

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Sweet called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Van Orsow moved to approve the February MSWAC minutes. Searcy seconded. Minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Jerauld shared three items:

1. The Dept. of Ecology's [Organics Recycling Collection Map](#) is now live. This highlights areas across Washington state where organics recovery services will become a standard part of waste management. The impacted local governments will need to meet the requirements below.
 - a. By April 1, 2027: Year-round (26 weeks of service per year or more) curbside source-separated collection of organic materials must be provided to all single-family residential and business customers within designated areas.
 - b. April 1, 2030: These same areas must provide source-separated collection of organics materials on a non-elective basis, and food waste must be an accepted material.
2. The 2025 Washington State Recycling Association (WSRA) and Washington Organic Recycling Council (WORC) Conference will be co-hosted from May 19-22 at the Northern Quest Resort in Airway Heights, Washington. This year's conference offers an opportunity to network, learn, and collaborate with industry leaders and peers from throughout the region. For more information, [see here](#). To register, [click here](#).
3. The WSRA-WORC Conference will kick off by hosting the NextCycle Washington 2025 Pitch Showcase on May 19, 2025. The Pitch Showcase is the culmination of NextCycle programming advancing projects focused on material reuse, repair, recycling, composting, and recycled content products. The NextCycle teams will deliver a summary of their projects using a concise 5-minute business pitch format. For more information, [visit the conference webpage](#).

SWD Updates

McLaughlin provided the SWD update.

Tonnage update

Tonnage in January was slightly ahead (2.6% or 1,200 tons) of last year at this time. (68K tons in 2024 vs. 70K ton in 2025). Transactions in January looked strong. They were up 6.6% or +4,500 more transactions compared to January 2024. Transactions were off to a slow start in 2024. January 2025 transactions more closely mirror January 2023 transactions.

Yard waste tonnage for January 2025 was 75% ahead of January 2024. We saw 598 tons more this January compared to 2024. 2024 was also a slow start year for yard waste tonnage. January 2025 was short 300 tons compared to January 2023.

BEW Update

King County and BEW reached a tentative settlement agreement to end litigation. Under the settlement agreement, the parties would have until the end of August 2025 for King County to acquire the landfill gas plant at Cedar Hills Regional Landfill. If fully implemented, it would lead to an end of the litigation process and the ownership of the plant would transfer to King County.

King County will have a period of due diligence, including inspection of the plant, before the agreement can be finalized. The County Council must approve the settlement agreement and appropriate funds.

A successful acquisition of the plant would allow King County to resume operating the plant to put the landfill gas to beneficial use and could provide future revenue for the Solid Waste Division. We are hopeful and encouraged by this progress. At next month's meeting, we should be able to provide more information.

Bomb Cyclone debrief on March 18

SWD is hosting a bomb cyclone debrief with our city partners on March 18 at 11 a.m. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss what went well, areas for improvement, and identify opportunities for future action. The feedback we gather will feed into the Debris Management Program, as applicable.

SWD also debriefed with our hauling partners at the hauler forum in January.

Cities are encouraged to attend. Please feel free to extend the invite to your city's emergency planner or other relevant staff. Reach out to Blum if you do not have the invite.

NERTS FEIS Release

On Monday, we published the final environmental impact statement for NERTS. The final EIS evaluates the potential environmental and community impacts of the project's construction and operation and proposes mitigation to avoid or address impacts.

We anticipate a siting decision next week. Preliminary design work will begin later in 2025.

We're excited to reach this important milestone. We are particularly grateful to our Core Cities team for their partnership and engagement in this process.

Re+ City Grant Request for Applications Launching in April

A grant opportunity for cities is coming up – the second cycle of the Re+ City grant opens on April 14. This is a competitive grant program to support cities that have signed the Re+ Pledge in taking on innovative efforts to divert waste from the landfill.

Total funding available is \$400,000, with awards for individual cities ranging from \$20,000-\$50,000 and up to \$100,000 for joint proposals.

