
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

ESSB 5303

Brief Description: Extending the water supply milestone for the Yakima river basin integrated plan to 2035.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Senators Warnick, Chapman, Dozier, Nobles and Torres).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Extends water supply milestones to implement the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan from July 1, 2025, to July 1, 2035.

Hearing Date: 3/19/25

Staff: Lily Smith (786-7175).

Background:

The Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (Integrated Plan) was developed to improve water supply and management in the Yakima River Basin along with environmental goals. The Department of Ecology (Ecology) is authorized to develop water supply solutions consistent with the Integrated Plan that provide concurrent benefits to both instream and out-of-stream uses.

Ecology and the Office of the State Treasurer (OST) must prepare and periodically update a cost estimate and financing plan for the Integrated Plan in which at least half of the cost comes from nonstate sources with a significant portion coming from local beneficiaries of the projects. Until July 1, 2025, prior to an appropriation for the construction of a water supply project under the

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Integrated Plan that costs more than \$100 million, the Washington Water Resource Center (Center) must evaluate the cost benefit analysis for the project.

In 2013 the Department of Natural Resources purchased land under the Integrated Plan to establish the Teanaway Community Forest. If by June 30, 2025, permits and funding are in place for construction of facilities that produce at least 214,000 acre-feet of water for out-of-stream and instream uses, the land will remain in the Community Forest Trust. If not, the Board of Natural Resources is authorized to place the land in the Common School Trust.

Any investment in land purchased for a community forest with a loan from the Common School Trust Fund is subject to an annual interest payment.

Summary of Bill:

The following dates are extended from June 30, 2025, to June 30, 2035:

- milestones in the Integrated Plan to secure required permits and funding for one or more water supply facilities designed to provide at least 214,000 acre feet of water; and
- the requirement for the Center to provide a cost-benefit analyst before appropriations for a water supply project that costs more than \$100 million.

The requirement of an interest payment on a loan from the Common School Trust Fund for an investment in land purchased for a community forest expires June 30, 2025.

Ecology, with assistance from the OST, must periodically update the cost estimate and financing plan for the Integrated Plan.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 7, 2025.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on June 30, 2025.