIONS.**

15 “In this title:

16 “(1) COMMISSION.—The term ‘Commission’  
17 means the Northwest Straits Advisory Commission  
18 established by section 402.

19 “(2) MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE.—The  
20 term ‘marine resources committee’ means a county  
21 government committee that assists in assessing ma-  
22 rine resource and conservation needs.

23 “(3) NORTHWEST STRAITS REGION.—The term  
24 ‘Northwest Straits region’ means the marine waters  
25 of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and of Puget Sound

1 from the Canadian border to the south end of Sno-  
2 homish County.

3 “(4) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘Tribal  
4 government’ means the recognized governing body of  
5 any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation,  
6 pueblo, village, community, component band, or com-  
7 ponent reservation individually identified (including  
8 parenthetically) in the list published most recently as  
9 of the date of enactment of the Northwest Straits  
10 Marine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act  
11 of 2025 pursuant to section 104 of the Federally  
12 Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25  
13 U.S.C. 5131).

14 “(5) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term ‘Under  
15 Secretary’ means the Under Secretary of Commerce  
16 for Oceans and Atmosphere.

17 **“SEC. 404. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION.**

18 “(a) COMPOSITION.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be  
20 composed of 14 members, except as provided in  
21 paragraph (2), who shall be appointed as follows:

22 “(A) One member appointed by a con-  
23 sensus of the members of a marine resources  
24 committee for San Juan County, Washington.

1           “(B) One member appointed by a con-  
2           sensus of the members of a marine resources  
3           committee for Island County, Washington.

4           “(C) One member appointed by a con-  
5           sensus of the members of a marine resources  
6           committee for Skagit County, Washington.

7           “(D) One member appointed by a con-  
8           sensus of the members of a marine resources  
9           committee for Whatcom County, Washington.

10          “(E) One member appointed by a con-  
11          sensus of the members of a marine resources  
12          committee for Snohomish County, Washington.

13          “(F) One member appointed by a con-  
14          sensus of the members of a marine resources  
15          committee for Clallam County, Washington.

16          “(G) One member appointed by a con-  
17          sensus of the members of a marine resources  
18          committee for Jefferson County, Washington.

19          “(H) Two members appointed by the Sec-  
20          retary of the Interior, in coordination with the  
21          Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and in  
22          consultation with the Tribal governments af-  
23          fected by this title, to represent the interests of  
24          such Tribal governments.

1           “(I) One member appointed by the Gov-  
2           ernor of the State of Washington to represent  
3           the interests of the Puget Sound Partnership.

4           “(J) Four members appointed by the Gov-  
5           ernor of the State of Washington who—

6                   “(i) are residents of the State of  
7                   Washington; and

8                   “(ii) are not employed by a Federal,  
9                   State, or local government, excluding an  
10                  institution of higher education.

11           “(2) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—The Commission  
12           may, as determined necessary to improve the ability  
13           of the Commission to perform the duties of the  
14           Commission under section 405(b), appoint members  
15           in addition to those appointed under paragraph (1).  
16           Any such additional member shall be appointed by  
17           a consensus of the members of a marine resources  
18           committee that is not described in such paragraph.

19           “(b) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission  
20           shall be filled in the manner in which the original appoint-  
21           ment was made.

22           “(c) CHAIRPERSON.—The Commission shall select a  
23           Chairperson from among its members.

1       “(d) MEETING.—The Commission shall meet at the  
2 call of the Chairperson, but not less frequently than quar-  
3 terly.

4       “(e) LIAISON.—

5           “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in  
6 consultation with the Commission, shall appoint an  
7 employee of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
8 Administration—

9           “(A) to serve as a liaison between the  
10 Commission and the Department of Commerce;

11           “(B) to coordinate programs of the Na-  
12 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
13 with activities related to the goal of the Com-  
14 mission described in section 405(a); and

15           “(C) to perform additional liaison func-  
16 tions benefitting the Commission and the Na-  
17 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,  
18 which may include, as agreed to by the Com-  
19 mission and the National Oceanic and Atmos-  
20 pheric Administration, attending meetings and  
21 other events of the Commission as a nonvoting  
22 participant.

23           “(2) LIMITATION.—Service as a member of the  
24 Commission by the employee appointed under para-  
25 graph (1)—

1                   “(A) is limited to the employee’s service as  
2                   a liaison; and

3                   “(B) does not obligate the employee to per-  
4                   form any duty of the Commission under section  
5                   405(b).

6           “(f) ADMINISTRATION.—The Commission may enter  
7   into cooperative agreements with the State of Washington  
8   for staffing and administrative services for the purposes  
9   of supporting the duties of the Commission under section  
10 405(b).