Applications will be due in May and awards will be announced and finalized this year. We will share the grant guidelines and further details with Advisory Committees in April.

SWD Director Recruitment

DNRP held a partner meet and greet with candidates for the SWD Director position on February 27. It was wonderful to see so many of you in attendance. We thank all who participated in the process.

Question: Sweet wanted to know if SWD consulted with Cedar Grove on the bomb cyclone. McLaughlin was not sure but said we would find out and follow up.

5-Day Update

As I begin to provide you an update on the 5-Day pilot, I want to express my disappointment in how this has played out during the first 6 weeks or so.

A substantial amount of planning went into this effort before its launch. We started planning a few years ago and that included good faith bargaining with our labor partners. It's uncharacteristic of us to have this much planning and not get the results that we want.

During the 12+ years that I have served as your regional leader, my team has worked extremely hard to provide a resilient service for your cities.

We have thrived through major weather events, fires, pandemics and so much more; and we have proudly held the mantra of "We never close." We have even been able to support our neighboring jurisdictions when they have experienced service constraints.

So, please hear me when I say that the conditions that everyone is facing is not being taken lightly. In fact, we are engaging at the highest levels of the County to address the resource constraints that are prohibiting our normal operations.

John Taylor had hoped to be here for this discussion but had a previous obligation with Council. He asked me to convey his full awareness of this problem and his full commitment to get it resolved quickly.

Overview of Operations since City/Hauler Forum on 2/26

Since the Presidents' Day holiday, we have continued to focus on improving operational efficiency. The model we created for this pilot relies on historical and actual tonnage, historical average daily driver counts, and consistent driver efficiencies. When one of these critical elements is not met, the system begins to struggle, and we experience capacity issues. The model is not super complicated – it's all about how much tonnage comes in, what it takes to get it in a truck and move it, and how many resources are needed to that. On one hand, it's straightforward math but there are a lot of variables that can interfere with that.

The capacity issues have been evident in the past two weeks. We continued to experience disruptions at our transfer stations that impacted commercial haulers and the public. We are zeroing in on what the constraints are and have about 20% fewer resources than needed to operate the system and the resources that are working are working at ~13% in productivity. This is not sustainable and this is not acceptable. This is not characteristic of our own expectations of service delivery, and we are not meeting our partners' expectations. We are working tirelessly to solve these problems.

We've received questions regarding our transfer station closures and some have expressed confusion why we have closed stations that have empty trailers. The reality is that this is a very connected system. When one station begins to shut down due to capacity and/or staffing challenges, it requires a thorough reassessment of the whole system, including available resources and anticipated material inflows. This ensures that we provide the most efficient support to both our internal and external stakeholders. As we have seen, this often means diverting traffic and trucks drivers from top-load sites to focus sending materials to compactor sites, which are more efficient stations.

When we talk about the drop in productivity, it relates to our labor resources, but this is not our only challenge. We have had equipment challenges and have made decisions that did not work out for us as we've tried to manage through this pilot.

In some cases, strategic decisions might require closing a station that still has available floor capacity, allowing for a better allocation of resources and more effective management of material inflows. This strategy is vital for upholding the integrity and efficiency of our entire system.

Root cause analysis and next steps

We have been analyzing data and evaluating our performance to understand the root causes of our challenges. Two primary root causes have emerged:

- Driver shortage: On average, we are operating with 20% less than the minimum number of daily drivers required for successful operations.
- Productivity: We are not operating with our customary productivity. In fact, we have measured a 13% loss in driver productivity in February.

What we're doing now

We are in the process of hiring drivers to consistently maintain the necessary staff levels for successful daily operations. We are approaching one of the final stages of the process where we bring prospective drivers in to do skills testing and final interviews. We are targeting to hire at least 5 drivers to help close the operating gap. We are expediting this process as much as possible, but it could be several weeks before we see more drivers on the road.

