



Dear Audubon in Washington,

The 2015 regular legislative session ended early last week and we moved right into a special session on April 29th. Our 2015 legislative priorities – [funding for forage fish](#), [safe oil transport](#), and [carbon emission reductions](#) – received much attention and ran the session-gauntlet with mixed success. Budget negotiations are now underway; expect a final briefing once the numbers are in.

Click [here for a list of the bills](#) that passed the legislature this session.

Forage Fish Funding

[SB 5166](#) - Concerning the management of forage fish resources.

Trina, our Director of Bird Conservation, is in Olympia today (May 7th) for the signing of this bill which represents a [strong win for Audubon](#) advocates this session. Expected bi-partisan funding of this legislation will support smelt and sand lance spawning surveys throughout Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and trawl surveys to evaluate the prevalence of all species of forage fish throughout the Sound. Understanding the health of our regional forage fish populations will help us to safeguard marine birds and their food resources. We believe this is just the first step towards improving the management of forage fish resources in Washington and continue to look for collaborative strategies to build upon current tiny-fish momentum. Forage fish are [in the limelight](#) and, with your help, we intend to keep them there.

Thank you to everyone that responded to our [action alert](#), testified during public hearings, and educated their legislators about the importance of this fundamental resource to the health of our marine ecosystem – you made a difference.

Oil Transportation Safety Now

[HB 1449](#) - Concerning oil transportation safety.

You may have already received word that a weakened oil bill (HB 1499) was passed out of the state legislature on April 24th. Click here to [read the press release](#) from WEC/EPC.

Things we lost:

- Removal of over water protections in Puget Sound
- No barrel tax increase leaving Ecology's oil spill prevention programs and the public disclosure aspects of the bill without long-term funding (there was a one-time transfer this year).

Things we should feel good about:

- Increased public disclosure through a new website
- Financial responsibility of oil carriers to clean up spills

Similar to last year, we succeeded in terms of garnering substantial grassroots support and elevating the pressing issue of oil transport in Washington among all legislators, the media, the public, and local elected officials. And you helped [make oil transport a hot enough issue](#) that the legislature felt compelled to act in the final days of regular session. A large coalition campaign to *Stand Up to Oil* is underway – please plan to stay engaged in this multi-year effort. And mark your calendars for the **next**

opportunity for action: an Oil Transport forum on June 10th in Grays Harbor – Washington’s hemispherically important bird area. As [yesterday’s derailment in North Dakota](#) illustrates, the risks are not going away.

Carbon Pollution Accountability Act

[HB 1314](#) – Implementing a carbon pollution market program to reduce GHG emissions.

A priority bill for the [Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy](#), this Governor requested legislation aimed to create a market-based program (cap and trade) that limits carbon pollution and requires major polluters to pay for their emissions, while generating about \$1 billion annually to promote further emissions reductions, expand transit, and assist lower-income families to transition to a clean energy economy. Although still a part of budget negotiations, it is unlikely this bill will garner enough support in the legislature for implementation this year.

By now you are likely aware of a second carbon emissions program being suggested in Washington – a revenue neutral carbon tax, being promoted by an organization called [Carbon WA](#). In an effort to align these measures to reduce our carbon footprint, the Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy is working collaboratively with Carbon WA toward a shared strategic path. The Audubon network in Washington is also strategizing what our next steps will be in the carbon emissions arena; look for upcoming opportunities to weigh in on our way forward. In the meantime, please read/listen to this recent KPLU interview – [Pay to Pollute? Carbon Taxes Explained](#) – where Ken Kimmel, the President of the Union of Concerned Scientists, clearly explains the two carbon reducing alternatives.

Action Report

This year our network ROCKED the legislative world. Your energy, time, talents, and actions made a difference in the lives of birds and people – THANK YOU. Using new technology, we were able to reach thousands of Audubon advocates across the state, in addition to the actions you took during weekly legislative updates. Using your energy, we were able to hold our own lobby day(s) in Olympia. Using your voices, we gave hope to birds. Here are some numbers and photos to celebrate.

of actions taken on our priority alerts: 2600

of Hope Buttons given away: 200

of chapters at Audubon Advocacy Day: 13 chapters covering 27 legislative districts

Photos: [Audubon Advocacy Day](#)

Photos: [Teen Advocacy Day](#)

Next Steps

Keep updated on these and other issues of concern via our [Issues and Action](#) Center on the Audubon Washington website, through topical postings and conversations in the [Washington Chapter Group](#) on [Audubon Works](#), and encourage other members in the network to join the [WaGeneral and/or WSACC listserves](#).

We are navigating new territory in Washington State: exponential increase in oil transport, limiting carbon emissions to mitigate climate change impacts, the regulatory world of shellfish farming, federal land conservation in Eastern Washington, to name a few. We won’t succeed without you, so please stayed tuned and keep in touch!