



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WACD Week 9 Legislative Update

March 10, 2025

With Governor Ferguson's announcement two weeks ago regarding additional cuts to the Conservation Commission, WACD modified its current operating budget priorities to reflect the new proposal in [our communications with legislators](#). This short list of priorities does not capture everything of interest to conservation districts, and this is a difficult state budget year.

- 1) Maintain 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

Last week [House Bill 1488](#) passed the House. Now it is scheduled for a vote in the Senate's Ways & Means Committee on Thursday, March 13. It appears that the bill will bypass the public hearing component of the committee process, which is a good sign of support at the committee level.

2. Next Legislative Hurdle

Wednesday, March 12 will be the next legislative cut-off, when bills will have to pass either the House or the Senate to continue moving forward this year. This is called the

"House of Origin Cut-Off". Here are some legislative proposals that are in jeopardy of being added to our bill tracker of [left behind bills](#):

- [HB 1271](#) (Permitting early deployment of state fire service resources.)
- [HB 1309](#) (Addressing the impacts of burrowing shrimp on bottom culture shellfish farming through integrated pest management research.)
- [HB 1707](#) (Establishing a review process before the state noxious weed control board may list certain agricultural crops as noxious weeds.)
- [HB 1912](#) (Concerning the exemption for fuels used for agricultural purposes in the climate commitment act.)
- [HJB 4004](#) (Requesting Congress to modify the Marine Mammal Protection Act.)

3. What's Over the Hurdle

Here are some of the remaining forty-one bills on [our tracker](#) which cleared the "House of Origin Cut-Off" and are already scheduled for committee hearings later this week.

- [SB 5317](#) (Exempting local governments providing certain services for projects under the jurisdiction of the Energy Facility Siting Evaluation Council from certain appeals.) will be heard in the House Committee on Environment & Energy at 11:30 AM on Thursday, March 13.
- [HB 1135](#) (Ensuring that local government planning complies with the growth management act.) will be heard in the Senate Committee on Local Government at 1:30 PM on Thursday, March 13
- [SB 5212](#) (Concerning filing of adjudication claims for uses of groundwater and surface water in the water resource inventory area 1 water rights adjudication.) will be heard in the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources at 10:30 AM on Friday, March 15.

4. Understanding the Tactics

With three days until the House of Origin Cut-Off, there will be plenty of parliamentary shenanigans by both the majority and minority parties if you find yourself watching TVW. There are many bills waiting to be adopted (414 in the House and 267 in the Senate) and not enough time to pass all of them. The minority party wants to delay and stall so as few of the majority's bills get adopted, so they will add numerous amendments to otherwise simple bills and have many speakers to take up time. The majority party will in turn place the bills most desired by the minority party towards the end of the line for potential adoption, to force the minority party to allow speedy action

on other bills. It's a dance where both parties know all the steps.

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 major bills passed already by the House or Senate, potential 2025 initiatives, and a new Political Action Committee focusing affordability in Washington State.



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

Taken by Julie Allen, Snohomish Conservation District



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