Before this pilot, we had a larger margin for error, with weekends to account for issues like equipment failure or bad weather. Now, with reduced margin for error, we're adding more staff to handle garbage collection and address unforeseen circumstances. Once driver numbers and productivity are restored, the pilot will offer flexibility to manage things like busy weekends or a less productive weekday.

We also are in active conversations with Labor. John Taylor is very involved, and many conversations have taken place over the past week. Changes are needed to this pilot. We haven't had one week where there have been sufficient resources, like the 35 drivers needed daily for garage to run normal business operations. The current conversations show that there is a mutual interest in resolving the disruptions and reaching agreements to improve the pilot's implementation.

Our leadership is regularly having direct conversations about the pilot with DNRP leadership, the Executive Office, and Council members. In these conversations we are transparent about our challenges, their regional impacts, and the feedback from our partners. We are also working with leaders to help right the ship.

Evaluation

We continue to believe that this pilot needs the opportunity to succeed because there are great benefits, like cost savings, that it can deliver on. The start has been incredibly rocky and has had significant negative impacts for our own team, hauler partners, cities, and the people we serve.

We acknowledge that the pilot is not sustainable the way it is operating now, but our analysis shows that by addressing the shortfall in staffing and bringing up the productivity, this pilot will be successful.

Comments/questions:

Van Orsow thanked McLaughlin for the update and efforts that are being made. He shared that from what has been laid out, SWD lacks the resources and staffing to make this trial work. Random, frequent reductions in transfer station services without notice indicate that this trial is not working and should be paused until the underlying issues are resolved. Van Orsow suggested a detailed presentation be given to MSWAC outlining variables and mitigation plans for when the pilot resumes. He also recommended that SWD seek input from cities and haulers before re-launching the pilot, with an exit or pause option-built in.

McLaughlin said that we are operating under an agreement that prevents pausing and restarting the program. While neither party is obligated to negotiate, both are working to resolve the roadblock. Though conversations were unproductive until recently, they are now progressing. McLaughlin agreed with Van Orsow that this pilot unsustainable, not working, and lacks the necessary resources. This is why both parties are addressing the issue.

Van Orsow asked why the trial can't be paused or stopped and why this option wasn't included in the pilot for situations like the current one.

McLaughlin responded that there is a possibility that they could end the trial earlier than expected, and this is part of the discussions with labor. The goal is to ensure fairness and give the pilot a reasonable chance to succeed. As shared, we don't believe we can continue to operate as we have for the last six weeks – it is not a sustainable approach; and labor likely feels the same way. While this is a difficult situation, McLaughlin hopes a change will allow proper evaluation of the pilot, which could save millions for ratepayers.

Sweet acknowledged the labor issue emphasized that haulers and cities must be included in the discussions and solutions

Searcy inquired about how many labor shortages were due to vacancies versus employees on leave or absent and if there were for examples of declining productivity.

1. McLaughlin responded that there are no vacancies. For years, even before McLaughlin was Director, SWD has used overtime to cover driving positions, a practice valued by employees. Some have volunteered for overtime in other county areas, and McLaughlin believes this reflects employee frustration. This is not an organized labor effort, and the pilot assumed employees would take overtime, but no overtime has been worked. SWD needs 35 drivers but is averaging 28. Overtime can't be mandated under the current agreement, and even if the operation returned to a 7-day schedule, overtime would still be needed, with no guarantee of solving the problem.
2. McLaughlin stated that the primary measure of productivity the number of loads per day. Each station is different because of travel times, traffic, etc., but we know on average the loads per day in February 2024 is 13% higher than February 2025.

McInnis mentioned ongoing frustration from haulers, indicating the issues are not just holiday-related, as they persist beyond that period. She agreed with Van Orsow that the pilot should be formally evaluated sooner than the one-year mark. Despite pushback from the county, she believes quarterly or semi-annual checks with stakeholder feedback are necessary to assess the pilot's progress, as it's not currently working. It's important to capture the current status rather than waiting until the year-end to evaluate the pilot.

