



Advisory Group on Water Trust, Banking, & Transfers

Update for CR-PAG
June 4, 2020



Background

Oct 2018: Ecology launches internal workgroup to study trust water and water banking.

Oct 2019: Ecology does external outreach to identify concerns & problems and brainstorm policy solutions.

Jan 2020: Ecology introduces request legislation on water banking and trust water. The legislature debates several related bills.

Mar 2020: Legislature passes budget proviso to further study the issues.



Legislative Direction – ESSB 6168

Sec 302(37): Ecology shall...

- Convene a work group ... to study the design and use of the state water trust, water banking, and water transfers...
- Invite representatives to serve on the work group...
- Consult with affected federally recognized tribal governments upon request...
- Present its findings, including a summary of discussions and any recommendations on policy improvements...



Advisory Group Objectives

- Inform Ecology's findings and recommendations to the Legislature.
- Convene discussion to enhance understanding among entities on priorities, concerns, and potential solutions.
- Increase shared understanding of trust water, banking, and transfers in Washington.

Meetings

1. **Kickoff** (April 16)
2. **Policy discussion:** Transparency in water right sales & out-of-basin transfers of water rights (May 7)
3. **Policy discussion:** Private investment and marketing of water rights (part A): Use of the state water trust (May 26)
4. **Policy discussion:** Private investment and marketing of water rights (part B): Water banking (June 10)
5. **Review session:** Draft policy options (June 30)
6. **Wrap-up:** Finalization of Advisory Group feedback (July 16)



After the Advisory Group Concludes

Ecology will:

1. Summarize Advisory Group activities and findings.
2. Internally vet findings and recommendations.
3. Evaluate pursuing request legislation.
4. Present findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 2020.

Topics Discussed Thus Far

- Overarching concerns and priorities
- Sales & transfers:
 - Transparency in water right sales
 - Out-of-basin transfers
- The Trust Water Rights Program:
 - Ways to put a water right into trust (definitions)
 - Acceptable mitigation for out-of-stream uses
 - Temporary donations



Thank You!

Contact: Carrie Sessions, Carrie.sessions@ecy.wa.gov, (360) 742-6582