

**Chapter 36.61 RCW**  
**LAKE AND BEACH MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS**

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*Assessments and charges against state lands: Chapter 79.44 RCW.*

*Boat trailer fee: RCW 46.17.305.*

**RCW 36.61.010 Findings—Intent—Purpose.** (1) The legislature finds that the environmental, recreational, and aesthetic values of many of the state's lakes are threatened by eutrophication and other deterioration and that existing governmental authorities are unable to adequately improve and maintain the quality of the state's lakes.

(2) The legislature intends that an ecosystem-based beach management approach should be used to help promote the health of aquatic ecosystems and that such a management approach be undertaken in a manner that retains ecosystem values within the state. This management approach should use long-term strategies that focus on reducing nutrient inputs from human activities affecting the aquatic ecosystem, such as decreasing nutrients into stormwater sewers, decreasing fertilizer application, promoting the proper disposal of pet waste, promoting the use of vegetative borders, promoting the reduction of nutrients from on-site septic systems where appropriate, and protecting riparian areas. Organic debris, including vegetation, driftwood, seaweed, kelp, and organisms, are extremely important to beach ecosystems.

(3) The legislature further finds that it is in the public interest to promote the conservation and stewardship of shorelines and upland properties adjoining lakes and beaches in order to: (a) Conserve natural or scenic resources; (b) protect riparian habitats and water quality; (c) promote conservation of soils, wetlands, shorelines, or tidal marshes; (d) enhance the value of lakes or beaches to the public as well as the benefit of abutting or neighboring parks, forests, wildlife preserves, nature reservations or sanctuaries, or other open space; (e) enhance recreation opportunities; (f) preserve historic sites; and (g) protect visual quality along highway, road, street, trail, recreational, and other corridors or scenic vistas.

(4) It is the purpose of this chapter to establish a governmental mechanism by which property owners can embark on a program of lake or beach improvement and maintenance for their and the general public's benefit, health, and welfare. Public property, including state property, shall be considered the same as private property in this chapter, except liens for special assessments and liens for rates and charges shall not extend to public property. Lake bottom property and marine property below the line of the ordinary high water mark shall not be considered to be benefited, shall not be subject to special assessments or rates and charges, and shall not receive voting rights under this chapter. [2014 c 85 s 1; 2008 c 301 s 1; 1987 c 432 s 1; 1985 c 398 s 1.]

**RCW 36.61.020 Creation of district—Special assessments or rates and charges.** (1) Any county may create lake or beach management districts to finance: (a) The improvement and maintenance of lakes or beaches located within or partially within the boundaries of the county; and (b) the acquisition of real property or property rights within or outside a lake or beach management district including, by way of example, conservation easements authorized under RCW 64.04.130, and to promote the conservation and stewardship of shorelines as well as the conservation and stewardship of upland properties adjoining lakes or beaches for conservation or for minimal development. All or a portion of a lake or beach and the adjacent land areas may be included within one or more lake or beach management districts. More than one

lake or beach, or portions of lakes or beaches, and the adjacent land areas may be included in a single lake or beach management district.

(2) For the purposes of this chapter, the term "improvement" includes, among other things, the acquisition of real property and property rights within or outside a lake or beach management district for the purposes set forth in RCW 36.61.010 and this section.

(3) Special assessments or rates and charges may be imposed on the property included within a lake or beach management district to finance lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities, including: (a) Controlling or removing aquatic plants and vegetation; (b) improving water quality; (c) controlling water levels; (d) treating and diverting stormwater; (e) controlling agricultural waste; (f) studying lake or marine water quality problems and solutions; (g) cleaning and maintaining ditches and streams entering the lake or marine waters or leaving the lake; (h) monitoring air quality; (i) the acquisition of real property and property rights; and (j) the related administrative, engineering, legal, and operational costs, including the costs of creating the lake or beach management district.

(4) Special assessments or rates and charges may be imposed annually on all the land in a lake or beach management district for the duration of the lake or beach management district without a related issuance of lake or beach management district bonds or revenue bonds. Special assessments also may be imposed in the manner of special assessments in a local improvement district with each landowner being given the choice of paying the entire special assessment in one payment, or to paying installments, with lake or beach management district bonds being issued to obtain moneys not derived by the initial full payment of the special assessments, and the installments covering all of the costs related to issuing, selling, and redeeming the lake or beach management district bonds. [2014 c 85 s 2; 2008 c 301 s 3; 2000 c 184 s 5; 1987 c 432 s 2; 1985 c 398 s 2.]

**Effective date—2000 c 184:** See note following RCW 39.96.010.

*Cities and towns authorized to establish lake and beach management districts: RCW 35.21.403.*

*Flood control districts authorized to engage in activities under RCW 36.61.020: RCW 86.09.151.*

**RCW 36.61.025 Creation of district—Duration.** To improve the ability of counties to finance long-term lake or beach management objectives, lake or beach management districts may be created for any needed period of time. [2008 c 301 s 4; 2000 c 184 s 4.]

