

Weekly Legislative Update: **Forests**

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Important Note: Every bill introduced in the session goes through multiple committees during the legislative process. **At each step, where there is a public hearing, you have the opportunity to make your position known.**

For instance, you may have signed in PRO when HB 1460 was first heard on February 9 in the House Capital Budget committee. **Now, the bill is on its journey through the Senate.** It will pass through multiple committees, with public hearings at each step.

This week's action is to sign in PRO for its **hearing** in Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks committee. It is likely that this bill will pass this policy committee and then pass to the Senate Ways & Means committee. When that fiscal committee holds a public hearing, **you will again have a chance to sign in PRO.** Please stay tuned for Action Alerts that will direct you to an **easy way to sign in to make your position known, at each step of the way.**

Take Action

[HB 1460](#) Concerning the Department of Natural Resources land transactions, revenue distributions, and creation and management of a trust land transfer program.

HB 1460 has passed out of its house of origin and now needs support in its journey through the Senate. You can make a difference by supporting this bill at its first public hearing in the Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks committee.

Scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks committee at 1:30 PM March 9.

Please sign-in PRO [here](#) by 12:30 pm on March 9

Updates

Several bills did not survive the winnowing process that ended on 2/24.

Dead for this session:

HB 1078 - Urban forestry

HB 1720 – Riparian protection (budget proviso advancing)
SB 5039 – Mitigating wildfires/utility planning (HB 1032 alive)
SB 5372 – DNR Trust Land Transfer (HB 1460 alive)
SB 5611 – Community preparedness for wildfire (HB 1578 alive)
SB 5688 – Carbon sequestration/ecosystem services (HB 1789 alive)

Bills We Support

[HB 1032](#) Mitigating the risk of wildfires through electric utility planning and identification of best management practices appropriate to each electric utility's circumstances. LWVWA supported SB 5803-2022, but it was met with much resistance from the electric utilities. Senator Rolfes considered the concerns and introduced SB 5039. It now appears that the electric utilities are mostly in favor.

[HB 1460](#) Concerning the Department of Natural Resources land transactions, revenue distributions, and creation and management of a trust land transfer program. These bills will help revitalize the Trust Land Transfer program. Here is a [fact sheet](#) about TLT. The Governor's budget included \$10.6 million for Trust Land Transfer – an insufficient, yet promising start to revitalizing TLT. Advocates for the TLT revitalization program will be asking the legislature for \$25 million for the 10 projects on the list. For more details about the program and list of the projects see DNR's [Trust Land Transfer-Land Portfolio Management Tool](#).

[HB 1578](#) Improving community preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience to wildland fire health and safety impacts in areas of increasing population density, including in the wildland urban interface. These bills intend to improve community preparedness and resilience, while mitigating wildland fire health and safety impacts in the urban/wildland interface.

[SB 5390](#) Establishing a programmatic safe harbor agreement on forestlands. This bill would facilitate participation in safe harbor agreements for spotted owl habit protection. These agreements would be voluntary, incentive-based and available to any nonfederal forestland owner. The Department of Natural Resources would consult with and rely on the Department of Fish and Wildlife for technical assistance (interagency agreement).

Bills We Are Watching

[HB 1078](#) Concerning urban forest management ordinances. The intent of the bill is to provide guidance for cities or towns that enact an urban forestry program on the use of tree banks. The bill would require the Department of Natural Resources to create a model ordinance and

provide scientific guidance for the use of tree banks for cities or towns that choose to use this model. **Bill is dead.**

HB 1720 Concerning the protection and restoration of riparian areas through the establishment of a fully voluntary, regionally focused riparian grant program designed to improve the ecological functions of critical riparian management zones. This bill replaces HB 1215. **Bill is dead.**

HB 1789 Expanding revenue generation and economic opportunities from natural climate solutions and ecosystem services. This bill is related to SB 5688 A sticker amendment was introduced by Representative Reeves.

SB 5688 Providing carbon sequestration and ecosystem services in the management of public lands. This bill was made at the request of the Department of Natural Resources. The intent of this bill to provide the Department of Natural Resources with specific authority, procedures, and criteria for development and implementation of carbon storage projects and associated ecosystem services. This bill would codify a new way for revenue to be generated from land and waters in the state, through the carbon offset markets. **Bill is dead.**

How You Can Be Involved

- 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 into consideration as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Sherri Dysart, Forests Issue Chair, sdysart@lwvwa.org.
- [Pacific Northwest Forest Climate Alliance](#) is an organization dedicated to exploring the intersection of forest protection and climate justice. Many of the most renowned forest scientists are affiliated with this organization.