

Weekly Legislative Update: Rivers

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Until the end of the day Monday, February 7th, bills in the Rules Committees will be going to the floor for voting on passage from their chamber of origin, before going on to a policy committee in the opposite house. Many bills we supported may not make it, though they may be revived if they are deemed Necessary to Pass the Budget. Many bills supporting salmon recovery and tribal coordination failed. Thursday, February 24th is the last day for bills to pass out of their chamber of origin.

Bills Needing Action This Week

HB 1172 Recognizes judicially affirmed and treaty-reserved fishing rights and promotes state-tribal cooperative agreements in the management of salmon, trout, and steelhead resources. Repeals the 1984 Initiative 456, which abrogated tribal treaty rights, that the League strongly opposed.

⚠ Scheduled for Thursday, February 17, 1:30pm in the Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resource & Parks Committee. **Please sign in Pro by 12:30pm.**

SB 5804 Discovery Pass free days extended from state parks to other state recreation sites and lands.

⚠ Public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, February 16, 10am the House Community and Economic Development Committee. **Please sign in Pro by 9am.**

Bills We Support

HB 1172 Recognizes judicially affirmed and treaty-reserved fishing rights and promotes state-tribal cooperative agreements in the management of salmon, trout, and steelhead resources. The League was a strong opponent of the 1984 Initiative 456, which abrogated tribal treaty rights. Passed out of House 96-0. Has a public hearing February 17, 1:30pm in Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources and Parks Committee.

[SHB 1691](#) Financial responsibility requirements related to oil spills. Requires oil vessels and facilities to demonstrate financial ability to pay for a “worst case” oil spill. Bill would stop oil companies from externalizing costs and relieve taxpayers of the financial burden. Currently in House Rules Committee, second reading.

[HB 1700/SB 5598](#) Concerning sustainable funding for derelict vessel removal account using the watercraft excise tax. Derelict vessels reduce near shoreline habitat for fish. SB 5598 currently in the Senate Ways and Means Committee. HB 1700 passed out of House 94-0, scheduled for public hearing Feb. 17, 1:30pm in Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks Committee

[HB 1978](#) Concerning Shoreline Master Programs. Review and revision of Shoreline Master Plans would be revised from 8 to 10 years. They are way behind now and need to catch up. Passed out of House 93-1-0-4. Referred to Senate Environment, Energy and Technology Committee.

[SB 5504](#) Discovery Pass free days extended from state parks to other state recreation sites and lands. Bill has passed out of Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks to Rules where it passed 43-0-0-6, and was referred to the House Community & Economic Development Committee, where public hearing scheduled February 16, 10am, and executive session February 18, 8am.

[SB 5619](#) Conserving and restoring kelp forests and eelgrass meadows in Washington State. 2nd Substitute passed out of Senate. (See Forests for update.)

[SHB 5885](#) Relating to marine shoreline habitat. Substitute bill directs Department of Ecology to conduct baseline survey of Puget Sound marine shorelines using a on-the-water view of the shoreline, identifying unpermitted development, and to consider the results in their enforcement authority. Last year’s bill on shoreline armoring bill was not as comprehensive as this is. Creates more near shore habitat for forage fish and juvenile salmon. In Senate Rules for second reading; just passed out of Senate.

Bills We Supported that Did Not Pass

[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. No further action, so bill is dead for session.

[SHB 1653](#) Substitute bill creates the **Salmon Advisory Cabinet** to convene agency directors, legislators and tribal leaders to develop recommendations regarding agency actions, legislation and budget priorities to enhance salmon and steelhead recovery. Original bill 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, but no public hearing scheduled, so dead for session.

[HB 1838](#) **State Salmon Strategy (Lorraine Loomis bill)** 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 dead for session, but funding for some measures in bill may be included in the House Operating budget.

Bills We Opposed that Did Not Pass

[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, so is dead.

[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, so is dead.

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@lwwa.org.