



## 2026 State Legislative Platform

*The Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT) unites 36 land trusts and conservation organizations across the state to advance voluntary, collaborative conservation. WALT connects its members to protect and restore the lands and waters that sustain us.*

Land trusts partner effectively with communities across the state to conserve land for future generations – but success hinges on robust public funding and effective policy tools. Our priorities:

### **1) Preserve Climate Commitment Act (CCA) funding for its intended uses**

WALT urges the legislature to use CCA dollars to invest in natural climate solutions, support Tribal-led projects, reduce climate pollution, support natural resource jobs and local economies, and make our air and water healthier for families across Washington.

### **2) Advance working forest protection through Community Forest Grants**

WALT urges the State Legislature to allocate \$9 million to RCO's Community Forest Program to expand to new geographies and strengthen existing projects. Community-based forestry, in which residents are actively included in the development, governance, management and use of working forest land, can bring substantial benefits to community health, support local jobs, enhance wildlife habitat, increase recreational access, and advance climate resilience and mitigation. We support supplemental funding of this impactful program at a minimum advancing the next three projects on the list – the Nisqually Community Forest, Carbon Canyon Community Forest, and Green Mountain Community Forest.

### **3) Support salmon recovery and climate resiliency through Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) investments.**

WALT supports RCO's request for \$20M to fund SRFB and supports an allocation of \$8.1M to the ESRP ranked project list. This funding could go to shovel-ready projects that will make our communities more resilient to climate change and protect beloved shorelines. From a restoration project in Nisqually to impactful conservation projects from Kitsap to Skagit, this investment will have immediate benefits for diverse communities.

### **4) Fulfill the commitment to fund \$125 million biennially for the Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience Account.**

WALT urges the legislature to honor its commitment made in 2021 via HB 1168 by funding the remaining \$60M for the Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience Account in the supplemental budget. The investments made since 2021 in prescribed fire, forest health, and community wildfire risk reduction have been critical in helping DNR, local jurisdictions, Tribes, and land trusts do the activities to care for our lands in a way that help stop high intensity wildfires before they start.

### **5) Increase funding for No Child Left Inside and youth outdoor education programs.**

WALT recommends expanding investment in the No Child Left Inside (NCLI) program. Expanding youth access to nature-based learning opportunities—especially for underserved youth—is essential to help foster the next generation of conservation leaders, promotes physical and mental well-being, and helps to ensure that tens of thousands of young people have the chance to connect with and appreciate Washington's natural environment.



**The Washington Association of Land Trusts supports the following funding priorities in the 2025-2027 State Supplemental Budget:**

**WA Recreation & Conservation Office**

- Community Forests Program (\$9M)
- Estuary and Salmon Recovery Program (\$8.1M)
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board (\$20M)
- No Child Left Inside (\$5.8M)

**WA State Conservation Commission**

- Forest Health and Community Wildfire Resiliency (\$2.5M)
- Conservation Technical Assistance (\$2.25M)

**WA Department of Natural Resources**

- Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience (\$60M)
- Urban Forestry Local Grants (\$3M)
- Watershed Resilience Program (\$600K)

**WA Department of Fish and Wildlife**

- Post-wildfire Habitat Recovery (\$919K)
- Forest Health and Fuel Reduction (\$2.4M)
- HPA Permitting System Modernization (\$1.4M)

**Support/Oppose Issues and Bills**

• **Support**

○ **New 2026 bills**

- [HB 2624](#) - Clarifying consumer protections regarding unsolicited real estate transactions for public purposes or by nonprofit land conservancies
- [SB 6097](#) - Adding federally recognized Indian tribes to the list of entities that may participate in the conservation futures program
- [SJM 8015/HJM 4009](#) - Requesting Congress to ensure that federal wildfire response entities have the capacity to protect communities and infrastructure, limit impacts to natural resources and watersheds, and protect wildland firefighter health and safety.

○ **Bills supported since 2025 Session**

- [SB 5203](#) - Ensuring connectivity for Washington wildlife through safe passages
- [HB 1983](#) - Amending the definition of timberland for purposes of determining the real estate excise taxes for a governmental entity
- [SB 5155](#) - Extending a program to streamline the environmental permitting process for salmon recovery projects
- [SB 5567](#) - Expanding secondary training for careers in natural resources and conservation

• **Oppose**

- [HB 2316](#) - Concerning land use development when vegetation associated with shrubsteppe is present in the urban growth areas