**Effective date—2000 c 184:** See note following RCW 39.96.010.

**RCW 36.61.030 Creation of district—Resolution or petition—Contents.** A lake or beach management district may be initiated upon either the adoption of a resolution of intention by a county legislative authority or the filing of a petition signed by ten landowners or the owners of at least twenty percent of the acreage contained within the proposed lake or beach management district,

whichever is greater. A petition or resolution of intention shall set forth: (1) The nature of the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities proposed to be financed; (2) the amount of money proposed to be raised by special assessments or rates and charges; (3) if special assessments are to be imposed, whether the special assessments will be imposed annually for the duration of the lake or beach management district, or the full special assessments will be imposed at one time, with the possibility of installments being made to finance the issuance of lake or beach management district bonds, or both methods; (4) if rates and charges are to be imposed, the annual amount of revenue proposed to be collected and whether revenue bonds payable from the rates and charges are proposed to be issued; (5) the number of years proposed for the duration of the lake or beach management district; and (6) the proposed boundaries of the lake or beach management district.

The county legislative authority may require the posting of a bond of up to five thousand dollars before the county considers the proposed creation of a lake or beach management district initiated by petition. The bond may only be used by the county to finance its costs in studying, holding hearings, making notices, preparing special assessment rolls or rolls showing the rates and charges on each parcel, and conducting elections related to the lake or beach management district if the proposed lake or beach management district is not created.

A resolution of intention shall also designate the number of the proposed lake or beach management district, and fix a date, time, and place for a public hearing on the formation of the proposed lake or beach management district. The date for the public hearing shall be at least thirty days and no more than ninety days after the adoption of the resolution of intention unless an emergency exists.

Petitions shall be filed with the county legislative authority. The county legislative authority shall determine the sufficiency of the signatures, which shall be conclusive upon all persons. No person may withdraw his or her name from a petition after it is filed. If the county legislative authority determines a petition to be sufficient and the proposed lake or beach management district appears to be in the public interest and the financing of the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities is feasible, it shall adopt a resolution of intention, setting forth all of the details required to be included when a resolution of intention is initiated by the county legislative authority. [2014 c 85 s 8; 2008 c 301 s 5; 1987 c 432 s 3; 1985 c 398 s 3.]

**RCW 36.61.040 Creation of district—Public hearing—Notice—**

**Contents.** Notice of the public hearing shall be published in at least two consecutive issues of a newspaper of general circulation in the proposed lake or beach management district, the date of the first publication to be at least fifteen days prior to the date fixed for the public hearing by the resolution of intention. Notice of the public hearing shall also be given to the owner or reputed owner of any lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property within the proposed lake or beach management district by mailing the notice at least fifteen days before the date fixed for the public hearing to the owner or reputed owner of the property as shown on the tax rolls of the county assessor at the address shown thereon. Notice of the public

hearing shall also be mailed to the departments of fish and wildlife, natural resources, and ecology at least fifteen days before the date fixed for the public hearing.

Notices of the public hearing shall: (1) Refer to the resolution of intention; (2) designate the proposed lake or beach management district by number; (3) set forth a proposed plan describing: (a) The nature of the proposed lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities; (b) the amount of special assessments or rates and charges proposed to be raised by the lake or beach management district; (c) if special assessments are proposed to be imposed, whether the special assessments will be imposed annually for the duration of the lake or beach management district, or the full special assessments will be payable at one time, with the possibility of periodic installments being paid and lake or beach management bonds being issued, or both; (d) if rates and charges are proposed to be imposed, the annual amount of revenue proposed to be collected and whether revenue bonds payable from the rates and charges are proposed to be issued; and (e) the proposed duration of the lake or beach management district; and (4) indicate the date, time, and place of the public hearing designated in the resolution of intention.

In the case of the notice sent to each owner or reputed owner by mail, the notice shall set forth the estimated amount of the cost of the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities to be borne by special assessment, or annual special assessments, or rates and charges on the lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property owned by the owner or reputed owner.

If the county legislative authority has designated a committee of itself or an officer to hear complaints and make recommendations to the full county legislative authority, as provided in RCW 36.61.060, the notice shall also describe this additional step before the full county legislative authority may adopt a resolution creating the lake or beach management district. [2008 c 301 s 6; 1994 c 264 s 9; 1988 c 36 s 9; 1987 c 432 s 4; 1985 c 398 s 4.]

**RCW 36.61.050 Creation of district—Public hearing—Amendments to original plan.** The county legislative authority shall hold a public hearing on the proposed lake or beach management district at the date, time, and place designated in the resolution of intention.

At this hearing the county legislative authority shall hear objections from any person affected by the formation of the lake or beach management district. Representatives of the departments of fish and wildlife, natural resources, and ecology shall be afforded opportunities to make presentations on and comment on the proposal. Members of the public shall be afforded an opportunity to comment on the proposal. The county legislative authority must consider recommendations provided to it by the departments of fish and wildlife, natural resources, and ecology. The public hearing may be extended to other times and dates declared at the public hearing. The county legislative authority may make such changes in the boundaries of the lake or beach management district or such modification in plans for the proposed lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities as it deems necessary. The county legislative authority may not change boundaries of the lake or beach management district to include property that was not included previously without first passing an amended resolution of intention and giving new notice to the owners or

reputed owners of property newly included in the proposed lake or beach management district in the manner and form and within the time provided for the original notice. The county legislative authority shall not alter the plans for the proposed lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities to result in an increase in the amount of money proposed to be raised, and shall not increase the amount of money proposed to be raised, without first passing an amended resolution of intention and giving new notice to property owners in the manner and form and within the time provided for the original notice. [2008 c 301 s 7; 1994 c 264 s 10; 1988 c 36 s 10; 1985 c 398 s 5.]

