



WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

RESOLUTION

SHORT TITLE: Stock Water Rights

SPONSOR CD: Stevens County

AREA: NW SW X NC SC X NE SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- Policy
- X Position Statement
- Recognition
- Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY (check any option that applies):

- X WACD
- X WSCC
- OTHER STATE AGENCY _____
- NRCS
- NACD
- NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

The Washington Department of Ecology adopted policy 94-1025 almost 30 years ago which directed Ecology staff to allow for the mechanical diversion of surface waters for livestock consumption in return for protection of water quality values. This policy has been the driving force behind hundreds of projects that removed livestock access from surface water. These projects have been paid for by private parties and public agencies such as the Washington State Conservation Commission, Washington Department of Ecology, and others.

In 2021, with no input from the partners or the public, Ecology created panic and uncertainty when they released a draft proposal to change the ability of livestock owners to utilize surface water for current animal husbandry and riparian practices. As this proposed change may be well intended, it does not consider the firmly established practices and projects that have been in use and accepted for many years. Unfortunately, this suggested policy would have negative impacts on any such future projects and current practices.



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PROPOSED RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

- **WACD will support the continuation of Livestock Task Force of Conservation Districts.**
- **WACD and WSCC will work collaboratively with private stakeholders, Washington Department of Ecology, Conservation Districts, the Legislature, and all other appropriate agencies to resolve the uncertainty if surface water rights are required for livestock.**
- **If determined some current livestock operations are non-compliant with a revised Ecology policy in the utilization of surface water, WACD will work with stake holders, Ecology, WSCC, and the legislature to ensure there is a route to comply without enforcement or financial burden.**

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.

Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.

New policy.

ARE WACD RESOURCES (FUNDING, STAFF CAPACITY, ETC.) REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

NO

YES (briefly explain): Aid in coordination of task force and communicate with WSCC and stakeholders.