



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WACD Week 8 Legislative Update

March 04, 2025

With Governor Ferguson's announcement last week regarding additional cuts to the Conservation Commission, WACD has modified its current operating budget priorities to reflect the new proposal. We expect the WACD Board to provide additional guidance at their meeting on Monday, March 17th, but for the moment the biennium's budget goals are:

- 1) Seek an increase to Conservation Technical Assistance.
- 2) Maintain Forest Health & Community Wildfire Resiliency funding levels.
- 3) Preservation of the Conservation Commission's Science Hub.

If you have questions, or comments, about these priorities please reach out to us. 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

We are happy to announce that [House Bill 1488](#) passed the House this afternoon. It will move over to the Senate, where it will repeat the committee process in that chamber in a couple weeks.

Thank you to everyone who spoke to their legislators about the bill.

2. Rules Committee

With the legislature voting on bills between now and March 12, there will be only committee meeting - the Rules Committee. This committee is different than any other

committee, there is no opportunity to comment by the public and no testimony is offered in their meetings.

The Rules Committee is primarily a tool of the leadership, allowing them to exercise control over what bills do and do not get voted on. Bills have to be "pulled" from the Rules Committee to be considered for a vote by the full legislative body, and each Representative or Senator on the committee will be assigned a certain number of "pulls" each time the committee meets. Some bills will be approved by a policy committee, and a fiscal committee, only to die in the Rules Committee.

3. Bills Left Behind

Fiscal Cut-off peeled off eighteen more bills last week from the WACD Bill Tracker. This meant the bills did not advance from their respective fiscal committee before Friday, February 28 and are considered defunct for the remainder of session. We have created a bill tracker of these [left behind bills](#), here are some which were added to the defunct list:

- [HB 1048](#) (Concerning a rangeland fire protection association pilot project.)
- [SB 5117](#) (Protecting agriculture.)
- [SB 5171](#) (Concerning livestock damage due to wolf predation.)

4. What's Over the Hurdle

Here are some of the remaining forty-one bills on [our tracker](#) which cleared the second legislative hurdle last week:

- [HB 1271](#) (Permitting early deployment of state fire service resources.)
- [HB 1303](#) (Increasing environmental justice by improving government decisions.)
- [HB 1563](#) (Establishing a prescribed fire claims fund pilot program.)
- [HB 1912](#) (Concerning the exemption for fuels used for agricultural purposes in the climate commitment act.)

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 Governor Ferguson's proposed budget for FY25 - 27, detailing his identified budget cuts and the initial response by legislators.



"Mid-Winter Fence Building", courtesy of [WSCC's Flickr account](#), as a treat for those who read to the bottom of the page.
Taken by Justin Bader, North Yakima Conservation District



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