**RCW 36.61.060 Creation of district—Public hearing—Legislative authority may delegate responsibility.** A county legislative authority may adopt an ordinance providing for a committee of itself, or an officer, to hold public hearings on the proposed formation of a lake or beach management district and hear objections to the proposed formation as provided in RCW 36.61.050. The committee or officer shall make a recommendation to the full legislative authority, which need not hold a public hearing on the proposed creation of the lake or beach management district. The full county legislative authority by resolution may approve or disapprove the recommendation and submit the question of creating the lake or beach management district to the property owners as provided in RCW 36.61.070 through 36.61.100. [2008 c 301 s 8; 1985 c 398 s 10.]

**RCW 36.61.070 Creation of district—Submittal of question to landowners.** (1) After the public hearing, the county legislative authority may adopt a resolution submitting the question of creating the lake or beach management district to the owners of land within the proposed lake or beach management district, including publicly owned land, if the county legislative authority finds that it is in the public interest to create the lake or beach management district and the financing of the lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities is feasible. The resolution shall also include: (a) A plan describing the proposed lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities which avoid adverse impacts on fish and wildlife and provide for appropriate measures to protect and enhance fish and wildlife; (b) the number of years the lake or beach management district will exist; (c) the amount to be raised by special assessments or rates and charges; (d) if special assessments are to be imposed, whether the special assessments shall be imposed annually for the duration of the lake or beach management district or only once with the possibility of installments being imposed and lake or beach management bonds being issued, or both, and, if both types of special assessments are proposed to be imposed, the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities proposed to be financed by each type of special assessment; (e) if rates and charges are to be imposed, a description of the proposed rates and charges and the possibility of revenue bonds being issued that are payable from the rates and charges; and (f) the estimated special assessment or rate and charge proposed to be imposed on each parcel included in the proposed lake or beach management district.

(2) No lake or beach management district may be created by a county that includes territory located in another county without the approval of the legislative authority of the other county. [2014 c 85 s 4; 2008 c 301 s 9; 1987 c 432 s 5; 1985 c 398 s 6.]

**RCW 36.61.080 Creation of district—Submittal of question to landowners—Mail ballot.** (1) A ballot shall be mailed to each owner or reputed owner of any lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property within the proposed lake management district, including publicly owned land, which ballot shall contain the following proposition:

"Shall lake management district No. . . . be formed?  
Yes . . . . ."  
No . . . . ."

(2) A ballot shall be mailed to each owner or reputed owner of any lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property within the proposed beach management district, including publicly owned land, which ballot shall contain the following proposition:

"Shall beach management district No. . . . be formed?  
Yes . . . . ."  
No . . . . ."

(3) In addition, the ballot shall contain appropriate spaces for the signatures of the landowner or landowners, or officer authorized to cast such a ballot. Each ballot shall include a description of the property owner's property and the estimated special assessment, or rate and charge, proposed to be imposed upon the property. A copy of the instructions and the resolution submitting the question to the landowners shall also be included. [2008 c 301 s 10; 1987 c 432 s 6; 1985 c 398 s 7.]

**RCW 36.61.090 Creation of district—Submittal of question to landowners—Balloting—Conditions.** The balloting shall be subject to the following conditions, which shall be included in the instructions mailed with each ballot, as provided in RCW 36.61.080: (1) All ballots must be signed by the owner or reputed owner of property according to the assessor's tax rolls; (2) each ballot must be returned to the county legislative authority not later than 5:00 p.m. of a specified day, which shall be at least twenty but not more than thirty days after the ballots are mailed; (3) each property owner shall mark his or her ballot for or against the creation of the proposed lake or beach management district, with the ballot weighted so that the property owner has one vote for each dollar of estimated special assessment or rate and charge proposed to be imposed on his or her property; and (4) the valid ballots shall be tabulated and a simple majority of the votes cast shall determine whether the proposed lake or beach management district shall be approved or rejected. [2008 c 301 s 11; 1987 c 432 s 7; 1985 c 398 s 8.]

**RCW 36.61.100 Creation of district—Submittal of question to landowners—Majority vote required—Adoption of ordinance.** If the proposal receives a simple majority vote in favor of creating the lake or beach management district, the county legislative authority shall

adopt an ordinance creating the lake or beach management district and may proceed with establishing the special assessments or rates and charges, collecting the special assessments or rates and charges, and performing the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities. If a proposed lake management district includes more than one lake and its adjacent areas, the lake management district may only be established if the proposal receives a simple majority vote in favor of creating it by the voters on each lake and its adjacent areas. The county legislative authority shall publish a notice in a newspaper of general circulation in a lake or beach management district indicating that such an ordinance has been adopted within ten days of the adoption of the ordinance.

The ballots shall be available for public inspection after they are counted. [2008 c 301 s 12; 1987 c 432 s 8; 1985 c 398 s 9.]

**RCW 36.61.110 Creation of district—Limitations on appeals.** No lawsuit may be maintained challenging the jurisdiction or authority of the county legislative authority to proceed with the lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities and creating the lake or beach management district or in any way challenging the validity of the actions or decisions or any proceedings relating to the actions or decisions unless the lawsuit is served and filed no later than forty days after publication of a notice that the ordinance has been adopted ordering the lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities and creating the lake or beach management district. Written notice of the appeal shall be filed with the county legislative authority and clerk of the superior court in the county in which the property is situated. [2008 c 301 s 13; 1985 c 398 s 11.]

