

## Weekly Legislative Update: **Forests**

Issue Team Chair: Sherri Dysart

Contact: [sdysart@lwvwa.org](mailto:sdysart@lwvwa.org)

**March 12, 2023**

**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.**

### Take Action

**[HB 1032](#) Mitigating the risk of wildfires through electric utility planning and identification of best management practices appropriate to each electric utility's circumstances.**

HB 1032 has passed out of its house of origin (House) 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.

Scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology committee at 1:30 PM March 14.

Please sign-in PRO [here](#) by 12:30 pm on March 14.

### 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 habitat 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 1789 Expanding revenue generation and economic opportunities from natural climate solutions and ecosystem services.** *Several troubling strikers and amendments were passed on March 7 in the House floor vote. The bill has been referred to the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology committee.*

## **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](mailto: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.