



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

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## WACD Week 15 Legislative Update

**April 30, 2025**

The 2025 Washington State legislative session is over. The House and the Senate adjourned on time, with the usual last minute scrambling. It will take days and weeks to fully understand the impact of the session, both on the policy and the budgetary front. This will not be the last legislative newsletter for the year, expect more as we wait for any governor vetoes and WACD staff to crunch the numbers and review 1,000 page budget bills for all the potential impact to our member-districts.

As always, if there are additional ways WACD can be of service to our membership, all you have to do is pick up the phone or write to [Tom](#), [Ryan](#) or [Heather](#).

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### 1. Rates and Charges Bill Update

[House Bill 1488](#) is still waiting to be signed by the Governor. There were 431 bills adopted by the legislature this session, so there is a bit of a backlog. We hope the bill will be signed sooner than later.

### 2. Conservation Commission Funding

The Conservation Commission will provide a more complete breakdown of their funding in the next day or two, but here is what we read in their operating and capital budget for FY25 - 27. Below are the programmatic changes to the Commission's operating budget, taken from [summary documents](#):

**2025-27 Omnibus Operating Budget**  
**State Conservation Commission**  
(Dollars in Thousands)

	ESSB 5167 as Passed Senate		Passed House (ESSB 5167 w/Hse AMD)		Conference Proposal	
	NGF-O	Total	NGF-O	Total	NGF-O	Total
<b>2025-27 Carryforward Level</b>	<b>31,436</b>	<b>53,950</b>	<b>31,436</b>	<b>53,950</b>	<b>31,436</b>	<b>53,950</b>
<b>2025-27 Maintenance Level</b>	<b>31,476</b>	<b>53,983</b>	<b>31,476</b>	<b>53,983</b>	<b>31,476</b>	<b>53,983</b>
<b>Policy Other Changes:</b>						
1. Conservation Project Engineering	0	0	-400	-400	-400	-400
2. Conservation Technical Assistance	0	0	-200	-200	-200	-200
3. Disaster Assistance Program	600	600	0	0	0	0
4. Forest Health & Community Wildfire	0	-2,500	0	-1,000	0	-2,500
5. Increase Overhead to Capital Budget	-1,906	-1,906	0	0	-1,906	-1,906
6. Integrated Science Hub for Ag	0	0	0	1,000	0	1,000
7. Reduce Administrative Costs	-340	-340	-340	-340	-340	-340
8. Reduce Engineering Grants	-729	-729	-729	-729	-729	-729
9. Reduce Micro Grant Program	-30	-30	-30	-30	-30	-30
10. Reduce SFF Program	-180	-180	-180	-180	-180	-180
11. Riparian Education & Outreach	0	-232	0	0	0	-232
12. Riparian Plant Nurseries	-600	-600	0	0	-156	844
13. Riparian Plant Propagation Program	0	0	-156	844	0	0
14. Salmon Riparian Restoration Program	0	-2,500	0	0	0	-1,000
15. Tribal Liaison	0	0	365	365	365	365
<b>Policy -- Other Total</b>	<b>-3,185</b>	<b>-8,417</b>	<b>-1,670</b>	<b>-670</b>	<b>-3,576</b>	<b>-5,308</b>

As for the capital budget, here's the Commission's authorized funding list transcribed from the [summary list](#):

- Farmland Protection and Land Access – \$4 million
- Improve Shellfish Growing Areas – \$3.5 million
- Natural Resource Investments – \$5 million
- RCPP Match – \$6.32 million
- VSP Cost-share – \$3 million
- Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency – \$3 million
- Irrigation Efficiencies – \$7 million
- WSCC project management - \$1.906 million (transferred from the operating budget)

### 3. Waiting to be Signed

From a high point of over one hundred bills earlier in session on the [WACD bill tracker](#), twenty-eight bills eventually made it to the Governor's desk. Some have been signed already, while many are in the queue of the 264 currently bills waiting for gubernatorial action. For these bills that were delivered to the governor in the final days of session, he has twenty days (not counting Sundays) to act.

## 4. Thinking about Next Session

Though session ended less than 48 hours ago, planning for the next session has already begun. All the bills that were not adopted in 2025 will return in 2026, with many conversations happening in the interim. Please take a look at the bills on WACD's [defunct bill tracker](#), these will be the bills under consideration at the start of next year.

## 5. General Legislative Update

WACD's Lobbyist Brynn Brady writes a weekly update for those interested in the general happenings of Olympia. [This final week](#) she describes provides additional information about the final budget, both the revenue and the spending. She also takes note of the legislative wins for the majority Democratic party from this session.

## 6. Natural Resource Agency Comparisons

As shared in the introduction, WACD staff is starting to look over the compromise budgets that were released on Saturday and adopted on Sunday. There are always surprises at the end of each session when the dust settles. The first project was to compare the operating and capital budgets for all the natural resource agencies, you can find [that list](#) on the WACD Hub.



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

Taken by Ken Muir, Cascadia CD



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