

WEEK of Monday, January 26, 2009

Environmental Community

Hot List for the STATE HOUSE

For the seventh year in a row, the environmental community will be sending legislators and key stakeholders its weekly Environmental Community "Hot List" detailing positions on no more than ten of the highest priority issues for the upcoming week. Separate Hot Lists will be prepared for the House and Senate and distributed each Monday via email and in hard copy to your office. At the end of the document, you will find a list of environmental community organizations that contributed to the Hot List. We hope you find this communication helpful. Please feel free to contact me at clifford@wcvoters.org or 206-369-2235, if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Clifford R. Traisman, State Lobbyist, Washington Conservation Voters & Washington Environmental Council

HOUSE COMMITTEE ACTION

HB 1267: Clarifying that the legislature intends that RCW 90.14.140 be liberally construed.

HB 1268: Concerning the relinquishment of a water right.

HB 1269: Defining "crop rotation" for the purposes of RCW 90.14.140(1)(k).

Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *OPPOSE ALL THREE BILLS*

- Water is a limited and publicly owned resource that is asked to meet many demands. Water policies must fairly balance multiple needs for critical fish habitat, agriculture, industry, and use in our homes.
- These three bills imbalance existing water law by weakening the long-standing principle that requires current water users to relinquish the right to water that has not been used for five or more years. Undermining this principle encourages water hoarding and financial speculation and may raise seriously impact the rights of other water users.
- Changes to the state's relinquishment requirements should occur only within the context of broad-based reform that fairly considers the interests of farms, fish and people.

HB 1165: Providing for the safe collection and disposal of unwanted drugs from residential sources through a producer provided and funded product stewardship program.

Environmental Health: Possible Executive Session

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Reduces risks of accidental poisonings, drug diversion, and contamination of surface and ground water by requiring drug producers to provide residents with a secure and convenient statewide program for disposing unwanted and left-over prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines.
- Budget-neutral to the State. A fee paid by drug producers recovers agency oversight costs.

HB 1180: Regarding the use of bisphenol A.

Environmental Health Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- The Safe Baby Bottle bill protects children's health by banning the toxic chemical—bisphenol A (BPA)—in baby bottles, sippy cups and other food containers kids use. Please support this important measure.
- Safer alternatives to this chemical are widely available and already in use. Wal-Mart, Toys 'R' Us, Whole Foods, and Safeway Stores have announced that they will stop stocking BPA containing products for babies. Nalgene, Camelbak, and Playtex and others have announced that they will stop making products with BPA.

HB 1334: Concerning water resource management on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- This bill would allow agricultural water users to consume more water by transferring conserved water to new irrigated acreage. Although water conservation should be encouraged, it should not be used as a tool to further draw down already burdened rivers and streams.
- This bill undermines the Columbia River Management Program by unilaterally amending statutory language that was agreed to in 2006 by both agricultural and environmental communities.

HB 1409: Requiring a permanent oil spill response tug at Neah Bay.

Ecology & Parks Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- With a track record of 41 rescues or assists, the Response Tug at Neah Bay has proven itself the most effective means of preventing and responding to oil spills in Puget Sound and on the outer coast.
- This bill will save the state \$3.6 million in the second year of the biennium and in subsequent years by requiring oil companies and other shippers to privately contract for the placement of the tug.

HB 1481: Regarding electric vehicles.

Technology, Energy & Communications Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- Promotes the use of electric vehicles through the creation of an electric infrastructure that will support the use of electric vehicles. This approach was recommended by the Governor's Climate Advisory Team (CAT) and will spur economic development while reducing emissions.
- One element of the bill is to promote having the state motor pool switch to electric vehicles in the future and to provide electric infrastructure at all of the state owned motor pool lots.

HB 1489: Regarding water resource management.

Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- This legislation would allow industrial feedlots and other cattle operations to withdraw up to 350 acre-feet of water per year (over 100 million gallons) for stock watering without adequate measuring and monitoring of water use.
- Such excessive, unpermitted water use could impact our state's aquifers, adversely affecting the water supplies available to valid water rights holders and for critical fish habitat.

HB 1490: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through land use and transportation requirements. (a.k.a. Creating Transit Oriented Communities; Rep. Nelson, Prime Sponsor)

Local Government & Housing Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *SUPPORT*

- One of the four environmental priorities for 2009, this bill implements many of the policy recommendations of the interim land-use and transportation climate committees to address the state's single largest source of global warming emissions – transportation.
- A central component of the bill, Section 9, seeks to create a statewide framework for ensuring that our communities closest to transit centers will remain affordable and walkable while capitalizing on the taxpayer investment in transit. This section, a work in progress, is supported by the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance and State Labor Council.



HB 1509: Defining the term "stock watering" for the purposes of chapter 90.44 RCW.

Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee: Public Hearing

POSITION: *OPPOSE*

- Another of the numerous bills relating to stock watering this session, this legislation would codify an overly broad definition of "stock watering" that would allow unlimited use of water for any purpose related to stock operations, without any permit or reporting requirements.

HB 1614: Reducing the amount of petroleum pollution in stormwater. (a.k.a. Invest in Clean Water; Rep. Ormsby, Prime Sponsor)

POSITION: *SUPPORT – PLEASE PINK SLIP ONTO BILL*

- One of four environmental priorities for 2009, this bill would raise \$100 million for clean water by imposing a fee on petroleum products that contribute to stormwater pollution.
- This polluter-pays fee on oil companies will provide money for new jobs, relieve financial pressure on local governments, and promote new economic stimulus.



Contributing Organizations

American Rivers ▪ Audubon Washington ▪ Climate Solutions ▪ Conservation Northwest ▪ Earth Ministry ▪ Environment Washington
Fuse ▪ Futurewise ▪ Heart of America Northwest ▪ League of Women Voters of Washington ▪ Lutheran Public Policy Office
National Wildlife Federation ▪ Nature Conservancy ▪ NW Energy Coalition ▪ People for Puget Sound ▪ Sierra Club ▪ Surfrider
Foundation ▪ Transportation Choices Coalition ▪ Washington Citizens for Resource Conservation ▪ Washington Conservation Voters
Washington Environmental Council ▪ WashPIRG ▪ Washington Toxics Coalition ▪ Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition