



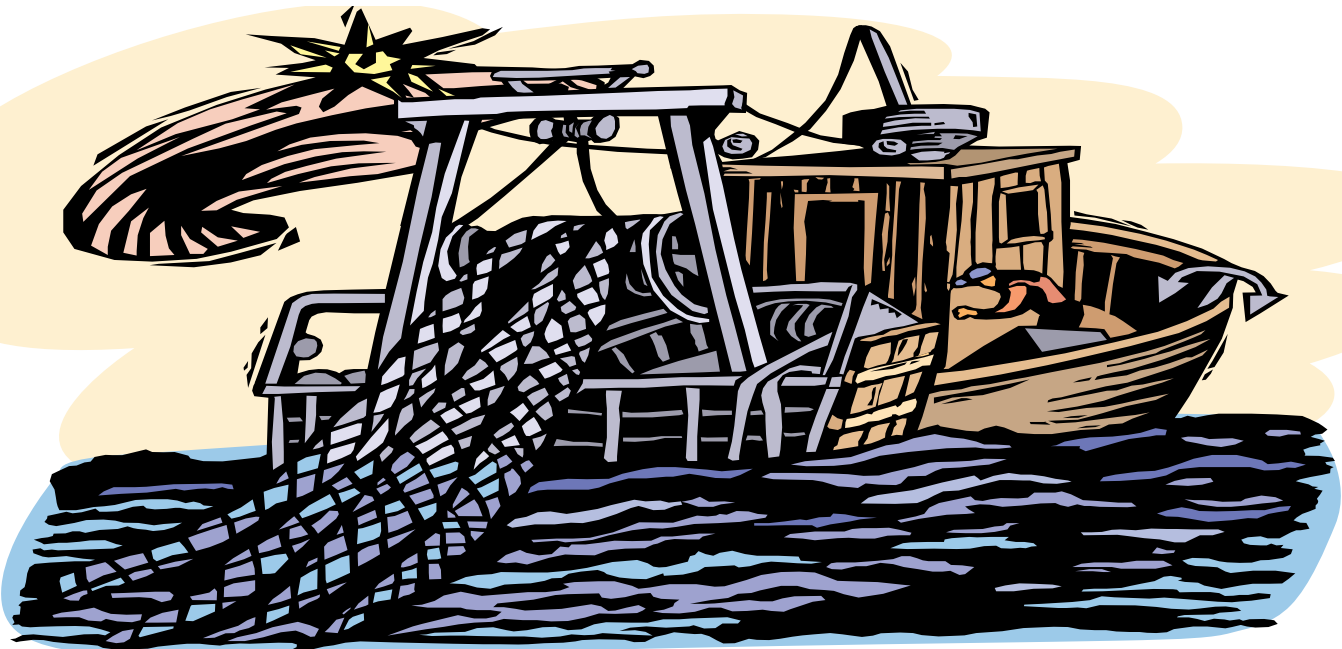
Rain, Sleet and Snow...but Legislators and Environmental Community Braved the Weather Again!

Invasive Aquatic Species (SB 6553) Has Many Supporters

Along with shellfish growers and other conservation organizations, Audubon testified in favor of this important bill which gives Washington State Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) improved enforcement authority over those owning, transporting or releasing invasive aquatic species. WDFW must also create a rapid response plan in cooperation with the Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee and the other state agencies involved in invasive species management. The State Patrol must jointly develop a plan to inspect watercraft entering the state to prevent the introduction of invasive aquatic species. The plan must be provided to the Legislature by December 2003. The bill is expected to move onto the rules committee next week.

Getting Rid of Ghost Nets Bill (SB 6313)

Senator Bob Oke from Kitsap County has worked on this problem for years and was successful this week in getting his ghost net bill sent on to the rules committee. Audubon supports this bill because we know that lost or abandoned fishing gear may continue to catch marine organisms long after the gear is lost. The purpose of this act is to develop safe, effective methods to remove derelict fishing gear, eliminate regulatory barriers to gear removal, and discourage future losses of fishing gear. The bill requires WDFW, in consultation with the Northwest Straits Commission, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and other interested





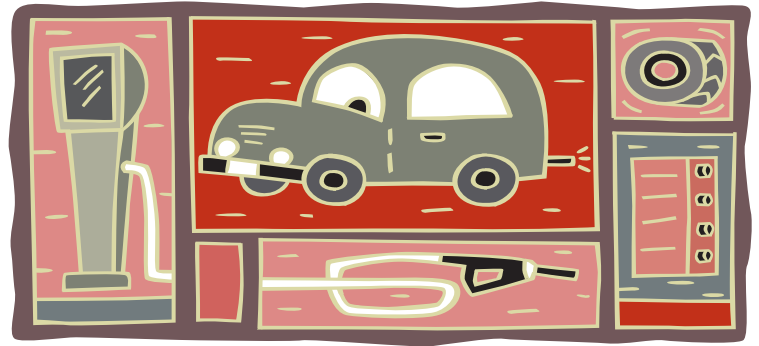
parties, to create and maintain a data base of known derelict fishing gear, including the type of gear and its location.

