



What Did the Legislature Accomplish in 2002?

Last December Audubon Washington's Statewide Conservation Committee suggested we follow four legislative policy areas during the legislative session (budget, transportation, growth management, and wetlands). For 60 days, we tracked proposed legislation, committee hearings, and budget deliberations. After the legislature adjourned on March 14 at midnight (on time!), we reviewed their legislative performance and accomplishments. Although environmental programs were cut disproportionately to other state agencies, luckily we did not see major rollbacks in our environmental laws.

We hope you enjoyed this year's Bird's Eye Views. We will start it up again next January, but it will come out every two weeks because it will be the long, 105 day session.

Below are highlights from the 2002 Legislative Session...

State Operating Budget:

The environmental community was very disappointed at the disproportionate share of cuts made to the natural resource agencies. We assumed we would have to take some cuts just like everyone else, but when the legislature cut out more than \$21 million in natural resource programs that resulted in 8.6% of the total cuts. This amount is a lot to ask of environmental programs that only use 1.6% of the General Fund. Some examples of cuts taken by the agencies:

Ecology:

The oil spill prevention rescue tug was funded for another year, although only for 200 days during the winter, instead of the 220. (Let's hope we don't have an Exxon Valdez on the day after the tug is sent to dry dock.)

The state's shoreline program was cut by 15% and HB 2305 passed, which exempts existing agriculture from the Shoreline Management Act. Josh Baldi from Washington Environmental Council (WEC) said that passage of this bill

was expected because rural lawmakers had pushed for a bill and the Locke Administration agreed to support it two years ago. The exemption was originally part of a package to implement improved shoreline rules everywhere else, but the bill moved in spite and in front of broader shoreline negotiations. The governor did work to ensure that the exemption did not extend to the Growth Management Act.

State Parks:

Several parks will be closed temporarily and many parks that are actually owned by other governments (federal, public utilities, counties) may be turned back over if those owners are unable to pay operating costs. The legislature created a special task force to study the decades-long problem of under-funding for state park operations and maintenance. The task force recommendations are due to the Legislature by January 1, 2003 and they are required to take some action on the recommendations.

Fish and Wildlife:

Even though the Legislature was looking for ways to raise money, they chose not to charge a fee for hydraulic permits. These permits are now free to the public even though the general taxpayer pays for the permit staff at WDFW.

Also, the state-wide Salmon Recovery Office was eliminated and the burden of financing salmon recovery projects, monitoring and other staffing now falls to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board chaired by Bill Ruckelshaus.

And last, but not least, Audubon closely followed the on-again-off-again funding for the 10 year-old marine bird monitoring program. It was not cut in the final budget passed by the legislature, however, WDFW is



required to make more cuts in their Puget Sound monitoring program. This means WDFW may still consider cutting the marine bird monitoring program. Audubon is in daily contact with WDFW about their budget decision and will let you know about the final budget decision through the Audubon lists.

Transportation:

Turns out the 2002 Legislature did not want to make the final call on raising gas taxes to pay for more transportation projects. So, this fall you can vote on a referendum to spend \$7.8 billion for new highways and transportation.

Of that amount, \$1.2 will be used for “transportation choices”, that is rail, bus transit, trip reduction programs, car pool lanes, etc.). The environmental community believes that this amount for “choices” fell short of a balanced transportation package, but it did represent a significant step forward by historical standards. Interestingly, the legislature’s failure to pass a bill in Olympia forced lawmakers to provide more “transportation choices” so the referendum would have a chance with voters. Stay tuned for this vote in the fall.

Water:

Although a joint task force from the Senate, House and Governor’s Office tried to develop a comprehensive water policy bill, they failed to complete their work on time. By the time a draft proposal reached the Senate, too many legislators disagreed with the details of the water policy proposal. Our state still lacks a comprehensive water policy that will allocate enough water for people, farms and fish.



A disappointed Josh Baldi from WEC said: “The legislature only passed a modest bill that provides additional management tools which keeps some momentum for reform on an issue that has seen political gridlock for 17 years.” Audubon will follow the water policy debates throughout this year and into the 2003 Legislative session.

Wetlands:

HB 2288 has been delivered to the Governor for signature. This new law will allow the Department of Transportation to transfer environmental mitigation sites to local, state, or federal agencies, tribal governments, or private nonprofit groups that are organized for environmental conservation purposes. If the recipients agree to assume ownership of these sites, then they must assume all future maintenance and operation obligations and costs required to maintain and operate the environmental mitigation site in perpetuity.

Competitiveness Council:

Earlier in the Legislative session, the Competitiveness Council released a report criticizing state government operations, and in particular, environmental and labor programs. Several bills were proposed that would have made it more difficult to enforce or adopt environmental protection programs. Luckily, these bills were held up in the House State Government Committee.

But, to their credit, many legislators wanted to understand why the complaints were generated about permitting requirements. To counter these complaints, several House members sponsored and then worked hard to pass a bill to assist the public when they want permits for projects that impact our watersheds, wetlands or ecosystems. We thank Representatives Linville, Romero, Reardon, Simpson, Gombosky, Grant, Veloria, Kessler, Conway, Doumit, Hatfield, Ogden, Morris, Kenney, Dickerson, Edwards, Chase, Schual-Berke, Wood, Rockefeller, Jackley, Kagi and McDermott for sponsoring and working to pass HB 2671. It is on the Governor’s desk for signature.

