

# WFFA Final Legislative Report – March 12, 2018

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The 2018 legislative session ended on time on March 8. The most important news might be what did not pass. Both the capital gains tax proposal and the carbon tax bill died in the last days of session. Immediately upon the death of the carbon tax bill, a coalition of tribal, labor and environmental groups filed a petition for a citizen's initiative to create a carbon fee. The fee would add an estimated 14 cents to the cost of a gallon of gasoline. The groups supporting the initiative have until July 6 to gather 260,000 signatures to qualify the measure for the November ballot.

A bill of concern to agriculture and forestry, E2SSB 6529, creates a pesticide safety work group which must report back to the legislature with recommendations for legislation for next year. The focus is primarily on applications made via air and airblast sprayers. The group, which is made up of legislators and state agencies, will meet over summer.

As always, the operating budget provides interesting insights into how your tax dollars are being spent.

\$3,897,000 was provided for the Department of Ecology to implement ESSB 6091, the Hirst fix, dealing with water availability. These funds are to cover the costs of watershed planning, a metering pilot project, a joint legislative task force, and preparation of a programmatic environmental impact statement. An additional \$20,000 was provided to the Department of Agriculture.

\$625,000 was provided to the Department of Ecology for water rights compliance and enforcement staff to address water use in violation of state water resources laws, including technical assistance, informal enforcement, and formal enforcement actions.

\$80,000 was provided to the department of agriculture to provide to the sheriff's departments of Ferry and Stevens counties to cooperate with the department and the department of fish and wildlife on wolf management activities.

Several budget provisos for the department of natural resources may be of interest:

- \$1,690,000 to increase fire response capability, including upgrading information technology systems and equipment for wildfire and forest health data, training department and fire service personnel, adding fire management staff, and replacing aviation fuel trucks and fire engines.
- \$198,000 for weed control and to maintain public access at 17 sites.
- \$403,000 to create a prescribed burn certification program as described in House Bill 2733. This bill includes a provision added by WFFA stating that certified prescribed burn managers may be issued burn permits with modified requirements in recognition of their training and skills. In such cases, normal smoke management and fire risk parameters apply.
- \$500,000 is provided to increase the level of permanent staff dedicated to planning and managing forest health projects.
- \$193,000 for the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee to analyze and make recommendations on areas of the state not in an established fire district and the value of fire prevention programs per SHB 2561.

In the final days of session, a number of legislators announced plans to not seek re-election. This is expected. The list is bound to grow over the next several weeks.

Senator Michael Baumgartner, Spokane  
 Rep. Judy Clibborn, Mercer Island  
 Rep. Larry Haler, Richland  
 Rep. Ruth Kagi, Seattle  
 Rep. Dan Kristiansen, Snohomish  
 Rep. Melanie Stambaugh, Puyallup  
 Rep. Terry Nealey, Dayton  
 Rep. Liz Pike, Camas  
 Rep. Jay Rodne, Snoqualmie

Below is the list of bills that passed from my tracking list. If you have any questions about any bills, or the legislative process, please do not hesitate to ask.

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Position</u>
<a href="#"><u>E2SHB 2177</u></a> <b>Rural county jobs program</b> Creates the rural county high employer demand jobs program to: (1) Meet the workforce needs of business and industry in rural counties by assisting students in earning certificates, associate degrees, or other industry-recognized credentials necessary for employment in high employer demand fields; and (2) Provide selected students scholarship funds, as determined by the opportunity scholarship board, to help them meet their eligible expenses for up to one year, when they enroll in a community or technical college program that prepares them for a high employer demand field. Requires the opportunity scholarship board to create the rural jobs program account, from which scholarship funds will be disbursed beginning no later than the fall term of the 2020 academic year, if by that date, state matching funds have been received. Creates the rural jobs program match transfer account.	Del to Gov	Chapman	Medium	Support
<a href="#"><u>SHB 2276</u></a> <b>Wildlife transfer notice</b> Requires the department of fish and wildlife to provide notice and hold a public hearing before department personnel relocates or introduces any wolves, coyotes, lynx, bobcats, and animals defined as big game, where the action is intended for population maintenance or enhancement.	Del to Gov	Eslick	Low	
<a href="#"><u>ESHB 2285</u></a> <b>Marbled murrelet reports</b> Finds that protecting the habitat of the marbled murrelet is beneficial to the state and our environment, however, the protection and recovery of the murrelets may have impacts, specifically on timber jobs in our rural communities and lost revenues to our schools, counties, and junior taxing districts through reduced timber harvests. Requires the department of natural resources to provide a report to the legislature that includes an economic analysis of: (1) The net loss or gain of revenues to each of the trust beneficiaries from a proposed marbled murrelet habitat conservation plan approved by the board of natural resources and forwarded to or approved by the United States fish and wildlife service; (2) The potential net loss or gain of jobs for each impacted county; and (3) Economic activity benefits from additional conservation measures that support murrelet protection and recovery. Requires the commissioner of public lands to appoint a marbled murrelet advisory committee to assist the department in developing and providing the report.	Del to Gov	Chapman	Medium	Neutral
<a href="#"><u>HB 2307</u></a> <b>Fish &amp; wildlife data</b> Changes the term "may" to "must" with regard to subjecting the release of sensitive fish and wildlife data to a confidentiality agreement.	Del to Gov	Van Werven	Low	Support
<b>Wildland fire adv. committee</b>	Del to Gov	Dent	Medium	Neutral

[SHB 2561](#)

Requires the commissioner of public lands to direct the wildland fire advisory committee to review, analyze, and make recommendations on certain issues related to wild fire prevention, response, and suppression activities within the state. Expires December 31, 2019.

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[HB 2733](#)

**Prescribed burn cert. prog.**

Del to Gov

Orcutt

High

Support

Requires the department of natural resources to create a prescribed burn manager certification program for those who practice prescribed burning in the state.

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[ESB 5450](#)

**Mass timber for building**

Del to Gov

Liias

Support

Requires the state building code council to adopt rules for the use of cross-laminated timber products for residential and commercial building construction.

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[SB 6073](#)

**Hardwood processors levy**

Del to Gov

Takko

Medium

Support

Changes the agricultural commodity assessments, levied by the state hardwoods commission, on processors of hardwoods to four cents per ton produced. Requires the assessment to be adjusted to reflect the percentage change in the implicit price deflator for personal consumption expenditures by September 25th of the year before the assessments are payable.

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[ESB 6211](#)

**Federal land revolving accts**

Del to Gov

Hawkins

Medium

Support

Provides a definition for "good neighbor agreement," for purposes of Title 79 RCW (public lands), as follows: An agreement entered into between the state and the United States forest service or United States bureau of land management to conduct forestland, watershed, and rangeland restoration activities on federal lands, as originally authorized by the 2014 farm bill. Creates the federal lands revolving account. Requires receipts from the proceeds of good neighbor agreements and legislative transfers, gifts, grants, and federal funds designated for use in conjunction with a good neighbor agreement to be deposited in the account.

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[E2SSB 6529](#)

**Pesticide application safety**

Del to Gov

Saldana

Medium

Oppose

Creates the pesticide application safety work group to develop recommendations for improving the safety of pesticide applications. Expires December 31, 2018.

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