**RCW 36.61.115 Limitation on special assessments, rates, and charges.** A special assessment, or rate and charge, on any lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property shall not be increased beyond one hundred ten percent of the estimated special assessment, or rate and charge, proposed to be imposed as provided in the resolution adopted in RCW 36.61.070, unless the creation of a lake or beach management district is approved under another mailed ballot election that reflects the weighted voting arising from such increases. [2008 c 301 s 14; 1987 c 432 s 9.]

**RCW 36.61.120 Special assessment roll—Adoption—Public hearing.** After a lake or beach management district is created, the county shall prepare a proposed special assessment roll. A separate special assessment roll shall be prepared for annual special assessments if both annual special assessments and special assessments paid at one time are imposed. The proposed special assessment roll shall list: (1) Each separate lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property in the lake or beach management district; (2) the acreage of such property, and the number of feet of lake or beach frontage, if any; (3) the name and address of the owner or reputed owner of each lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property as shown on the tax rolls of the county assessor; and (4) the special assessment proposed to be imposed on each lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property, or the annual



special assessments proposed to be imposed on each lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property.

At the time, date, and place fixed for a public hearing, the county legislative authority shall act as a board of equalization and hear objections to the special assessment roll, and at the times to which the public hearing may be adjourned, the county legislative authority may correct, revise, raise, lower, change, or modify the special assessment roll or any part thereof, or set the proposed special assessment roll aside and order a new proposed special assessment roll to be prepared. The county legislative authority shall confirm and approve a special assessment roll by adoption of a resolution.

If a proposed special assessment roll is amended to raise any special assessment appearing thereon or to include omitted property, a new public hearing shall be held. The new public hearing shall be limited to considering the increased special assessments or omitted property. Notices shall be sent to the owners or reputed owners of the affected property in the same manner and form and within the time provided for the original notice.

Objections to a proposed special assessment roll must be made in writing, shall clearly state the grounds for objections, and shall be filed with the governing body prior to the public hearing. Objections to a special assessment or annual special assessments that are not made as provided in this section shall be deemed waived and shall not be considered by the governing body or a court on appeal. [2008 c 301 s 15; 1985 c 398 s 12.]

**RCW 36.61.130 Special assessment roll—Public hearing—Legislative authority may delegate responsibility—Appeals.** A county legislative authority may adopt an ordinance providing for a committee of itself, or an officer, to hear objections to the special assessment roll, act as a board of equalization, and make recommendations to the full county legislative authority, which need not hold a public hearing on the special assessment roll. The ordinance shall provide a process by which an appeal may be made in writing to the full county legislative authority by a person protesting his or her special assessment or annual special assessments as confirmed by the committee or officer. The full county legislative authority by resolution shall approve the special assessment roll, modify and approve the special assessment roll as a result of hearing objections, or reject the special assessment roll and return it to the committee or officer for further work and recommendations. No objection to the decision of the full county legislative authority approving the special assessment roll may be considered by a court unless an objection to the decision has been timely filed with the county legislative authority as provided in this section. [1985 c 398 s 13.]

**RCW 36.61.140 Special assessment roll—Public hearing—Notice—Contents.** Notice of the original public hearing on the proposed special assessment roll, and any public hearing held as a result of raising special assessments or including omitted property, shall be published and mailed to the owner or reputed owner of the property as provided in RCW 36.61.040 for the public hearing on the formation of the lake or beach management district. However, the notice need only

provide the total amount to be collected by the special assessment roll and shall state that: (1) A public hearing on the proposed special assessment roll will be held, giving the time, date, and place of the public hearing; (2) the proposed special assessment roll is available for public perusal, giving the times and location where the proposed special assessment roll is available for public perusal; (3) objections to the proposed special assessment must be in writing, include clear grounds for objections, and must be filed prior to the public hearing; and (4) failure to so object shall be deemed to waive an objection.

Notices mailed to the owners or reputed owners shall additionally indicate the amount of special assessment ascribed to the particular lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property owned by the person so notified. [2008 c 301 s 16; 1985 c 398 s 14.]

**RCW 36.61.150 Special assessment roll—Appeal to superior and appellate courts—Procedure.** The decision of a county legislative authority upon any objection to the special assessment roll may be appealed to the superior court only if the objection had been timely made in the manner prescribed in this chapter. The appeal shall be made within ten days after publication of a notice that the resolution confirming the special assessment roll has been adopted by filing written notice of the appeal with the county legislative authority and the clerk of the superior court in the county in which the real property is situated. The notice of appeal shall describe the property and set forth the objections of the appellant to the special assessment. Within ten days from the filing of such notice of appeal with the clerk of the superior court, the appellant shall file with the clerk of the court a transcript consisting of the special assessment roll and his or her objections thereto, together with the resolution confirming such special assessment roll and the record of the county legislative authority with reference to the special assessment or annual special assessments, which transcript, upon payment of the necessary fees therefor, shall be furnished by an officer of the county and by him or her certified to contain full, true, and correct copies of all matters and proceedings required to be included in the transcript. Such fees shall be the same as the fees payable to the county clerk for the preparation and certification of transcripts on appeal to the supreme court or the court of appeals in civil actions.

