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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WACD Legislative Update

March 13, 2023

This is WACD's **ninth week** of legislative updates for 2023. We are officially more than halfway past the midpoint of the 105-day legislative session. WACD provides these weekly updates about legislative activities for the benefit of our member districts.

1. Budget Letter Template

As budget conversations begin to consolidate, WACD encourages CDs to remind legislators about your district's priorities. WACD is offering a template for any district wishing to remind their senator and representatives this month about local conservation priorities and what funding sources are the most impactful for you. Feel free to modify or tailor the language to suit your needs as this should simply serve as a potential starting point for your own outreach. [Legislator email addresses](#) are available online and you can follow this link for the [Budget Letter Template](#).

2. Riparian Buffer Letters to Legislators

WACD suggests that conservation districts write to their legislators to ask for additional assistance in the state budget for riparian restoration work. To that end, WACD has suggested language for a [Riparian Buffer Letter](#) that can serve as a starting point for your own district's letter.

3. Bills Still on Track

Since the last issue of the Legislative Update, we've seen movement on some bills. If a bill is already scheduled for a public hearing and an executive session, it is noted as **moving quickly** in the list below.

- [SHB 1105](#) (*Requiring public agencies to provide notice for public comment that includes the last date by which such public comment must be submitted*) passed the House 95-0. It has moved on to the Senate Committee on State Government & Elections.
- [HB 1138](#) (*Concerning drought preparedness*) is scheduled for a public hearing on March 16 with the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks.

- [HB 1181](#) (*Improving the state's response to climate change by updating the state's planning framework*) is **moving quickly**, scheduled for a public hearing on March 14 and an Executive Session on March 16 with the Senate Committee on Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs.
- [HB 1216](#) (*Concerning clean energy siting*) will have a public hearing on March 15 in the Senate Committee on Environment, Energy & Technology.
- [HB 1322](#) (*Concerning the Walla Walla water 2050 plan*) will have a public hearing on March 16 in the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks.
- [HB 1500](#) (*Increasing the cap on gross sales for cottage food operations*) is moving on to the Rules Committee.
- [HB 1541](#) (*Establishing the nothing about us without us act*) passed the House 83-12. It moves on to the Senate Committee on State Government & Elections.
- [SB 5104](#) (*Surveying Puget Sound marine shoreline habitat*) passed the Senate 47-1 and moves to the House Committee on Environment & Energy.
- [SB 5268](#) (*Addressing equity and efficiencies in public works procurement including modifying small works roster requirements*) is **moving quickly** with a public hearing and executive session scheduled in the House Committee on Innovation, Community & Economic Development, & Veterans.
- [SB 5341](#) (*Creating a location-based promotion program for Washington food and agricultural products*) is also **moving quickly** with a public hearing and executive session scheduled in the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.
- [SB 5353](#) (*Concerning the voluntary stewardship program*) is similarly **moving quickly** with a public hearing and executive session scheduled in the House Committee on Local Government.

4. Legislative Overview

WACD lobbyist Brynn Brady reprised last week's most significant legislative activities, giving us a wide view of legislative interests. This week's coverage includes:

- Nursing issues
- Housing and population growth
- The "Nothing About Us Without Us" Act
- Elimination of the "pink tax"

You can [read her full review on the WACD Hub website](#).

5. Looking Ahead

Upcoming cutoff dates are listed below. At this point the bills that will be considered are fairly well known, but that doesn't mean the Legislature slows down!

- March 29 – Policy committee cutoff – opposite house
- April 4 – Fiscal committee cutoff – opposite house

- April 12 – Floor cutoff – opposite house
- April 23 – Sine Die



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