

Washington (state) Forest Health & Fire Policy Evolution

draft Statewide with focus on Central Cascades. Please send edits to rlolley@tnc.org

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Legislation - Bills

2018-19

2017-18

[HB 2733](#) — [Prescribed Burn Manager Certification Program](#) PASSED (49-0; 97-0). Included \$403K general fund support. Bill Digest: Requires the department of natural resources to: (1) Create a prescribed fire program, in support of the goals and strategies identified in the 20-year forest health strategic plan and pursuant to the forest health treatment framework; and (2) Create a prescribed burn manager certification program for those who practice prescribed burning in the state.

[SB 6109](#) — [Concerning the International Wildland Urban Interface Code](#) PASSED (34-12; 50-47). DNR must establish a technical assistance and grant program for municipalities to establish the International WUI Code.

[HB 2561](#) — [Wildland Fire Advisory Committee - Temporary Duties](#) PASSED (48-0; 98-0). Advisory committee with DNR must 1) quantify the areas in the state that are not contained within an established fire district nor subject to a planned fire response 2) examine the value of community programs that educate homeowners and engage in preventive projects within wild fire risk communities, such as firewise, and 3) develop plans to help protect non English speaking residents during wildfire emergencies. Develop interim recommendations to legislature by Dec. 2018 and final by 2019.

[ESB 6211--Concerning the federal lands revolving account](#) PASSED (49-0; 98-0) Supports Department of Natural Resources' 20-year forest health plan by creating a revolving account for revenue generated under the state's Good Neighbor Agreement to expedite forest health and watershed improvements across federal lands. Amended to also allow WDFW to create a similar revolving fund for any Good Neighbor Agreements with the Forest Service or BLM.

2016-17

[SB 5546](#) — [Concerning proactively addressing wildfire risk by creating a forest health treatment assessment](#). PASSED (49-0; 98-0). This bill sets a bold goal of treating 1M of the 2.7M acres of E WA forests in need of active disturbance by 2033. To achieve this, the bill directs the department to assess and treat 200K acres each biennium and provide regular reports to the legislature about the progress and funds needed to achieve this goal. The bill also directs the commissioner of public lands to appoint a forest health advisory committee that includes representatives from mills, timber companies, forest collaboratives, highly affected communities, community preparedness organizations, and others. [Final Bill Report](#)

[ESHB 1711](#) — [Prioritizing lands to receive forest health treatments](#) PASSED (49-0; 98-0). This bill sets up a forest health revolving account to increase the pace and scale of forest health restoration on state trust lands. It develops a set of criteria by which DNR should evaluate and prioritize forest health, including economic water quality impacts, carbon sequestration, recreation, and reducing insects and disease. Finally, it requires DNR to submit a prioritized list to the legislature for treatments along with recommended fund sources that include carbon, water and insurance.

In HB 1711, the legislature provides DNR a new revolving account, which enables a landscape level forest health strategy, increases the diversity of stands that can be treated, and ensures proper stewardship of the forest into the future.

"...to the extent feasible given all applicable trust responsibilities, develop and implement a policy for prioritizing investments on forest health treatments to protect state lands and state forestlands, as those terms are defined in RCW 79.02.010, to: (i) Reduce wildfire hazards and losses from wildfire; (ii) reduce insect infestation and disease; and (iii) achieve cumulative impact of improved forest health and resilience at a landscape scale" (Chapter 79.10 RCW).

Capital Budget funds (1.4 m.) grant project for Forest Collaboratives to increase collaborative infrastructure capacity grant and development of a Cross-boundary Competitive grant program modeled after Joint Chiefs'.

Reports/Significant Events:

2018-19

- Washington State Wildfire Strategic Protection Plan (Out late Dec or Jan.)
- [ESHB 2928 Forest Resiliency Burning Pilot Project](#) Report to the Legislature
- [SB 5546 2018 Forest Health Assessment and Treatment Framework](#) report to Legislature
- E2SHB 1711 Forest Health Treatment Prioritization and Implementation, On State Trust Lands in Eastern Washington, Report to the Legislature.
- [Prescribed Fire Work Session, Senate Natural Resources Committee](#), Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks Committee WPFC presentation.
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2017-18

- E2SHB 1711 [A Strategy to Restore Forest Health on State Lands in Eastern Washington](#)
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2016-17

- [Eastern Washington 20 - Year Forest Health Strategy](#) linked to 2SSB 5546.
- Dr. Paul Hessburg, a research ecologist with the U.S. Forest Service Research Lab. [January 19 presentation](#) to the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee- [Era of Mega Fire presentation](#)
- [Fire-Resilient Communities and Landscapes in Chelan County Pilot](#). While developed for WA Commissioner of Public lands, ultimately funded by USDA Forest Service. Many groups worked on developing specific federal and private land components.