At the time of the filing of the notice of appeal with the clerk of the superior court a sufficient bond in the penal sum of two hundred dollars, with a surety or sureties thereon as provided by law for appeals in civil cases, shall be filed conditioned to prosecute such appeal without delay, and if unsuccessful, to pay all costs incurred by the county because of the appeal. The court may order the appellant, upon application therefor, to execute and file such additional bond or bonds as the necessity of the case may require.

Within three days after such transcript is filed in the superior court, the appellant shall give written notice to the county legislative authority that such transcript is filed. The notice shall state a time, not less than three days from the service thereof, when the appellant will call up the cause for hearing.

The superior court shall, at this time or at such further time as may be fixed by order of the court, hear and determine such appeal

without a jury, and such cause shall have preference over all civil causes pending in the court, except proceedings under an act relating to eminent domain in such county and actions of forcible entry and detainer. The judgment of the court shall confirm, correct, modify, or annul the special assessment or annual special assessments insofar as the same affects the property of the appellant. A certified copy of the decision of the court shall be filed with the officer having custody of the special assessment roll, and he or she shall modify and correct such special assessment roll in accordance with the decision.

An appeal shall lie to the supreme court or the court of appeals from the judgment of the superior court, as in other cases, however, such appeal must be taken within fifteen days after the date of the entry of the judgment of the superior court, and the record and opening brief of the appellant in the cause shall be filed in the supreme court or the court of appeals within sixty days after the appeal is taken by notice as provided in this section. The time for filing the record and serving and filing of briefs may be extended by order of the superior court, or by stipulation of the parties concerned. The supreme court or the court of appeals on such appeal may correct, modify, confirm, or annul the special assessment or annual special assessments insofar as the same affects the property of the appellant. A certified copy of the order of the supreme court or the court of appeals upon such appeal shall be filed with the officer having custody of such special assessment roll, who shall thereupon modify and correct such special assessment roll in accordance with such decision. [1985 c 398 s 15.]

**RCW 36.61.160 Special assessments—Calculation.** Whenever special assessments are imposed, all property included within a lake or beach management district shall be considered to be the property specially benefited by the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities and shall be the property upon which special assessments are imposed to pay the costs and expenses of the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities, or such part of the costs and expenses as may be chargeable against the property specially benefited. The special assessments shall be imposed on property in accordance with the special benefits conferred on the property up to but not in excess of the total costs and expenses of the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities as provided in the special assessment roll.

Special assessments may be measured by front footage, acreage, the extent of improvements on the property, or any other factors that are deemed to fairly reflect special benefits, including those authorized under RCW 35.51.030. Special assessments may be calculated by using more than one factor. Zones around the public improvement may be used that reflect different levels of benefit in each zone that are measured by a front footage, acreage, the extent of improvements, or other factors.

Public property, including property owned by the state of Washington, shall be subject to special assessments to the same extent that private property is subject to the special assessments, except no lien shall extend to public property. [2008 c 301 s 17; 1987 c 432 s 10; 1985 c 398 s 16.]

**RCW 36.61.170 Special assessments—Limitations.** (1) The total annual special assessments may not exceed the estimated cost of the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities proposed to be financed by such special assessments, as specified in the resolution of intention. The total of special assessments imposed in a lake or beach management district that are of the nature of special assessments imposed in a local improvement district shall not exceed one hundred fifty percent of the estimated total cost of the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities that are proposed to be financed by the lake or beach management district as specified in the resolution of intention.

(2) After a lake or beach management district has been created, the resolution of intention may be amended to increase or otherwise modify the amount to be financed by the lake or beach management district by using the same procedure in which a lake or beach management district is created, including landowner approvals consistent with the procedures established in RCW 36.61.080 through 36.61.100. [2014 c 85 s 10; 2008 c 301 s 18; 1985 c 398 s 17.]

**RCW 36.61.180 Special assessments—Modification.** Whenever annual special assessments are being imposed, the county legislative authority may modify the level of annual special assessments imposed by conforming with the procedures and subject to the limitations included in RCW 36.61.120 through 36.61.170. [1985 c 398 s 18.]

**RCW 36.61.190 Special assessments—Collection—Notice.** Special assessments and installments on any special assessment shall be collected by the county treasurer.

The county treasurer shall publish a notice indicating that the special assessment roll has been confirmed and that the special assessments are to be collected. The notice shall indicate the duration of the lake or beach management district and shall describe whether the special assessments will be paid in annual payments for the duration of the lake or beach management district, or whether the full special assessments will be payable at one time, with the possibility of periodic installments being paid and lake or beach management bonds being issued, or both.

If the special assessments are to be payable at one time, the notice additionally shall indicate that all or any portion of the special assessments may be paid within thirty days from the date of publication of the first notice without penalty or interest. This notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the lake or beach management district.

Within ten days of the first newspaper publication, the county treasurer shall notify each owner or reputed owner of property whose name appears on the special assessment roll, at the address shown on the special assessment roll, for each item of property described on the list: (1) Whether one special assessment payable at one time or special assessments payable annually have been imposed; (2) the amount of the property subject to the special assessment or annual special assessments; and (3) the total amount of the special assessment due at one time, or annual amount of special assessments due. If the special assessment is due at one time, the notice shall also describe the thirty-day period during which the special assessment may be paid

without penalty, interest, or cost. [2008 c 301 s 19; 1985 c 398 s 19.]

