



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WACD Week 6 Legislative Update

February 17, 2025

This week is when sparks will really start to fly, as all bills with a policy change to state law must be approved out of their original committee by Friday. Known as "policy cut-off", if a bill doesn't clear this hurdle it will be defunct for the remainder of session. Bills that do survive will move on to either a fiscal committee next week if there's revenue or spending involved, or on to the Rules Committee (more on that next week).

As always, if there are additional ways WACD can be of service to our membership during session, all you have to do is pick up the phone or write to [Tom](#), [Heather](#), or [Ryan](#)

1. Rates and Charges Bill Updates

[House Bill 1488](#) and [Senate Bill 5510](#) were both voted out of their respective committees last week. These, as authorized by the membership via resolutions adopted in 2023 and 2024, would allow counties to set the per parcel amount based on community need.

While the bills were originally identical, each committee made different amendments. The House Finance Committee removed HB 1488's limits placed on the amount a county treasurer can withhold for collecting rates and charges fees. Senate Ways & Means Committee removed SB 5510's cap as well, and further modified the bill to reinstate the population cap with new amounts and tie future increases to inflation. You can read the [full amendment here](#). Both bills now have until March 12 to be voted on by their respective legislative body.

2. Opportunities to Comment

One regular feature in our weekly legislative newsletter will be opportunities for our membership to engage with legislators each week of the legislative session. Online committee testimony is available for both the House and the Senate, you do not need to come to Olympia to speak at a Public Hearing for a bill. You can register to testify remotely on a bill by using [this link](#) and following the online instructions. Registration closes one hour before the scheduled start of the meeting for which you're seeking to speak. You also have the option to submit written testimony or have your position reserved for the record.

This week, here are a couple bills from [our bill tracker](#) scheduled for public hearings:

- [HB 1685](#) & [HB 1930](#) will be heard on Wednesday, February 19th in the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee at 8 AM. Both bills propose to reform/restructure WDFW.
- Also at 8 AM on Wednesday the 19th, the Senate Environment, Energy, & Technology Committee will be holding a public hearing on [SB 5630](#) (Continuing to provide payments to support farm fuel users and transporters for exempt fuel under the Washington climate commitment act.)
- [House Joint Memorial 4004](#) (Requesting Congress to modify the Marine Mammal Protection Act.) is scheduled for a public hearing in the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources at 10:30 AM on Friday, February 21st.

3. Bills Under Pressure

Because it is Policy Cut-Off week, there will be pressure to squeeze in as much legislation as possible. Here some bills on our list which have received an initial public hearing but are not scheduled for a vote by Friday's deadline (for better or worse).

- [HB 1019](#) (Concerning tax incentives for farmers.)
- [HB 1153](#) (Concerning urban forest management ordinances.)
- [HB 1188](#) (Requiring local government and tribal approval of wind and solar siting recommendations by the energy facility site evaluation council.)
- [HB 1630](#) (Concerning livestock methane emissions.)
- [SB 5384](#) (Conducting a review of Washington's riparian programs.)

4. What's Over the Hurdle

Here are some highlights from the 35 bills on our tracker that have already cleared this first legislative hurdle and don't have to stress this week.

- [HB 1048](#) (Concerning a rangeland fire protection association pilot project.)
- [HB 1309](#) (Addressing the impacts of burrowing shrimp on bottom culture shellfish farming through integrated pest management research.)
- [SB 5155](#) (Extending a program to streamline the environmental permitting process for salmon recovery projects.)
- [SB 5171](#) (Concerning livestock damage due to wolf predation.)
- [SB 5391](#) (Concerning the sustainable farms and fields grant program.)

5. General Legislative Update

WACD's Lobbyist Brynn Brady writes a weekly update for those interested in the general happenings of Olympia. [This week](#) she covers the first press conference by Governor Bob Ferguson, proposed changes to the state's minimum wage, bills related to electric vehicles, and legislation that would change self-checkout options in stores.



"Glacier Basin", courtesy of [WSCC's Flickr account](#), as a treat for those who read to the bottom of the page.

Taken by Lea Shields, Lincoln County Conservation District



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1219 11th Ave SE Suite 103

Olympia, WA 98501

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