

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 2051

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Providing short-term disaster recovery financial assistance to agricultural producers.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Rule, Shewmake, Ormsby and Ramel).

**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

### **Background:**

Conservation Districts (CDs) are a type of government entity that provide voluntary land use and conservation services to landowners, such as habitat restoration and natural disaster preparedness and recovery. Each CD is led by a five-member board. There are 45 CDs in Washington, and at least one in each county.

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is the state agency that coordinates and provides state funding to CDs. The SCC is led by a 10-member board, and provides landowner services in addition to and in coordination with CDs.

### **Summary:**

Subject to amounts appropriated, and in cooperation with conservation districts, the Conservation Commission must develop and implement a short-term disaster recovery financial assistance program (Program) for farmers and ranchers. The Program funding must initially address physical damage or economic losses caused by flooding in Whatcom County during November 2021.

Grants may be used for payroll, utilities and rent, marketing and advertising, building improvements or repairs, replacing damaged or lost crops, livestock, and equipment, and

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other operations and business expenses. To be eligible for grant funds, farmers or ranchers must provide documentation of lost agricultural income or activity as a result of a natural disaster.

The Conservation Commission must coordinate with the Department of Agriculture and CDs to increase awareness of the Program and other state and federal disaster relief assistance.

The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	94	0
Senate	48	0

**Effective:** March 31, 2022