



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

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## WACD Week 12 Legislative Update

April 07, 2025

It is the 85 day of the legislative session, which means only 20 days are left until the regular session ends. Let the countdown begin.

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](#), [Ryan](#) or [Heather](#), who are all working on Olympia activities during budget time.

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### 1. Rates and Charges Bill Update

[House Bill 1488](#) waits for reconciliation between the House version passed on March 3 and the Senate version passed on March 26. The simplest path forward would be for the House to concur to the Senate's proposal (with the \$25 cap), after which the bill would be sent on to the Governor's office for his signature or veto. We may not see action on this bill until towards the end of session, as the bill is currently two weeks "ahead" of the legislative process compared to other proposals.

### 2. Conservation Commission Budget Breakdown

Last week, SCC staff released [their analysis](#) of the different proposals to the biennial operating and capital budgets. You should take a few moments to look over how district programs would be affected under the House and Senate proposals.

### 3. Expected to be approved

Tuesday, April 8, is the deadline for all bills to be passed out of committee from the opposite chamber (ex: Senate bills out of House Appropriations) or be left behind for the remainder of the legislative session. Below are some bills from WACD's [bill tracker](#) that are scheduled for a committee vote before tomorrow's deadline:

- [HB 1261](#) (Providing tax relief for certain incidental uses on open space land.) is scheduled for a vote in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.
- [HB 1563](#) (Establishing a prescribed fire claims fund pilot program.) is scheduled for a vote in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.
- [SB 5165](#) (Concerning compensation in frontier one counties for deer and elk damage) is scheduled for a vote in the House Appropriations Committee.
- [SB 5303](#) (Extending the water supply milestone for the Yakima river basin integrated plan to 2035.) is scheduled for a vote in the House Capital Budget committee.

## 4. Special Session Rumors

Now that the calendar has turned to April, folk start to think about the end of session, scheduled for Sunday, April 27th. With Governor Ferguson's [forceful pushback](#) at a [press conference](#) last week on the budgets developed by Democratic lawmakers, we were already hearing the first whispers of a special session if a compromise cannot be found. Those rumors have only intensified after the different operating budgets were adopted by the House and Senate, because the adoption percentage in both chambers was less than the 67% that would be needed to override any potential gubernatorial veto.

## 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 highlights feedback from the public, Governor Ferguson, and local officials on proposed revenue bills in the House and Senate. She also provides a list of major bills which are still active after the April 2nd cut-off.



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

Taken by Dean White, Lincoln County Conservation District



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