**RCW 36.61.200 Special assessments—Payment period—Interest and penalty.** If the special assessments are to be payable at one time, all or any portion of any special assessment may be paid without interest, penalty, or costs during this thirty-day period and placed into a special fund to defray the costs of the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities. The remainder shall be paid in installments as provided in a resolution adopted by the county legislative authority, but the last installment shall be due at least two years before the maximum term of the bonds issued to pay for the improvements or maintenance. The installments shall include amounts sufficient to redeem the bonds issued to pay for the lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities. A twenty-day period shall be allowed after the due date of any installment within which no interest, penalty, or costs on the installment may be imposed.

The county shall establish by ordinance an amount of interest that will be imposed on late special assessments imposed annually or at once, and on installments of a special assessment. The ordinance shall also specify the penalty, in addition to the interest, that will be imposed on a late annual special assessment, special assessment, or installment which shall not be less than five percent of the delinquent special assessment or installment.

The owner of any lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property charged with a special assessment may redeem it from all liability for the unpaid amount of the installments by paying, to the county treasurer, the remaining portion of the installments that is attributable to principal on the lake or beach management district bonds. [2008 c 301 s 20; 1985 c 398 s 20.]

**RCW 36.61.210 Special assessments—Subdivision of land—Segregation of assessment.** Whenever any land against which there has been levied any special assessment or annual special assessments by any county has been sold in part, subdivided, or short subdivided, the county legislative authority may order a segregation of the special assessment or annual special assessments. If an installment has been made, the segregation shall apportion the remaining installments on the parts or lots created.

Any person desiring to have such a special assessment or annual special assessments against a tract of land segregated to apply to smaller parts thereof shall apply to the county legislative authority which levied the special assessment or annual special assessments. If the county legislative authority determines that a segregation should be made, it shall by resolution order the county treasurer to segregate the special assessment or annual special assessments on the original assessment roll as directed in the resolution. The segregation shall be made as nearly as possible on the same basis as the original special assessment or annual special assessments were levied, and the total of the segregated parts of the special assessment or annual special assessments shall equal the amount of the special assessment or annual special assessments unpaid before segregation. The resolution shall describe the original tract and the amount and date of the original special assessment or annual special

assessments and shall define the boundaries of the divided parts and the amount of the special assessment or annual special assessments chargeable to each part. A certified copy of the resolution shall be delivered to the county treasurer who shall proceed to segregate the special assessment or annual special assessments upon being tendered a fee of three dollars for each tract of land for which a segregation is to be made. In addition to such charge the county legislative authority may require as a condition to the order of segregation that the person seeking it pay the local government the reasonable engineering and clerical costs incident to making the segregation. [1985 c 398 s 21.]

**RCW 36.61.220 Special assessments—Filing with county treasurer.**

Within thirty days after a county creates a lake or beach management district, the county shall cause to be filed with the county treasurer, a description of the lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities proposed that the lake or beach management district finances, the lake or beach management district number, and a copy of the diagram or print showing the boundaries of the lake or beach management district and preliminary special assessment roll or abstract of the same showing thereon the lots, tracts, parcels of land, and other property that will be specially benefited thereby and the estimated cost and expense of such lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities to be borne by each lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property. The treasurer shall immediately post the proposed special assessment roll upon his or her index of special assessments against the properties affected by the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities. [2014 c 85 s 5; 2008 c 301 s 21; 1985 c 398 s 22.]

**RCW 36.61.230 Special assessments—Lien created.** The special assessment or annual special assessments imposed upon the respective lots, tracts, parcels of land, and other property in the special assessment roll or annual special assessment roll confirmed by resolution of the county legislative authority for the purpose of paying the cost and expense in whole or in part of any lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities shall be a lien upon the property assessed from the time the special assessment roll is placed in the hands of the county treasurer for collection, but as between the grantor and grantee, or vendor and vendee of any real property, when there is no express agreement as to payment of the special assessments against the real property, the lien of such special assessments shall attach thirty days after the filing of the diagram or print and the estimated cost and expense of such lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities to be borne by each lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property, as provided in RCW 36.61.220. Interest and penalty shall be included in and shall be a part of the special assessment lien. No lien shall extend to public property subjected to special assessments.

The special assessment lien shall be paramount and superior to any other lien or encumbrance theretofore or thereafter created except a lien for general taxes. [2008 c 301 s 22; 1985 c 398 s 23.]

**RCW 36.61.240 Special assessments—Lien—Validity—Foreclosure.**

Special assessments shall be valid and enforceable as such and the lien thereof on the property assessed shall be valid if the county legislative authority in making the special assessments acted in good faith and without fraud. Delinquent special assessments or installments shall be foreclosed in the same manner as special assessments are foreclosed under chapter 36.94 RCW. Public property subject to special assessments shall not be subject to liens. [1985 c 398 s 24.]

**RCW 36.61.250 Special assessments—Legislative authority may stop—Exceptions.** Except when lake or beach management district bonds are outstanding or when an existing contract might otherwise be impaired, the county legislative authority may stop the imposition of annual special assessments if, in its opinion, the public interest will be served by such action. [2014 c 85 s 6; 1985 c 398 s 25.]

**RCW 36.61.260 Bonds.** (1) Counties may issue lake or beach management district revenue bonds in accordance with this section. Lake or beach management district bonds may be issued to obtain money sufficient to cover that portion of the special assessments that are not paid within the thirty-day period provided in RCW 36.61.190.