11 **“SEC. 405. GOAL AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

12           “(a) GOAL.—The goal of the Commission is to pro-  
13   tect and restore the marine waters, habitats, and species  
14   of the Northwest Straits region to achieve ecosystem  
15   health and sustainable resource use by—

16                   “(1) designing and recommending projects that  
17                   are driven by the best available science, local prior-  
18                   ities, community-based decisions, and the ability to  
19                   measure results;

20                   “(2) building awareness and stewardship and  
21                   making recommendations to improve the health of  
22                   the marine resources of the Northwest Straits re-  
23                   gion;

1           “(3) maintaining and expanding diverse mem-  
2           bership and collaboration with partner organizations,  
3           such as the Puget Sound Partnership;

4           “(4) expanding partnerships with Tribal gov-  
5           ernments and continuing to support Tribal treaties,  
6           cultures, and subsistence and Tribal treaty rights;  
7           and

8           “(5) recognizing the importance of economic  
9           and social benefits that are dependent on marine en-  
10          vironments and sustainable marine resources.

11          “(b) DUTIES.—The duties of the Commission are the  
12         following:

13                 “(1) To provide resources and technical support  
14                 for marine resources committees.

15                 “(2) To work with such marine resources com-  
16                 mittees and appropriate entities of Federal, State,  
17                 and local governments and Tribal governments to  
18                 provide advice in developing regional programs to  
19                 monitor the overall health of the marine ecosystem  
20                 of the Northwest Straits region.

21                 “(3) To collect marine resources data and iden-  
22                 tify factors adversely affecting or preventing the res-  
23                 toration of the health of the marine ecosystem and  
24                 coastal economies of the Northwest Straits region to  
25                 inform decisionmakers.



1           “(4) To develop scientifically sound restoration  
2           and protection recommendations, informed by local  
3           priorities, that address such factors.

4           “(5) To serve as a public forum for the infor-  
5           mal discussion of policies and actions, with respect  
6           to the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits re-  
7           gion, of Federal, State, or local governments, Tribal  
8           governments, or the Government of Canada.

9           “(6) To inform appropriate authorities and  
10          local communities about the marine ecosystem of the  
11          Northwest Straits region and about issues relating  
12          to the marine ecosystem of the Northwest Straits re-  
13          gion.

14          “(7) To consult with all affected Tribal govern-  
15          ments in the Northwest Straits region to ensure that  
16          the work of the Commission does not violate Tribal  
17          treaty rights.

18          “(c) COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—The  
19          Commission—

20                 “(1) shall carry out the duties described in sub-  
21                 section (b) in coordination and collaboration, as ap-  
22                 propriate, with Federal, State, and local govern-  
23                 ments and Tribal governments, including by—

24                         “(A) providing technical support and as-  
25                         sistance to any Tribal government seeking rep-

1           resentation and participation on the Commis-  
2           sion; and

3                   “(B) supporting the work and duties of the  
4           liaison to the Commission under section 404(e);  
5           and

6                   “(2) may enter into cooperative agreements  
7           with nonprofit entities, such as the Northwest  
8           Straits Foundation, to provide assistance, including  
9           financial assistance, in carrying out the duties de-  
10          scribed in subsection (b).

11          “(d) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this title provides  
12          the Commission with authority to issue regulations or im-  
13          plement any Federal law or regulation.

14          “(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—

15                   “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each year, the Commission  
16           shall prepare, submit to the Committee on Com-  
17           merce, Science, and Transportation and the Com-  
18           mittee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Com-  
19           mittee on Natural Resources and the Committee on  
20           Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and  
21           the Under Secretary, and make available to the pub-  
22           lic a report describing—

23                   “(A) the activities carried out by the Com-  
24           mission during the preceding year; and

1 “(B) the progress in achieving the bench-  
2 marks described in paragraph (2).

3 “(2) BENCHMARKS.—The benchmarks de-  
4 scribed in this paragraph are the following:

5 “(A) Protection and restoration of marine,  
6 coastal, and nearshore habitats within the  
7 Northwest Straits region.

8 “(B) Protection and restoration of marine  
9 resources populations to healthy, sustainable  
10 levels.

11 “(C) Improvement of the water quality of  
12 the Northwest Straits region.

13 “(D) Collection of high-quality data and  
14 promotion of the use and dissemination of such  
15 data for the purposes of ecosystem monitoring.

16 “(E) Promotion of stewardship and under-  
17 standing of marine resources of the Northwest  
18 Straits region through education and outreach,  
19 including by targeted outreach to  
20 underresourced communities.

21 **“SEC. 406. SUNSET.**

22 “The authority to carry out this title shall terminate  
23 on the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment

1 of the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative  
2 Reauthorization Act of 2025.”.

Passed the House of Representatives June 3, 2026.

Attest:

*Clerk.*



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