McLaughlin said SWD meets daily to review progress and plan for the next day. To improve accountability and collaboration, sharing observations, insights, and plans for the next period would be helpful. A quarterly update and regular reviews throughout the year would be valuable, and we can continue to do this for the rest of the pilot.

Nelson echoed Van Orsow's comments, noting that top-load stations like Algona are bearing the brunt of closures, with frequent messages about station shutdowns. She questioned the decision-making behind this, feeling it's an undue burden. While hoping labor negotiations succeed, she lacks confidence, as SWD initially said labor supported the pilot but now faces daily opposition. She sought clarity on the reasoning behind these decisions and their duration, warning that ratepayers will eventually be impacted, despite county savings, during future rate negotiations with cities and haulers.

McLaughlin said that being near a transfer station increases vulnerability to closures. This is unusual and hopefully temporary, but it's happening now. The South County Transfer Station, opening next year, will provide more capacity and resilience. While understanding the frustration, McLaughlin noted the current model operates only during weekdays and with less drivers than needed, compounded by sick calls. The goal is to create a model that accounts for absences, but the labor force is not showing up the way we thought they would. When hiring permanent drivers, we aim to build a margin of error. The decision to close stations today was made to avoid disruptions later in the week. McLaughlin hopes for a quick labor agreement to reset the pilot for more consistent operations. If the pilot fails, reliable and predictable operations must still be achieved.

Nelson asked if there's a reduced "direct haul" rate for haulers going directly to Cedar Hills.

McLaughlin clarified he misspoke. The King County Code has a regional direct rate for things like residuals from MRFs, not for residential route collectors going to Cedar Hills – either by choice or by direction. Therefore, there is no reduced rate for "direct haul" to Cedar Hills.

Sweet inquired if Mclaughlin was rethinking this rate.

McLaughlin said he needs to explore if an exception to the code is possible but is unsure if he has the authority to make it.

Van Orsow commented that McLaughlin agrees with the points made but lacks the flexibility to pause the trial. There should have been an exit strategy, as there's no clear resolution in sight. Continuing without a pause doesn't benefit anyone, including SWD. While it's good that McLaughlin acknowledges the issues, there seems to be no intent to pause the pilot and reassess the approach.

McLaughlin responded that he would pause and restart the pilot, if possible, but that option isn't available. While SWD could cancel it, they wouldn't be able to restart. Going back to bargaining would be challenging, as it took over two years to reach this point.

McLaughlin said John Taylor and Executive staff are concerned about the current conditions and are working to accelerate a solution with labor. Neither party has unilateral authority, but he hopes a solution will come soon.

Sweet thanked McLaughlin for his honesty, noting the transition is challenging. The cities hope John Taylor remembers the importance of the partnership. McLaughlin agreed, saying his goal is to bring a stable solution before he leaves on March 27. If not, he's confident Taylor will stay engaged and ensure the partnership is maintained.

MSWAC Update

No update.

2026-2027 Rate Model Proposal

Honaker led this.

As a reminder, none of these numbers are final and we will be coming back in April with more updates.

The division shared a timeline of the rate and budget process. The advisory committees, department leadership and Exec office will be briefed this month. Next month, the division will share the Executive proposed rate and ask for committees to consider a formal letter of support for the proposal.

The projections for 2025-2031 show an additional 200k tons, slightly exceeding expectations. This is based on the February tonnage forecast, which is part of our annual process.

In the next year, 75% of the revenue requirement will support direct customer operations. The slide shows the direct customer operations in blue. The next largest square is regulatory compliance in green. We have the least control over expansion of this square. The yellow squares are service areas with their own revenue supports. The orange squares are perhaps the most discretionary areas but are also directly tied to supporting important long-range goals like zero waste, statewide organics, and SCAP.