It also requires a person who loses or abandons commercial fishing gear within the waters of the state to report the location of the loss and the type of gear lost to WDFW within forty-eight hours of the loss. And lastly, it directs the department, in consultation with fishing industry groups and tribal co-managers, to evaluate methods to reduce future losses of fishing gear and report the results of this evaluation to the appropriate legislative committees by January 1, 2003. A tip of the hat goes to Richard Anderson, Conservation Co-Chair of Kitsap Audubon Society, for all his hard work on behalf of saving marine birds and critters from these ghost nets!

HB 2734 Pits Public Participation Against Science Education

This bill moves money from helping neighborhood groups learn about and effectively comment on toxic waste site cleanup to fund school science curriculum. The bill eliminates an important part of Initiative 97 which established Hazardous Waste Site Public Participation Grants for neighborhoods and communities. Grants are split between community groups trying to learn about hazardous waste sites in their neighborhood and what they can do about them, and businesses to help reduce and recycle hazardous wastes.

HB 2734 takes the existing grant funds and gives them to school districts for science education emphasizing safe management of hazardous waste, water and environmental health. Rather than robbing an important, voter-approved program, the Legislature should separately fund science education from other funding sources. **Contact your legislator and let them know you are opposed to HB 2734.**



Clean Cars and Clean Air (SB 6285/HB 2566)

SB 6285/HB 2566 give incentives to reduce air pollution by using clean, alternative fuel vehicles. We have about 1000 alternative fuel cars in Washington, but we need to encourage more of them. Representatives Linville, Pflug, Cooper, Barlean and Senators Regala, Horn, Kline, Jacobsen and Carlson, among many other legislators, agree that vehicle emissions from petroleum fuels account for more than half of all air pollutants and almost sixty percent of total carbon dioxide emissions in Washington. These bills begin addressing the negative impacts of continued gasoline and diesel fuel use. This bill gives tax credits for the purchase or the lease of new clean alternative fuel vehicles for a period of at least three years. The bill was heard in the House Agriculture and Ecology Committee and is expected to move to the rules committee next week. (Need a new car? Maybe these are worth investigating!)

Ever Wonder Why We Don't Know the Real Costs of Initiatives ?

HB 2823 lets you know...

As it turns out, there is no law requiring an initiative to have the true costs shown to the voters before they enter the voting booth. Representatives McDermott, Romero, Schmidt, Upthegrove, Schual-Berke, McIntire and Kagi sponsored a great bill that recognizes that through the initiative process, voters are setting statewide legislative policy and adopting new laws.

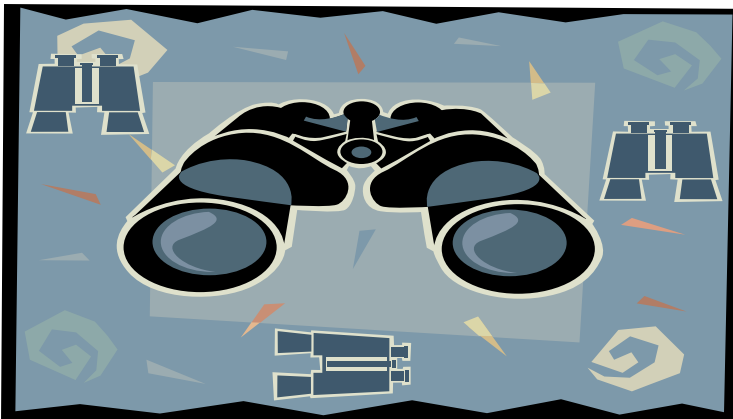


But voters don't always have enough information to make educated decisions about the costs of those initiatives. In fact, the Washington State Supreme Court found that many voters make decisions on initiatives based only on information on the ballot. HB 2823 says that the ballot should provide voters with the information they need to evaluate the impacts of their decision. It is just like when legislators decide on laws; they have a "fiscal note" that tells them how much the law will cost taxpayers and what the effect of the law will be. HB 2823 gives voters the same "notice of probable impacts," which will be displayed on ballots directly beneath the ballot title. This bill will be heard in the House State Government Committee on February 7 at 8 am. (You can watch it on TVW at the same time!)

