
Local Government Committee

HB 1426

Brief Description: Concerning cooperation between conservation districts.

Sponsors: Representatives Ramos, Orcutt, Mead, Walsh, Slatter, Lovick and Leavitt.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authorizes two or more conservation districts, by agreement, to engage in engineering activities or make available for purposes of the agreement any professional engineering services that may be available to them.

Hearing Date: 2/8/19

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

Conservation districts (district) are a type of special purpose district charged with engaging with private landowners in improving natural resources and delivering resource conservation programs and activities to local communities.

Each district is directed by a five-member board of supervisors. Three members are elected locally, at least two of whom must be landowners or operators of a farm. The Washington State Conservation Commission appoints the remaining two members, including at least one landowner or farm operator.

Districts offer a range of voluntary services including but not limited to assistance with: erosion control, habitat restoration, manure management, wildfire prevention/mitigation, stormwater management, forest plans, irrigation efficiency, noxious weed control, fish barrier removals, and livestock stream crossings.

Any two or more districts may engage in joint activities, by agreement, which include planning, financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and administering any program or project

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concerned with the conservation of renewable natural resources. The districts may also make available, for purposes of the agreement, funds, property, personnel, equipment and services available to them.

There are 45 conservation districts in Washington and all 39 counties in Washington are represented by at least one conservation district.

Summary of Bill:

Two or more conservation districts, by agreement, may engage in joint activities that, includes but is not limited to engineering as it relates to conservation of renewable natural resources. Districts are also authorized to make available for purposes of the agreement any professional engineering that may be available to them.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.