



Session Watch

Tuesday, March 17, 2020 (Final Session Watch Report for Regular Session 2020)

2020 Legislative Session Officially Over

The 2020 Washington State legislative session is in the rearview mirror. With some exceptions, the worst bills were amended to be less harmful or they died. The sex health education bill caused a huge outcry in Olympia and groups have formed asking the Governor to veto it. Some of the most interesting results of the legislative session can be found in the budget. Read on for highlights.

Soil Health Initiative

SSB 6306 creates the soil health initiative. Funding is provided for the Department of Agriculture, the Conservation Commission and Washington State University to coordinate on creating a soil health baseline and developing best management practices for improving soil health, especially in eastern Washington. For fiscal year 2021, the Conservation Commission gets \$55,000, WSU gets \$788,000 and WSDA gets \$200,000.

Grants for Compost Use

\$167,000 of ongoing funding is provided to implement the three-year pilot program to reimburse farming operations for purchasing compost from facilities with solid waste handling permits. Reimbursement may include transportation, equipment, spreading, and labor costs. The pilot program will run January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2023. For purposes of this program, "farming operation" includes commercial agriculture and silviculture.

Sustainable Farms and Fields – Grants for Precision Ag and Carbon Farming

Ongoing funding is provided to the Conservation Commission to create the grant program outlined in SSSB 5947. Grants may be used for the following:

- (a) Annual payments to enrolled participants for successfully delivered carbon storage or reduction;
- (b) Up-front payments for contracted carbon storage;

- (c) Down payments on equipment.
- (d) Purchases of equipment.
- (e) Purchase of seed, seedlings, spores, animal feed, and amendments.
- (f) Services to landowners, such as the development of site-specific conservation plans to increase soil organic levels or to increase usage of precision agricultural practices, or design and implementation of best management practices to reduce livestock emissions.
- (g) Other equipment purchases or financial assistance deemed appropriate by the commission to fulfill the intent of this act.

Gypsy Moth Eradication

Moth trapping efforts in the summer of 2019 identified three types of non-native gypsy moths in Washington State: Asian, European, and Hokkaido moths. The department will conduct eradication treatments in the spring of 2020 and follow-up monitoring. \$694,000 of one-time state funds will be used to secure federal grants to help pay for the cost of treatment and monitoring.

Ghost Shrimp / Oyster Research

\$650,000 of one-time funding is provided for research for an integrated pest management (IPM) plan to address burrowing shrimp in oyster beds in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor.

Wolf Management

\$320,000 is provided for the department of agriculture to contract with the northeast Washington wolf cattle collaborative, for range riders to conduct proactive deterrence activities with the goal to reduce the likelihood of cattle being injured or killed by wolves on forest service grazing allotments and adjoining private lands in the Kettle mountains in Ferry county north of highway 20. Range riders must share all relevant information with the department of fish and wildlife in a timely manner to aid in wolf management decisions and must document their

activities with geo-referenced photo points and provide written description of their efforts to the department of fish and wildlife by December 31, 2020.

In addition, \$40,000 is provided to the sheriff's departments of Ferry and Stevens counties to cooperate with the Department of agriculture and the Department of Fish and Wildlife on wolf management activities.

Group to Study State Water Trust

The Department of Ecology must convene a work group to study the design and use of the state water trust, water banking, and water transfers, and present its findings to the legislature before December 1, 2020. The work group must include:

- (i) Federally recognized Indian tribes.
- (ii) Local governments including cities, counties, and special purpose districts.
- (iii) Environmental advocacy organizations.
- (iv) The farming industry in Washington.
- (v) Business interests; and
- (vi) Entities that have been directly involved with the establishment of water banks.

Gun Violence

Washington office of firearm safety and violence prevention is created within the Department of Commerce for the purposes of coordinating and promoting effective state and local efforts to reduce firearm violence. The duties of the office include but are not limited to: Working with law enforcement agencies, county prosecutors, researchers, and public health agencies to develop and implement evidence-based firearm violence intervention and prevention strategies. Contracting for a statewide helpline, counseling, and referral services for victims, friends, and family members impacted by gun violence.

Quote of the Week

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead

Trivia Question of the Week

Where was the first state Grange meeting held?

Last Week’s Trivia Answer

Albert S. Goss

The bill tracking below is grouped into bills relating to agriculture and all other bills for convenience.

Bills related to Agriculture

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Position</u>
<u>ESHB 1622</u> Drought preparedness Concerning drought preparedness and response.	Del to Gov	Blake	Medium	Neutral
<u>E2SHB 2311</u> Greenhouse gas emissions Amending state greenhouse gas emission limits for consistency with the most recent assessment of climate change science.	Del to Gov	Slatter	Medium	Oppose
<u>HB 2524</u> Ag. product negotiations Expanding the scope of agricultural products subject to requirements in chapter 15.83 RCW related to negotiation concerning production or marketing.	Del to Gov	Chandler	Medium	Support

HB 2624 **Dept. of ag./examinations** Del to Gov Shewmake High Support
 Allows the Department of Agriculture to contract with community colleges to administer pesticide license exams. This will allow prospective licensees to take the test sooner and closer to home and get their results more quickly.

ESHB 2713 **Compost procurement and use** Del to Gov Walen Medium Support
 Encouraging compost procurement and use.

EHB 2811 **Environmental education** Del to Gov Johnson Low Neutral
 Establishing a statewide environmental sustainability education program.

2SSB 5947 **Sustainable farms and fields** Del to Gov McCoy Low Neutral
 Establishing the sustainable farms and fields grant program.

ESSB 6300 **Animals** Del to Gov Rivers Medium Concerns
 Concerning animal welfare.

SSB 6306 **Soil health initiative** Del to Gov Liias Medium Support
 Creating the Washington soil health initiative.

E2SSB 6518 **Pesticide, chlorpyrifos** Del to Gov Rolfes High Oppose

Other Bills

<u>Bill Details</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Position</u>
ESHB 2816 School & classroom climates Nurturing positive social and emotional school and classroom climates.	Del to Gov	Corry	Low	Support
ESSB 5323 Plastic bags Reducing pollution from plastic bags by establishing minimum state standards for the use of bags at retail establishments.	Del to Gov	Das	Medium	Concerns
ESSB 5395 Sexual health education Concerning comprehensive sexual health education.	Del to Gov	Wilson	Monitoring	
ESSB 6288 Office of firearm safety Creating the Washington office of firearm violence prevention.	Del to Gov	Dhingra	Medium	Oppose

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