



HILARY S. FRANZ
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS



DNR's mission is to manage, sustain, and protect the health and productivity of Washington's lands and waters to meet the needs of present and future generations.

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Department of Natural Resources 2024 Legislative Priorities Summary

CLIMATE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

1. Wildfire and Forest Health Resilience/HB 1168 Investments (\$23.41M GF-S)

Funding to meet the Legislature's \$125 million biennial commitment in the passage of HB 1168 (2021). Funding will continue the critical forest health and wildfire resilience work that were on the ground to help mitigate the damage and cost of wildfires in 2023. Failure to receive full funding will result in significant consequences DNR's ability to meet the Legislature's wildfire and forest health resilience objectives found in HB 1168. Failure to fully fund will disproportionately impact fire districts, forest health contractors, and communities supported by DNR's Wildfire Ready Neighbors program because DNR will not be able to distribute grants and contracts for critical community programs, including surplus engines and grants to fire districts.

2. Smokey Bear License Plate - SB 5910/HB 2108

Legislation establishing a Smokey Bear license plate that would be available for purchase in October 2024. Revenue from Smokey Bear license plates would be devoted for wildfire prevention programs administered by DNR. This would be the agency's first license plate, the only state license plate for wildfire prevention, and would utilize license plates to spread wildfire prevention messages across the state.

3. Drought Resilience – SB 6062/HB 2299 (\$1.6M GF-S / \$1M Cap)

Funding and legislation for DNR-managed lands to be more resilient to drought conditions occurring across the state. Bill authorizes DNR to lease non-land "assets" for the benefit of communities and trust beneficiaries. Funding requested will allow the agency to begin developing a water bank system for DNR's 3,000 water rights to ensure we do not lose critical access to these water rights; create a water usage monitoring and compliance program; and the agency's landowner obligation for our share of the Odessa groundwater replacement project.

4. Post-wildfire Debris Flow (\$965k GF-S)

DNR's Cascading Impacts of Wildfire legislation (HB 1578) unanimously passed in 2023. The bill, in part, created a post-wildfire debris flow program. The agency did not receive sufficient funding to fully establish the wildfire debris flow program envisioned in the bill, and the additional funding requested will allow the agency to conduct landslide hazard data analysis and assessment, including burned area assessments, and data collection needed to develop a warning system for at-risk communities and emergency managers.

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

1. Recreational Use Fees - SB 6043/HB 2165

Legislation authorizing the agency to charge a fee for recreational activities being conducted on DNR-managed public lands without the agency losing its recreational immunity. Loss of recreational immunity currently prohibits the agency imposing a fee and exacerbates inequity in who can utilize DNR lands. This legislation will create parity with sister natural resource agencies that are currently allowed to charge this fee. Fees will be established through rule-making and will require final approval by the Board of Natural Resources.

2. Tribal Interlocal Agreements - SB 6011/HB 2312

Legislation authorizing the Commissioner of Public Lands to enter into agreements with federally recognized Tribes allowing Tribal police officers to enforce DNR administrative rules on DNR-managed public lands. This will expand protection of lands from illegal dumping, tree cutting, etc. and allow Tribes to assist DNR in managing violations on our public lands, including outdoor access and recreation, and work with us to better protect our public lands and cultural resources.



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3. Fallen Firefighter Memorial - SB 5946 / HB 2091 (\$400k GF-S)

Initial funding and legislation to establish a Fallen Firefighters Memorial on Capitol Campus. The legislature passed a bill in 1989 to establish a memorial in the Cherburg Building on Capitol Campus but that memorial was lost during the Nisqually Earthquake. This project would build a new memorial outside on Capitol Campus grounds to honor our firefighters who have died in the line of duty giving unselfish service to their communities and the State.

4. Recreational Target Shooting (\$1.183M GF-S / \$1.937M Cap)

Funding to address the increasing public safety and environmental hazard challenges from recreational target shooting on DNR-managed public lands. Capital funding will allow DNR to launch two pilot programs—NE Region and Olympic Region—to address immediate concerns in these communities. Pilot sites will provide a blueprint to utilize operating funding for an outreach and designation process for other, more densely populated, areas of the state where target shooting management is highly needed.

5. European Green Crab Management (\$857k GF-S)

Funding for DNR to continue managing state-owned aquatic lands against the establishment and expansion of European Green Crabs (EGC), an ecologically destructive invasive species harming DNR-managed aquatic lands. Funding supports monitoring and trapping efforts to remove EGC from DNR-managed waterways. To date, DNR has trapped and removed more than 10,000 EGC from Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor.

6. Trust Land Transfer Properties (\$8M Cap)

HB 1460 was passed in 2023 revitalizing DNR's trust land transfer process. In 2023, there were ten properties identified for transfer. Five properties were funded in the 2023 session and this package would fund the transfer of the remaining five properties: Morning Star; Lake Spokane Campground; Blakely Island; Moses Lake Dunes; and Rustlers Gulch.

7. Camp Colman (\$2.14M Cap)

Funding for the Greater Seattle YMCA's Camp Colman located on Case Inlet in Pierce County. The Camp serves over 2,500 youth and families annually with a focus on providing access to outdoor spaces for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). DNR is removing a tide gate (culvert) in Whiteman Cove to restore fish passages for tribal treaty rights. Funding helps mitigate impacts to the Camp's programs and allows for the predesign of an environmental learning center as the centerpiece of its environmental learning program.

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Children's Social Equity Land Trust – HB 2243 (\$100M NCSA)

Legislation and funding to establish a Children's Social Equity Land Trust that will look to purchase forestland that DNR manages to benefit DCYF child care programs. Funding to child care programs will prioritize funding for child care deserts to assist families with access to child care where the need is greatest.

2. Housing on Public Lands - SB 5967/HB 2003 (\$2.25M Cap)

Funding and legislation to develop residential housing on DNR-managed lands. Legislation allows developers of low-to-moderate income households on DNR leased land to be eligible to defer the leasehold excise tax for a specific amount of time. Capital funding will pilot an Infrastructure Fund for necessary infrastructure, such as roads, sewer, power, and water, to make the lots more development ready, allow for a leasing project during FY24, and fund a feasibility assessment to help create a portfolio of residential lots across the state.

3. Youth Education and Outreach Program (\$1.65M GF-S)

Funding to launch DNR's Youth Education and Outreach Program (YEOP) to facilitate place-based, career-connected, outdoor learning experiences on state lands. Funding will allow DNR to provide resources to educators to help them teach about the complexities of natural resource management, including educator workshops; and youth programs on public land to explore careers in natural resources and develop the skills used by natural resource professionals.