(2) Whenever lake or beach management district revenue bonds are proposed to be issued, the county legislative authority shall create a special fund or funds for the lake or beach management district from which all or a portion of the costs of the lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities shall be paid. Lake or beach management district bonds shall not be issued in excess of the costs and expenses of the lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities and shall not be issued prior to twenty days after the thirty days allowed for the payment of special assessments without interest or penalties.

(3) Lake or beach management district revenue bonds shall be exclusively payable from the special fund or funds and from a guaranty fund that the county may have created out of a portion of proceeds from the sale of the lake or beach management district bonds.

(4) (a) Lake or beach management district revenue bonds shall not constitute a general indebtedness of the county issuing the bond nor an obligation, general or special, of the state. The owner of any lake or beach management district revenue bond shall not have any claim for the payment thereof against the county that issues the bonds except for: (i) With respect to revenue bonds payable from special assessments, payment from the special assessments made for the lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities for which the lake or beach management district bond was issued and from the special fund or funds, and a lake or beach management district guaranty fund, that may have been created; and (ii) with respect to revenue bonds payable from rates and charges, payment from rates and charges deposited in the special fund or funds that the county may have created for that purpose. Revenue bonds may be payable from both special assessments and from rates and charges. The county shall not be liable to the owner of any lake or beach management district bond for any loss to a lake or beach management district guaranty fund occurring in the lawful operation of the fund. The owner of a lake or beach management district bond shall not have any claim against the state arising from

the lake or beach management district bond, rates and charges, special assessments, or guaranty fund. Tax revenues shall not be used to secure or guarantee the payment of the principal of or interest on lake or beach management district bonds. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, nothing in this section may be interpreted as limiting a county's issuance of bonds pursuant to RCW 36.67.010 in order to assist in the financing of improvements to lakes or beaches located within or partially within the boundaries of the county, including without limitation lakes or beaches located within a lake or beach management district.

(b) The substance of the limitations included in this subsection (4) shall be plainly printed, written, engraved, or reproduced on: (i) Each lake or beach management district bond that is a physical instrument; (ii) the official notice of sale; and (iii) each official statement associated with the lake or beach management district bonds.

(5) If the county fails to make any principal or interest payments on any lake or beach management district bond or to promptly collect any special assessment securing lake or beach management district revenue bonds when due, the owner of the lake or beach management district revenue bond may obtain a writ of mandamus from any court of competent jurisdiction requiring the county to collect the special assessments, foreclose on the related lien, and make payments out of the special fund or guaranty fund if one exists. Any number of owners of lake or beach management districts may join as plaintiffs.

(6) A county may create a lake or beach management district bond guaranty fund for each issue of lake or beach management district bonds. The guaranty fund shall only exist for the life of the lake or beach management district bonds with which it is associated. A portion of the bond proceeds may be placed into a guaranty fund. Unused moneys remaining in the guaranty fund during the last two years of the installments shall be used to proportionally reduce the required level of installments and shall be transferred into the special fund into which installment payments are placed. A county may, in the discretion of the legislative authority of the county, deposit amounts into a lake or beach management district bond guaranty fund from any money legally available for that purpose. Any amounts remaining in the guaranty fund after the repayment of all revenue bonds secured thereby and the payment of assessment installments, may be applied to lake or beach improvement and maintenance activities or to other district purposes.

(7) Lake or beach management district bonds shall be issued and sold in accordance with chapter 39.46 RCW. The authority to create a special fund or funds shall include the authority to create accounts within a fund. [2014 c 85 s 7; 2008 c 301 s 23; 2000 c 184 s 6; 1985 c 398 s 26.]

**Effective date—2000 c 184:** See note following RCW 39.96.010.

**RCW 36.61.270 Imposition of rates and charges.** Whenever rates and charges are to be imposed in a lake or beach management district, the county legislative authority shall prepare a roll of rates and charges that includes those matters required to be included in a special assessment roll and shall hold a public hearing on the proposed roll of rates and charges as provided under RCW 36.61.120



through 36.61.150 for a special assessment roll. The county legislative authority shall have full jurisdiction and authority to fix, alter, regulate, and control the rates and charges imposed by a lake or beach management district and may classify the rates or charges by any reasonable factor or factors, including benefit, use, front footage, acreage, the extent of improvements on the property, the type of improvements on the property, uses to which the property is put, service to be provided, and any other reasonable factor or factors. The flexibility to establish rates and charges includes the authority to reduce rates and charges on property owned by low-income persons.

Except as provided in this section, the collection of rates and charges, lien status of unpaid rates and charges, and method of foreclosing on such liens shall be subject to the provisions of chapter 36.94 RCW. Public property, including state property, shall be subject to the rates and charges to the same extent that private property is subject to them, except that liens may not be foreclosed on the public property, and the procedure for imposing such rates and charges on state property shall conform with the procedure provided for in chapter 79.44 RCW concerning the imposition of special assessments upon state property. The total amount of rates and charges cannot exceed the cost of lake or beach improvement or maintenance activities proposed to be financed by such rates and charges, as specified in the resolution of intention. Revenue bonds exclusively payable from the rates and charges may be issued by the county under chapter 39.46 RCW. [2008 c 301 s 24; 1987 c 432 s 11.]

