



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

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## WACD Week 14 Legislative Update

**April 21, 2025**

We are in the final days of the legislative session, with legislators expected to work up to the final hour of the regular session on Sunday night. The last day of session is also known as "sine die". If you've never heard that term, it is a Latin phrase used in parliamentary procedure for the final adjournment of a legislative body.

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](#) is on its way to the Governor. On Friday the 18th, the House concurred to the Senate's version of the bill. After some legislative formalities, it will be delivered to the Governor's office for his signature or veto in the next couple days.

The final version of the bill raises the cap for all district requests for rates and charges funding to \$25, regardless of county population size. The bill will also require the Department of Revenue to adjust to rate every three years based on inflation.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible.

### 2. Uncertain Salmon Recovery Funding

One of the many remaining uncertainties with six days left of the legislative session is how salmon recovery funding will look in the next biennium. In the initial budget

proposal released by the Senate last month, \$5 billion in funding for state culvert replacement projects would be moved from the transportation budget to the capital budget. That idea appears to [no longer](#) be on the table, leaving the question remaining as to where that funding will come from now.

There is also a large discrepancy between the House and Senate versions of the Conservation Commission's Riparian Grant Program. Funding in the previous biennia was \$25 million, and the legislature has to determine if that level will decrease (the House's version is \$20 million) or if it will double (the Senate's version is \$50 million).

in addition to future funding, current funding could be affected as well. The Senate's operating budget proposal would raid \$30 million from the state's Salmon Recovery Account. This would take money from authorized projects from previous biennia that still have remaining funds. If your district is relying on salmon recovery account project funding from a previous biennium, this has the potential to curtail your work. There is no information yet as to which projects might be affected, or if this proposal will be in the final budget.

### 3. Waiting to be Approved

With the end of session being the deadline for all bills to be sent to the Governor, some bills are need to be reconciled for the differences between the House and Senate versions of their respective bills. Below are some bills from WACD's [bill tracker](#) that are waiting for that final compromise:

- [HB 1271](#) - Permitting early deployment of state fire service resources.
- [HB 1912](#) - Concerning the exemption for fuels used for agricultural purposes in the climate commitment act.
- [SB 5419](#) - Modifying reports of fire losses.

### 4. Gubernatorial Actions

As we reach the final days of session, attention begins to shift to what actions are being taken by the Governor. Bills that are approved by the legislature and delivered to the Governor within five days of sine die have a 20 day count-down (not counting Sundays).

The Governor has four available options when a bill appears on their desk:

- Sign the bill into law.

- Veto the entirety of the bill.
- Veto sections of the bill.
- Do not sign the bill (which will still become law)

You can track the governor's legislative actions on [this webpage](#).

## 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 describes the main revenue proposals in the House and the Senate, the biggest bills in Olympia from the previous week, and identified the special elections upcoming in November.



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

Taken by Garrett LaCivita, Palouse CD



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