The CapEx increases from \$34M in 2025 to \$99M in 2031, reflecting a sharp increase. This growth is primarily driven by rising cost expenditures, which are in line with the commitments agreed to in the 2019 Compensation Plan:

- South County Recycling and Transfer Station (SCRTS) will replace obsolete Algona Transfer Station (opens 2026).
- Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station (NERTS) will replace aging Houghton Transfer Station.
- Area 9 Development and Facilities Relocation will maximize landfill capacity. Local disposal was the most economic option and had the least environmental impact of the options considered.

CapEx is rising due to large projects, with most capital development levers for rate relief already utilized. We are focused on completing required projects, leaving few opportunities to delay. The plan is to address projects as they arise.

The proposed commercial revenue increase is 9% for 2026-2027. Due to the FAC and tipping fee, the revenue will be blended, and the increase may vary based on jurisdiction size.

- Self-haul: 12.5% rate increase aligns cost/revenue
 - Commercial cost allocation: 70%
 - Self-haul cost allocation: 22%
 - We've raised this increase to gradually boost revenue from self-haul customers.
 - Minimum fee cost allocation: 6%
 - Yard Waste Cost Allocation: 2%
- Delaying NERTS/PF reduces rate on average 1.8% annually
- Project deferrals could mitigate impacts for curbside customers but would leave the division with an aging Houghton Station and no permanent solution for facilities. The projection does not account for the additional maintenance or renewal costs associated with the obsolete facilities. Furthermore, there would be no operational increases beyond inflation for the next six years. If additional regulatory requirements or support for Re+ are needed, funding would have to come from cuts elsewhere. Additionally, the recession and rate stabilization reserves would be depleted. Drops in tonnage or other adverse impacts could lead to a sharp rate increase, negating any potential savings.

Comments/questions:

Sweet inquired if long-term disposal (LTD) projections were included. Honaker replied no, as LTD costs vary significantly between options. Once an LTD option is chosen, we can add those projections. Lead times will differ depending on the chosen option and landfill closure timeline.

Searcy asked about the OpEx assumptions with the 5-day haul. Honaker answered that the 2025 budget includes provisions for OpEx, and if modifications to the provisions are negotiated, we can price it out and incorporate it into our forward projections.

Gire wanted clarification on the expansion of permanent facilities. Honaker stated that significant construction is needed on the facilities. We have plans to proceed in 2028 and are currently exploring an acquisition option. More details will be shared as they become available.

Moldver inquired about the NERTS expenditure schedule, noting discrepancies on the website. Honaker responded that construction starting in 2029 is a more realistic timeline, as more time will likely be needed through the design phase. The current numbers are preliminary, and the schedule may be adjusted as needed.

Van Orsow asked about the driving factors behind the permanent facility costs and why they are so high, given the likely landfill closure. Honaker answered that the primary use will be for shops and truck parking. Currently, we are renting space for the shops at the Far West location and trucks are stored offsite near the landfill. While the original plan was to place these areas in the buffer zone, it may no longer be the best option with the facility closing.

Searcy wanted to know if the reserves are sufficient to exclude from the rate assumptions. Honaker clarified whether this referred to buying with cash, and Searcy confirmed that he meant using reserves for debt payments. Honaker explained that we have three reserves: rainy day, recession (fully replenished), and rate stabilization. All rate scenarios will deplete reserves, and we are predicting that we will dip into the recession reserve. For the current rate path, we plan to reduce short-term capital equipment transfers if we buy the Woodinville site to avoid using reserves.

Sweet hoped that we can have a fuller discussion at next month's meeting.

Re+ Food Waste Recycling (CoDigestion) Overview

Fitzpatrick and Hislop gave this presentation.

Currently, we are doing a lot of work in prevention, collection, processing & technology, and markets. These are all part of the county's effort to achieve zero food waste.