**RCW 36.61.280 Beach management districts—Purpose—Plan. (1)**

Beach management districts may be created for the purpose of controlling and removing aquatic plants or vegetation. These districts must develop a plan for these activities, in consultation with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies. The plan must include an element addressing nutrient loading from land use activities in a subbasin that is a tributary to the area targeted for management. The plan must be consistent with the action agenda approved by the Puget Sound partnership, where applicable.

(2) Plans for the control and removal of aquatic plants or vegetation must, to the greatest extent possible, meet the following requirements:

(a) Avoid or minimize the excess removal of living and nonliving nontarget native vegetation and organisms;

(b) Avoid or minimize management activities that will result in compacting beach sand, gravel, and substrate;

(c) Minimize adverse impacts to: (i) The project site when disposing of excessive accumulations of vegetation; and (ii) other areas of the beach or deep water environment; and

(d) Retain all natural habitat features on the beach, including retaining trees, stumps, logs, and large rocks in their natural location.

(3) Seaweed removal under this section may only occur on the shore of a saltwater body that lies between the extreme low tide and the ordinary high water mark, as those terms are defined in RCW 90.58.030.

(4) The control or removal of native aquatic plants or vegetation shall be authorized in the following areas:

(a) Beaches or nearshore areas located within at least one mile of a ferry terminal that are in a county with a population of one million or more residents; and

(b) Beaches or nearshore areas in a city that meets the following:

(i) Is adjacent to Puget Sound;

(ii) Has at least eighty-five thousand residents;

(iii) Shares a common boundary with a neighboring county; and

(iv) Is in a county with a population of one million or more residents. [2008 c 301 s 2.]

**RCW 36.61.290 Acquisition of real property or property rights—**  
**Limitations and requirements.** A proposal to acquire real property or property rights within or outside of a lake or beach management district in accordance with RCW 36.61.020 is subject to the following limitations and requirements: (1) The real property or property rights proposed for acquisition must be in a county located west of the crest of the Cascade mountain range that plans under RCW 36.70A.040 and has a population of more than forty thousand and fewer than sixty-five thousand persons as of April 1, 2013, as determined by the office of financial management; and (2) prior to the acquisition of real property or property rights, the proposal must have the written approval of a majority of the property owners of the district, as determined by the tax rolls of the county assessor. [2014 c 85 s 3.]

**RCW 36.61.300 Acquisition of real property or property rights—**  
**County authority.** (1) In connection with the acquisition of real property or property rights within or outside a lake or beach management district, a county may: (a) Own real property and property rights, including without limitation conservation easements; (b) transfer real property and property rights to another state or local governmental entity; (c) contract with a public or private entity, including without limitation a financial institution with trust powers, a municipal corporation, or a nonprofit corporation, to hold real property or property rights such as conservation easements in trust for the purposes of the lake and beach management district, and, in connection with those services, to pay the reasonable costs of that financial institution or nonprofit corporation; (d) monitor and enforce the terms of a real property right such as a conservation easement, or for that purpose to contract with a public or private entity, including without limitation a financial institution with trust powers, a municipal corporation, or a nonprofit corporation; (e) impose terms, conditions, and encumbrances upon real property or property rights acquired in respect of a lake or beach management district, and amend the same; and (f) accept gifts, grants, and loans in connection with the acquisition of real property and property rights for lake or beach management district purposes.

(2) If a county contracts with a financial institution, municipal corporation, or nonprofit corporation to hold that property or property rights in trust for purposes of the district, the terms of the contract must provide that the financial institution, municipal corporation, or nonprofit corporation may not sell, pledge, or hypothecate the property or property rights for any purpose, and must further provide for the return of the property or property rights back

to the county in the event of a material breach of the terms of the contract.

(3) Before a lake or beach management district in existence as of June 12, 2014, exercises the powers set forth in this section, the legislative authority of the county must provide for an amended resolution of intention and modify the plan for the district, with a public hearing, all as provided in RCW 36.61.050. [2014 c 85 s 9.]

**RCW 36.61.310 Dissolution—Procedure and conditions.** (1) Except when lake or beach management district bonds are outstanding or when an existing contract might otherwise be impaired, a lake or beach management district may be dissolved either by: The county legislative authority upon a finding that the purposes of the district have been accomplished; or a vote of the property owners within the district, if proposed by the legislative authority of the county or through the filing of a sufficient petition signed by the owners of at least twenty percent of the acreage within the district.

(2) If the question of dissolution of a district is submitted to property owners, the balloting is subject to the following conditions, which must be included in the instructions mailed with each ballot, as provided in RCW 36.61.080:

(a) A ballot must be mailed to each owner or reputed owner of any lot, tract, parcel of land, or other property within the district, with the ballot weighted so that a property owner has one vote for each dollar of special assessment or rates and charges imposed on his or her property;

(b) A ballot must be signed by the owner or reputed owner of property according to the assessor's tax rolls;

(c) Each ballot must be returned to the county legislative authority no later than 5:00 p.m. of a specified day, which must be at least twenty, but not more than thirty days after the ballots are mailed; and

(d) Each property owner must mark his or her ballot for or against the dissolution of the district.

(3) If, following the tabulation of the valid ballots, a simple majority of the votes cast are in favor of dissolving the district, the district must be dissolved on the date established in the ballot proposition.

(4) A county, although not separately responsible for satisfying the financial obligations of a dissolved district, has full authority to continue imposing special assessments, rates, and charges for a dissolved district until all financial obligations of the district incurred prior to its dissolution have been extinguished or retired. [2014 c 85 s 11.]