2015-16

- Governor Inslee formed the [Wildland Fire Council](#) formed. Community Listening Sessions supported by WAFAC, NCWFMS framework.
- [Washington Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network](#) (WAFAC) formed.
- [Forest and Community Resiliency Roundtable](#) formed at state level.
- [Wildfire and Us Summit](#) in Wenatchee with result of ask for Chelan Fire Pilot to Commissioner of Public lands. Debut of multi-media presentation of the [Era of Megafires](#).
- Joint Chief's proposal collaboratively developed and funded. [All Lands, All Hands: Building Resilient Landscapes and Fire Adapted Communities in Washington's East Cascades](#)

2014-15

- Haugo, et. al. 2015. [A new approach to evaluate forest structure restoration needs across Oregon and Washington, USA](#) (Is where the 2.7m acre active restoration need in EWA is defined).
- 2015 [Wildfire and Us Summit](#) in Wenatchee with result of ask for Chelan Fire Pilot to Commissioner of Public lands. Debut of multi-media presentation of the [Era of Megafires](#)
- Consecutive WA Wildfire record. Over 1 million acres, lives lost...

2013-14

- [Eastern Washington Forest Health: Hazards, Accomplishments and Restoration Strategy](#), A Report to the Washington State Legislature
- [North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative](#) Formed.
- [Washington Forest Collaboratives Network](#), first summit.
- Wildfire record, 386,972 acres; over six times the state average.
- The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, final phase completed.
- [Wildland urban interface \(WUI\) workshop](#), "Working Together, Collaboration for Fire Adapted Communities" Wenatchee.
- Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition becomes a member of FACNET, leads for Washington.
- DNR signs Good Neighbor Authority with USDA Forest Service authorized by Farm Bill.

Capital Budget funds (1.4 m.) grant project for Forest Collaboratives to increase collaborative infrastructure capacity grant and development of a Cross-boundary Competitive grant program modeled after Joint Chiefs'.

2015-16

[ESHB 2928](#) — [FOREST RESILIENCY BURNING--PILOT PROJECT--AIR QUALITY](#) PASSED (49-0; 96-1). Instituted the Forest Resiliency Burning Pilot Project to 'ensure restrictions on outdoor burning for air quality reasons do not impede measures necessary to ensure forest resiliency to catastrophic fires'. Direct WDNR to convene three Forest Collaboratives and the Washington Prescribed Fire Council among others to develop pilot.

[ESHB 2093](#) — [Wildland Fire Suppression](#). Requires the commissioner of public lands to: (1) Appoint a local wildland fire liaison that reports directly to the commissioner or the supervisor and generally represents the interests and concerns of landowners and the general public during fire suppression activities of the department of natural resources; and (2) Appoint and maintain a wildland fire advisory committee to generally advise the commissioner on matters related to wildland firefighting in the state. Authorizes an individual to enter privately owned or publicly owned land to attempt to extinguish or control a wildland fire, regardless of whether the individual owns the land. Expands the duties of the department of natural resources with regard to maximizing the effective utilization of local fire suppression assets.

[ESHB 2376](#) Sec. 308(19) \$800,000 of the disaster response account—state appropriation is provided solely for implementation of Engrossed 31 Substitute House Bill No. 2928 (outdoor burning). Of this amount, two percent is provided solely for the department's administrative costs, five percent is provided solely for the department to provide forest health collaboratives for burn technician costs, and ninety-three percent is provided solely for the department to provide forest health collaboratives for implementation of forest resiliency burning. The department shall direct the forest health collaboratives to complete the forest resiliency burning under this subsection by January 1, 2017.

Sec. 308 (11) \$215,000 of the disaster response account—state appropriation is provided solely for the department to develop a twenty-year strategic plan to treat areas of state forest land that have been identified by the department as being in poor health.

Sec. 308 (12) \$629,000 of the disaster response account—state appropriation is provided solely for the department to update the smoke management plan in consultation with the department of ecology, other relevant state and federal agencies, and relevant stakeholders.