The permit assistance center bill acknowledges that as our population has grown, so have the number of permits required of business and government. With more permits comes the possibility of conflict, overlap, and duplication between the various state, local, and federal permitting



agencies. Sometimes there could be better coordination in processing permit applications and this frustrates some applicants. HB 2671 creates a permit assistance center in the office of the Governor and its purpose is to help people understand what they must do to get an environmental permit. Audubon will follow how this bill is actually implemented in the Governor's office.

Biodiversity:

SSB 6400, the Biodiversity bill, passed and was funded with \$35,000 to create a temporary committee. This committee will develop recommendations to the governor and the legislature to establish the framework to develop and implement a statewide biodiversity conservation strategy. This strategy is meant to replace our limited existing single-species or single-resource protection programs. A report is due to the legislature and Governor by October 1, 2003.

Growth Management:

Growth Management Timelines: SB 584I has been delivered to the Governor for signature. This law extends timelines for counties and cities to adopt their growth management ordinances. There is a cash incentive to adopt the ordinances within the time frame; if their work is done on time, then they will be eligible for grants or loans from some environmental programs.

Transportation and Land Use Planning:

A long-overdue bill (HB 5748) is ready for the Governor's signature. It integrates transportation and land use planning and, among other things, encourages local governments to support development to revitalize existing downtowns and encourage compact, transit-oriented development for residential and nonresidential areas.

Bills Audubon Monitored

The following is a list of bills that passed and are ready for the Governor to sign. If you want to read the entire text of these bills, go to the Washington State Legislative website <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/default.htm> and just type in the bill number. The best place to see the summary is the Bill Digest...but if you have questions about a

Bills That Audubon Supports

Keeping Families Healthy and Moving

—Bill Id#—	—Title—	—Status—	—Date—	—Sponsor—
E SHB 141	Hazardous Substances	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	AGEC (Veloria)
E SHB 2969	Transportation	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	TR (Fisher)
E SSB 5748	Transportation/Land Use Planning	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	TRAN (McAuliffe)
SSB 5841	Growth Management Act	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	SLG (Patterson)

Healthy Neighborhoods, Smart Kids, and Clean Technology

—Bill Id#—	—Title—	—Status—	—Date—	—Sponsor—
SHB 2308	Recycling & Waste Reduction	Delivered to Governor	03-11-02	AGEC (Linville)
E SHB 2326	Climate & Energy Center	Delivered to Governor	03-11-02	AGEC (Linville)
E SHB 2376	Derelict Vessels	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	NR (Rockefeller)
HB 2397	Organic Food Products	Delivered to Governor	03-11-02	Linville
E SHB 2506	Green Building Task Force	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	AGEC (Romero)
E SHB 2522	The Purchase of Clean Technologies	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	SG (Sullivan)
SHB 2648	Capital Budget Applications	Delivered to Governor	03-11-02	CB (Murray)
2SHB 2697	Growth Management/Economic Development	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	APP (Reardon)
SSB 6329	Emission Control Inspection	Chapter 24 of Laws of 2002	03-12-02	EEW (Regala)
E SB 6396	Supplemental Capital Budget	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	Fairley
E SSB 6400	Biodiversity Conservation	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	NPS (Jacobsen)
SSB 6658	Energy Conservation Projects	Delivered to Governor	03-12-02	EEW (Poulsen)
SB 6818	General Obligation Bonds	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	Fairley
E SJM8023	Hanford Reservation Cleanup	Filed with the Secretary of State	03-08-02	Hale



Bills That Audubon Supports (continued)

Supporting Washington Farmers, Salmon, and Outdoor Recreation

—Bill Id#—	—Title—	—Status—	—Date—	—Sponsor—
E HB 2288	Environmental Mitigation	Delivered to Governor	03-11-02	Fisher
E HB 2498	Industrial Land Banks	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	Fromhold
HB 2657	Agricultural Products Purchased for State Facilities	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	Hunt
HB 2669	Animal Waste as a Qualified Energy Resource	Delivered to Governor	03-11-02	Linville
E2SHB 2671	Permit Assistance Center	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	APP (Linville)
SHB 2758	Agricultural Conservation Easement	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	AGEC (Quall)
SSB 6313	Derelect Fishing Gear	Chapter 20 of Laws of 2002	03-12-02	NPS (Oke)
SB 6484	Conservation Easements	Delivered to Governor	03-11-02	Haugen
SSB 6553	Invasive Aquatic Species	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	NPS (Poulsen)

Bills that Audubon Opposes

—Bill Id#—	—Title—	—Status—	—Date—	—Sponsor—
E SHB 2305	Shoreline Management	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	LGH (Hatfield)
E SHB 2866	Hydraulic Permits	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	NR (Doumit)
SSB 5292	Public Energy Projects	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	EEW (Sheldon, T.)
SB 6609	Ecology Department Studies	Delivered to Governor	03-14-02	Snyder

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS !!

Every Friday at 1pm our volunteers, Helen Mapp, Gwen Atkinson, Chelsea & Sally Lodahl, Warren Carlson, Sylvia Tytler, Rick Anderson, John Von Kampen, came to our Olympia office to assemble over 500 copies of the Bird's Eye View. They folded, stapled, stamped and mailed every issue you've held in your hands. We could not have done it without them. Many thanks for your time and efforts! Because of you, our membership has more information and is more involved with their state Legislators!



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Representative's Name
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Olympia WA 98504-0600

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Senator's Name
PO Box 404[Leg. Dist.]
Olympia WA 98504-04[Leg. Dist.]

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humanity and the earth's biological diversity.