



Legislative Update



2021 Legislative Session

Ron Shultz, WSCC Policy Director
WSCC Regular Meeting – January 21, 2021

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION SO FAR....

Remote committee hearings and remote one-on-one meetings with members have been a learning challenge but manageable.

Commission staff have been meeting with members to review the Governor's budget and discuss other policy activities. These meetings are going well.

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Important legislative cut-off dates:

Feb 15 – Final day for bills in committee.

Feb 22 – Final day for budget bills in committee.

March 9 – Final day to consider bills in houses of origin.

March 26 – Final day for bills from opposite chamber in committee.

April 2 – Final day for fiscal bills from opposite chamber in committee.

April 11 – Final day to consider bill from opposite chamber.

April 25 – Last day of session.

KEY BILLS OF INTEREST

Commission Request Legislation:

- Bill would exempt from public disclosure email addresses and cell phone numbers of voters in CD elections requesting an absentee ballot.
- Request from legislator we not run the bill this session due to legislative leadership direction to limit the number of bills to COVID and urgent matters.

KEY BILLS OF INTEREST

OPMA:

SHB 1056 Allows public meetings to be held remotely when declared emergency. Requires allowing public to listen-in to remote meetings.

HB 1180 Requires opportunity for public comment at public meetings including virtual meetings.

HB 1329 Encourages agencies to hold public meetings even when not required to do so. Requires local gov't to provide public comment at hearings.

KEY BILLS OF INTEREST

Salmon Recovery and GMA:

HB 1117 Applied net ecological gain concepts into GMA planning.

SB 5306 Requires WDFW to develop guidance for local gov't on riparian habitat protection for GMA critical areas ordinance revision.

KEY BILLS OF INTEREST

Water Issues:

HB 1113/SB 5060 Adds an exemption to relinquishment laws to allow exemption when property is purchased by a “good faith” buyer unaware of the relinquishment and who puts water to beneficial use.

HB 1143 Requires Ecology to accept a temporary transfer of a water right to trust for 2 years when the right is banked as part of the Walla Walla Pilot Local Water Management program.

KEY BILLS OF INTEREST

Forestry:

HB 1168 DNR bill creating the Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience Account. Funds various forest plans. Includes CDs in entities supported in this work.

HB 1216 DNR request bill. Makes updates to the existing urban and community forestry statutes to incorporate environmental justice, address salmon and orca recovery, increase collaboration with tribes and other entities.

KEY BILLS OF INTEREST

GMA / Farmland Preservation:

HB 1233/SB 5275 Allows for expansion of boundary of LAMIRD. Could impact agricultural lands.

HB 1241 Requires counties to submit 5-year progress reports on implementing GMA, including CAOs.

HB 1298/SB 5221 Allows for accessory dwelling units outside UGA.

SB 5206 Prohibits expedited permitting of alternative energy sites when the proposal is on agricultural lands.

KEY BILLS OF INTEREST

Other Bills:

SB 5045 Establishes a state meat and poultry inspection program.

SB 5126 Gov's Climate Commitment Act

SB 5141 Implements recommendations of the environmental justice task force.

SB 5220 Addressing taxation of salmon recovery project grants.

SB 5253 Implementing recommendations of the pollinator health task force.

2021 LEGISLATURE

Watch the Friday Update for weekly updates to bill status and reports on new items impacting the Commission and conservation districts this session.



Thank you!

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