



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WACD Week 11 Legislative Update

March 31, 2025

Last week the House and Senate operating budget and transportation budget proposals were released. Today is the expected release of the two chamber's capital budget proposals, which will provide a fuller picture of the work that remains to be done. Details on the capital budget (once its released) can be found at fiscal.wa.gov.

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](#) or [Heather](#), who are working on Olympia activities while [Ryan](#) is away.

1. Rates and Charges Bill Update

[House Bill 1488](#) was passed by the State Senate on Wednesday, March 26. The Senate did adopt [an amendment](#) to the bill that would put a cap of \$25 on all counties that seek to implement CD rates & charges, rather than the current tiered system based on population. The bill now goes back to the House for their concurrence to the Senate's changes.

2. Operating Budget Proposals

Now seemed a good time to lay out the various operating budget proposals, to let the membership see how the Conservation Commission (and subsequently conservation districts) fared in various proposals. With two governor proposals, two chamber proposals, and a minority proposal from the Senate Republicans there are five different operating budgets to compare:

- [Governor Inslee WSCC Proposed Budget](#)
- [Governor Ferguson WSCC Proposed Budget](#)
- [Senate Republican's WSCC Proposed Budget](#)
- [House WSCC Proposed Budget](#)
- [Senate WSCC Proposed Budget](#)

3. Opportunities to Comment

Below are some bills from WACD's [bill tracker](#) that are scheduled for committee hearings this week, should districts' wish to comment. You will need to follow [this link](#) and complete your comments at least one hour before the start of the committee meeting.

- [HB 1216](#) (House Capital Budget) is scheduled for a public hearing at 8 AM on April 1st in the House Capital Budget Committee.
- [SB 5195](#) (Senate Capital Budget) is scheduled for a public hearing at 4 PM on April 1st in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.
- [HB 1261](#) (Providing tax relief for certain incidental uses on open space land.) is scheduled for a public hearing at 1:30 on April 3rd in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.
- [SB 5485](#) (Concerning livestock identification.) is scheduled for a public hearing at 1:30 PM on April 3rd in the House Appropriations Committee.

4. Expected to be approved

Wednesday, April 2nd is the next legislative cut-off, where bills must be approved by the policy committee in the opposite chamber (ex: House bills passed by Senate Ag) to continue on the legislative pathway to adoption. Here's a sampling of bills from our bill tracker scheduled for a vote before the deadline:

- [SB 5391](#) (Concerning the sustainable farms and fields grant program.) is scheduled for a vote in the House Ag & Natural Resources Committee at 10:30 AM on April 1st.
- [HB 1912](#) (Concerning the exemption for fuels used for agricultural purposes in the climate commitment act.) is scheduled for a vote in front of the Senate Committee on Environment, Energy, and Technology at 1:30 on April 1st.

- [SB 5419](#) (Modifying reports of fire losses) is scheduled for a vote in the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Businesses at 1:30 PM on April 1st.
- [SB 5669](#) (Concerning irrigation district elections.) is scheduled for a vote on either April 1st or April 2nd in the House Local Government Committee.
- [SB 5656](#) (Modifying the definition of inflation rate for aquatic leases.) is scheduled for a vote in the House Ag & Natural Resources Committee at 8 AM on April 2nd.

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 compares the House's and Senate's proposed operating budgets as well as their competing transportation budget proposals.



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

Taken by Zorah Oppenheimer, Clark Conservation District



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