

Weekly Legislative Update: Rivers

Issue Team Chair: Raelene Gold

Contact: rgold@lwvwa.org, 206-303-7218

January 30, 2020

Bills Needing Action This Week

HB 1691 Financial responsibility requirement related to oil spills. Requires oil vessels and facilities to demonstrate financial ability to pay for a “worst case” oil spill. Would relieve taxpayers of the financial burden. Public hearing in House Environment and Energy Committee January 13, and executive session held January 21st, substitute bill passed, referred to Appropriation, has hearing in Appropriation January 31 at 3:30pm.

⚠ Please sign into House Appropriation Committee public hearing on January 31 before 2:30pm and **record a PRO**:

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=House&mlId=29661&ald=145214&callId=19154&tId=3>

You may express support for bills in hearings with the [online process](#). Select House or Senate then the committee and the date and time of the meeting, then follow the menus. Detailed instructions are in this week’s Legislative Newsletter. Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, so please leave the “Organization” box blank. A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

Bills We Support

HB 1172 Repeals Initiative 456 passed in 1984 during Washington state and tribes fishing wars in which Billy Frank Jr. went to jail 50 times for treaty protected fishing in the Nisqually River. Recognizes judicially affirmed and treaty-reserved fishing rights and promoting state-tribal cooperative agreements in the management of salmon, trout, and steelhead resources. Sponsored by Rep. Lekanoff at request of Attorney General Ferguson. The League was a strong opponent of Initiative 456 in 1984. Passed out of House 96-0, referred to Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources and Parks Committee

HB 1631 Preserving kelp and eelgrass. (See Forests for update)

[HB 1640](#) Creates a joint legislative Tribal-State Committee. Tribes to meet with state legislators to discuss and work on tribal issues together. A good idea for looking forwards to resolve issues. Had public hearing in State Government & Tribal Relations Committee January 12th.

[HB 1653](#) Improving state-wide coordination in support of anadromous fish recovery. Creates a Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and a Salmon Cabinet. An attempt to get coordination of all efforts to achieve state's salmon recovery goal. Had public hearing on January 20th in House State Government and Tribal Relations Committee, and executive session January 26th, substitute bill passed and referred to Appropriations.

[HB 1691](#) Financial responsibility requirement related to oil spills. Requires oil vessels and facilities to demonstrate financial ability to pay for a "worst case" oil spill. Would relieve taxpayers of the financial burden. Public hearing in House Environment and Energy Committee January 13, and executive session held January 21st, substitute bill passed, referred to Appropriation, has hearing in Appropriation January 31 at 3:30pm.

[HB 1838](#) State Salmon Strategy sponsored by Governor Inslee with Tribes to protect our remaining EPA listed salmon focusing on riparian and river habitat restoration. Public hearing in House Rural Development Agriculture & Natural Resources on January 19th brought out landowner and farmer strong opposition as they were not consulted on legislation and large (200'-350') riparian buffers would remove much of their land from production. They prefer the Voluntary Stewardship program. Second public hearing held January 21. Bill apparently dead for session.

[HB 1978](#) Concerning Shoreline Master Programs. Review and revision of SMP's would be revised from 8 to 10 years. They are way behind now and need to catch up. Public hearing in Local Government Committee Jan 19, and executive session January 21, referred to Rules and placed on second reading.

[SB 5885](#) Relating to marine shoreline habitat. Conducts survey of Puget Sound marine shorelines identifying un-permitted development and requiring changes creating near shore habitat for forage fish and juvenile salmon. Public hearing held in the Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources and Parks Committee January 27; executive session scheduled February 3, 1:30pm.

Bills We Oppose

[SB 5608](#) Related to free public access to state parks and lands. Would repeal the Discovery Pass which State Parks needs for sustained revenue to maintain our parks. Public hearing in

the Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources and Parks Committee January 13, has not proceeded on.

[SB 5632](#) Concerning public investment in critical water infrastructure projects. Problem here is agencies promoting projects are evaluating which projects get selected and ranked for funding, and that there is no public input on the selected projects. Bill needs revision. Had public hearing held in Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources and Parks Committee on June 18th, has not proceeded on.

How You Can Be Involved

- During the legislative session we will send Action Alerts in the [Legislative Newsletter](#). Please respond to these, which will direct you to an application to facilitate communicating with your legislators on an important vote in committees or on the chamber floor.
- Local Leagues in Washington have action chairs who coordinate action teams. Some local Leagues have environmental teams to take action locally. Contact your local League action chair to find out and join.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under considerations as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Raelene Gold, Rivers Issue Chair, rgold@lwvwa.org.