



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WACD Week 7 Legislative Update

February 24, 2025

We've hit the first major cut-off for the year, as Friday the 21st was "policy cut-off". WACD's bill tracker went from 109 active bills to 58. Some defunct proposals may come back in the form of studies or one-time funding buried in the final budget, but otherwise will have to wait until next year for a second chance.

All action this week will be in the fiscal committees, where some very late nights can be expected. Here's how many bills are in each fiscal committee: Senate Ways & Means - 223, Senate Transportation - 45, House Appropriations - 222, House Finance - 103, and House Transportation - 45). All bills must be voted out by this Friday, February 28 or be left behind for the session. This is known as "fiscal cut-off".

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

There's no change last week on [House Bill 1488](#) and [Senate Bill 5510](#). Both were both voted out of their respective committees two weeks ago, so they are three weeks ahead of the cut-off mark.

As previously mentioned, 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 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, a couple bills from [our bill tracker](#) are scheduled for public hearings in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on Wednesday, February 26 starting at 1:30 PM::

- [SB 5117](#) (Protecting agriculture)
- [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 5322](#) (Addressing the impacts of burrowing shrimp on bottom culture shellfish farming through integrated pest management research.)

3. Bills Left Behind

It happens every session, some proposals are squeezed out of the process. A few bills this year did go from on track to off the rails in short notice. Here are a few bills from [our bill tracker](#) that were scheduled, but did not receive, a committee vote before Friday's deadline.

- [HB 1311](#) (Concerning the implementation of the recommendations of the department of fish and wildlife regarding the gray wolf.)
- [HB 1825](#) (Concerning grizzly bear management.)
- [SB 5305](#) (Concerning the new environmental accelerator for salmon recovery and ecological resiliency projects.)

4. What's Over the Hurdle

Here are some of the 58 bills on [our tracker](#) which cleared the first legislative hurdle last week:

- [HB 1707](#) (Establishing a review process before the state noxious weed control board may list certain agricultural crops as noxious weeds.)
- [SB 5117](#) (Protecting agriculture)
- [SB 5491](#) (Establishing a prescribed fire claims fund pilot program.)
- [SB 5669](#) (Concerning irrigation district elections.)

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 a potential media literacy requirement in schools, preparations for the 2026 FIFA World Cup coming to Seattle, banning certain nicotine products, proposals to cap rent increases, and other proposals in the legislature.



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

Taken by Megan Martin Aust, Grays Harbor and Pacific Conservation District

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