[SB 6657 Wildfire Management Act](#) (DID NOT PASS) Many bill ideas integrated into one. See "[Sometimes To Prevent Fires, You Have To Set Fires: Lawmakers Mull DNR Reforms](#)". Some elements funded in ESHB 2376.

2014-15

2013-14

2012-13

2011-12

2010-11

2009-10

2008-09

2007-08

2006-07

2005-06

2004-05

2003-04

- DNR signs Good Neighbor Authority with USDA Forest Service authorized by Farm Bill.

2012-13

- [The Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Restoration Strategy: adaptive ecosystem management to restore landscape resiliency](#)
- Prescribed Fire Work Session, Senate Natural Resources Committee, [WPFC presentation](#). (Link to hearing with WDNR on TVW).
- Evolution of Fire Learning Network expands to meet needs of National Cohesive Strategy, forming "[Promoting Ecosystem Resiliency and Fire Adapted Communities Together](#)" (PERFACT) agreement Nationwide. [Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network - FACNET](#) forms nationally with new partners [The Watershed Center](#).

2011-12

- [DNR designated the first Forest Health Hazard Warning Areas](#) under RCW 76.06, which was the first statewide effort to prioritize forest health investments.
- DNR Tech. Advisory Committee Report: [Recommendations of the WA Forest Health Technical Advisory Committee to the Commissioner of Public Lands](#)
- [Staff Report - Forest Health Technical Advisory Committee July 2012](#)
- Conference: 97th ESA Annual Convention 2012: [An ecological context for "whole system" conservation of eastern Washington forests](#). Download full report at [Conservation Gateway](#). This report influenced definition of forest health from more than insect and disease characteristics, to incorporate landscape *ecological departure* and defining restoration need. Is precursor to Haugo et.al 2014 paper.

2010-11

- [Washington Prescribed Fire Council](#) formed.
- [Initial Draft Forest Restoration Strategy: a process for guiding restoration projects within the context of ecosystem management](#) Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest and Wenatchee Forest Service Science Lab.

2009-10

- DNR began receiving state capital funding for forest health treatments.

2008-09

- [Forest Health Implementation Status Report & Strategy Development](#). The fiscal note that accompanied 2SSB 6141 anticipated a pilot project to guide program development before scaling-up to a statewide level. (Stevens County Pilot).
- 2009 The Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act ([FLAME Act](#)). Congress mandated the development of a national cohesive wildland fire management strategy.

2007-08

- [Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition](#) formed.

2006-07

- [Tapash Sustainable Forest Collaborative](#) formed. Memorandum of Understanding signed between Yakama Nation, WDNR, WDFW, Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy.

2005-06

- [Forest Health Strategy Work Group Report to the Legislature](#) directed by 2SSB 6144 [Forest Health Improvement Act](#) 2004.

2004-05

- [A Desirable Forest Health Program For Washington's Forests Forest Health Strategy Work Group Report](#) directed by 2SSB 6144 [Forest Health Improvement Act](#).
- Washington joins Northwest Fire Learning Network.
- The North Central Washington Prescribed Fire Council, formed.

2003-04

- Law initiates forest health innovation at DNR that began with the Forest Improvement Treatment (FIT) program.

2002-03

- National Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC), established by the

2004-05

2003-04

[2SSB 6144](#) — Forest Health Improvement Act. An Act relating to opportunities and strategies for improving forest health in Washington. Forest Improvement Treatment (FIT) program in 2004 initiated. Sec. 2 (1) "The commissioner of public lands is designated as the state of Washington's lead for all forest health issues"

2002-03

[SSB 5144 Forest Health Act](#) (Additions for forest exotic pests).

Sec. 2. (7) Forest health is defined in state statute as "*the condition of a forest being sound in ecological function, sustainable, resilient, and resistant to insects, diseases, fire and other disturbance, and having the capacity to meet landowner objectives*" (RCW 76.06).

Improvement Treatment (FIT) program.

2002-03

- National Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC), established by the Secretaries of Ag/Interior to provide an intergovernmental committee to support the implementation and coordination of Federal Fire Management Policy.
- 2002 The [Fire Learning Network](#), launched in 2002, is a joint project of [The Nature Conservancy](#), the [USDA Forest Service](#) and several agencies of the [U.S. Department of the Interior](#).
- [Northeast Washington Forest Health Coalition](#) formed.