NEXT WEEK...

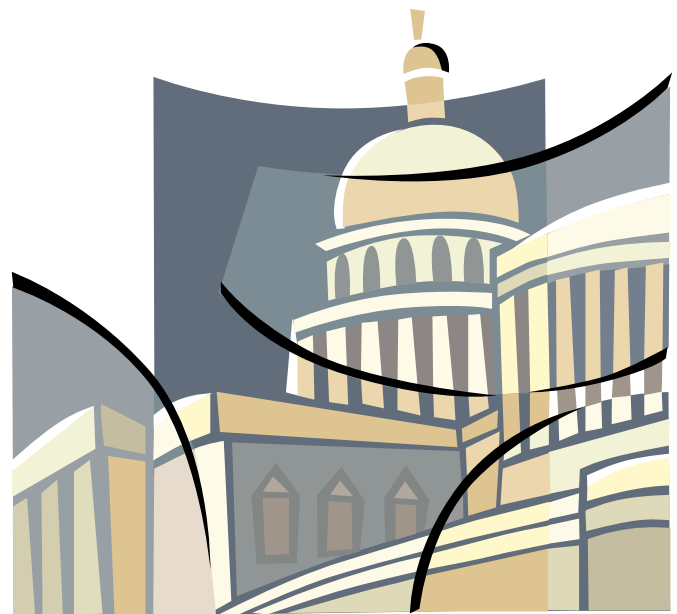
State Legislature Publicly Recognizes Audubon Birder!

Next Wednesday, the Senate will officially recognize **Marv Breece**, a 25-year birder and Seattle Auduboner, because he identified the highest number of birds for the 2001 Big Year Competition. Last year he drove about 25,000 miles to get to marshes, salt water beaches, mountain peaks, dark forests and sagebrush deserts to watch for birds. Marv set a record by spotting 359 bird species! This is probably the highest record to date because previous records were thought to be in the low 340s. In the Julia Butler Hansen National Wildlife Preserve in Wahkiakum County, he spotted



his last bird on his list, the Black Phoebe, a rare visitor to our state. The Secretary of the Senate will present a Senate Resolution to Marv Breece on Wednesday, February 6th. Congratulations Marv!

We urge you to call your legislators to support these bills...



In the House...

HB 2657 requires state institutions to purchase Washington State-grown commodities. This will keep our tax payer dollars in our state and help our farmers in Eastern and Western Washington. Hearing is scheduled on February 5 at 1:30pm in the House State Government Committee.

HB 2648 requires environmental, land use and economic revitalization information to be considered when spending state capital budget dollars. We have limited funds and need to assure maximum positive benefit. This bill helps to revitalize downtowns and preserve open space. It is scheduled for a hearing on February 4 at 1:30 pm in House Capital Budget Committee.



HB 2758 establishes the agricultural conservation easement program to help provide stable markets and a fallback fund when land is threatened by conversion for development. The hearing is on February 7 at 8 am in House Agriculture and Ecology.

In the Senate...

SB 6615 finally allows WDFW to charge a fee for processing the hundreds of hydraulic permit applications (HPAs). This bill will help WDFW recover its costs to monitor and enforce their fish and wildlife regulations. The bill is scheduled for a hearing on February 4 at 1:30 pm in the Senate Natural Resources, Parks and Shoreline Committee.

SB 6667 is the same as HB 2657 on purchasing Washington State commodities. It will be heard in the Senate Agriculture and Trade Committee on February 6 at 8 am.

WHERE IS OUR BILL TRACKING PAGE ???

Next week is the cut-off for all policy bills to be out of their house of origin. That means many of the bills we have tracked in the Senate or House will be dead because they were not given a hearing or were not voted out of the committee. Next Friday we will give you a shorter list of bills, in order of priority, that are still alive and that are being followed by the environmental community.

But in the meantime, contact your Legislators and tell them what you think about the bills described above.

STAY TUNED !

Join us for Lobby Day, Feb 14th!

Visit <http://wa.audubon.org> to register and send your Legislators a valentine or view recent Action Alerts!





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Representative's Name
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Olympia WA 98504-0600

For the **Senate**, address as follows:

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

(For example - 43rd Leg. Dist.: PO Box 40443, Olympia WA 98504-0443)

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Audubon WASHINGTON

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Mission of the National Audubon Society

To conserve and restore natural ecosystems,
focusing on birds, other wildlife,
and their habitats for the benefit of
humanity and the earth's biological diversity.