

Focus on: Climate Resilience Coordination

Establishing a durable governance structure

The Problem

Adapting to and preparing for climate change poses many challenges for our communities, infrastructure and the environment. It requires ongoing coordination across state government to deliver efficient and effective services for a more climate resilient Washington.

In 2023, the legislature passed E2SHB 1170, requiring Ecology to update the state's climate resilience strategy (the strategy). The law also requires us, in partnership with other agencies, to recommend a durable governance structure by September 30, 2024.

Why This Matters

By creating a structure for interagency coordination and funding the associated agency outreach and engagement, the state will be better able to report on progress and connect with diverse audiences statewide. Proposed funding for this legislation will help build long-term relationships and sustain dialogue with affected communities and groups.

Without this measure, Ecology will have to rely on limited existing staff and voluntary participation by agencies. As a result, agencies may take inconsistent actions that lead to confusion, delays and potentially conflicting guidance. Lack of

strategic alignment on climate resilience will increase the impacts and result in greater costs of climate-fueled events.

Ecology's Proposal

Our proposed legislation would establish the recommended governance structure in the updated strategy by creating the interagency climate resilience coordinating council.

The council would be comprised of agency leaders from ten agencies involved in developing the strategy. The council would provide overall leadership and guidance on strategy implementation and future updates.

Ecology would staff the council, including supporting council and subcommittee meetings, tracking metrics and reporting on progress, and performing outreach and engagement.

Additional advisory committees or work groups could also be formed, as needed, to inform the state's work.

The proposal supports ongoing engagement and consultation with a variety of interested parties with a focus on addressing barriers to engagement for Tribes and overburdened communities.

Related Information

<https://ecology.wa.gov/climate-strategy>



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