

Submitter: Adele Dawson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3580

Eelgrass meadows are nurseries for juvenile fish including salmon, herring, and shellfish species that are so important for our coastal economy. They also support biodiversity including migratory birds like the Black Brant. Eelgrass can sequester carbon faster than many terrestrial habitats and it improves water quality. However eelgrass is declining and we currently don't know why. Passing this bill would set up a Taskforce to set eelgrass conservation targets, assess monitoring programs, and evaluate policy barriers through a collaborative effort involving agencies, Tribes, scientists, local communities, and others.

Eelgrass is the key to healthy estuaries. Eelgrass has been destroyed by development, erosion, pollution. Once it's destroyed it is not so simple to repair.