



WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Resolution 2019-11 Improve Hydraulic Permit Approval Statue

SPONSOR CD: King, Mason, and Okanogan Conservation Districts

AREA: NW SW NC SC NE SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- Policy
- Position Statement
- Recognition
- Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- WACD
- WSCC
- OTHER STAGE AGENCY Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- NRCS
- NACD
- NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) program, issues permits statewide for private, and public entities to ensure their projects do not harm aquatic habitat. Established in 1943, it's one of the state's oldest regulatory permits and one of its most underfunded.

In 1988, RCW 77.55.181 was drafted to streamline the HPA permitting process for fish habitat enhancement projects. This RCW specifically addresses the permit review and approval process for fish habitat enhancement projects. Section (1)(c)(v) of the code refers to a process where conservation district sponsored projects can be reviewed and approved if they comply with, "design standards established by the conservation commission" through "interagency agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service". Neither the design standards or interagency agreement have ever been completed.

In 2018, a Washington AgForestry Class 40 Public Policy Group took up this issue. They worked collaboratively with WDFW, Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC), and conservation districts to identify a solution. The solution that was ultimately developed was to ask the legislature to amend RCW 77.55.181 to make the rapid HPA permitting approval similar to other entities in the statute such as WDFW or Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group sponsored projects.

The AgForestry Public Policy group worked with Representatives Dent, Blake, Chandler, Kretz, Schmick, and Bergquist to get HB 1187 introduced in January 2019. Ultimately the bill passed the



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House unanimously but didn't pass the Senate on the final day of the legislative session due to a lack of time.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

Resolved, WACD shall work WDFW, WSCC, conservation districts, and legislators to support the passage of this bill as a top priority of the Association.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION

- Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- NO**
- YES** (briefly explain):