- Prevention:
 - Food Too Good to Waste Grants
 - City and Re+ Grants
 - Pacific Coast Food Waste Collaborative
 - School Food Share
- Collection:
 - Single Family collection requirements
 - State Organics Management Laws
 - Commercial technical assistance
- Processing & technology
 - Grants & NextCycle
 - Vashon Island collection area improvement and development of processing facility
 - CODI
- Markets:
 - Compost Procurement Ordinance and Universal Contract
 - Compost Wise technical assistance

Zero Food Waste: Context

- Re+ increased regional work on food waste
- Requires whole system approach
- Processing capacity increase needed by 2030s

Co-digestion (CODI) is the digestion wastewater solids and commercial food waste (CFW).

Background on County CODI work:

- King County Council requested CODI Alternative Analysis
- Work co-led by SWD and WTD
- Work completed by Jacobs Consulting in 2024
- Key Focus:
 - Analyses to better understand how the County can facilitate the diversion of food waste from the landfill
 - Identify and implement the most beneficial use for processed food waste
 - Consider capacity requirements for co-digestion of commercial food waste (CFW) at the South Treatment Plant (STP)

The project team conducted an analysis on all the processes available and found four alternatives:

- Alternative 1A: County-owned, third party operated pre-processing + co-digestion at STP
- Alternative 1B: Third-party owned and operated pre-processing + co-digestion at STP
- Alternative 2: Continued composting at third-party sites
- Alternative 3: Third party bio-digestion

Key Findings:

- Lack of flow control:
 - King County lacks the authority to require commercial food waste (CFW) to be processed at county facilities, limiting its direct role in organics processing
- Co-digestion infrastructure capacity:
 - STP would need to expand its anaerobic digestion capacity even without adding food waste slurry (FWS). The earliest STP could accept FWS for co-digestion is 2035.
- Sit availability & Logistics:
 - No suitable surplus County-owned sites were found, but industrial real estate in South King County could provide viable options
- PFAS
 - PFAS in food waste poses a risk to the County's Biosolids Program and its Loop product. Further research is needed to assess and mitigate this risk.
- Stakeholder and Market Feedback
 - Stakeholders support partnerships or pilot projects for food waste pre-processing
 - Existing composting facilities prominent in organics processing in King County are expected to remain viable

Analysis Conclusions and Next Steps from the Report

- Immediate co-digestion facility development: Not recommended
- Recommended actions:
 - Monitor third-party bio-digestion developments
 - Explore partnerships for food waste processing
 - Further research PFAS risks and mitigation strategies
 - Continue to evaluate the County's role in organics diversion efforts

We aren't walking away from this work right now, but we are leaning more towards our generators to produce change.

Focus on food waste

- Immediate Focus: Develop and Expand Commercial Technical Assistance
 - Increase business organics collection and diversion through outreach and technical assistance
 - Expand program to better anticipate business needs
 - Continuously consult with decision-makers and partners
 - Pilot new strategies and build on successes
- Underway:
 - Commercial compliance and enforcement
 - Collection policy
 - Contamination reduction and compliance
 - Vashon Island processing

School Program Update

Ochoa Argüello gave this updated.

Program History: Over 30 years of collaboration

- Overall Goal: Incorporate Re+ messaging and support to foster environmental stewardship in schools, empowering student and staff to adopt long-term sustainable behaviors.
- Technical Support: Supports schools and districts in implementing sustainable practices through seven benchmarks, Student Green Teams, and tailored resources.
- Curriculum Programming: Free educational services offering activity guides, school assemblies, and classroom workshops on sustainability, waste reduction, recycling, composting, and environmental justice.
- Key Initiatives: Hands-on learning experiences like the "Curiosity Quest" assembly, Workshops, and "Green Teams" to engage students in recycling, composting, and climate action.
 - "Green Teams" are student-lead teams.

2023-2024 School Year Key Achievements

- Engagement: Over 300 schools across 16 districts
- Curriculum: Incorporated Re+ messaging into assemblies and workshops
- Assemblies: 69 assemblies at 40 schools
- Workshops: 167 elementary and 324 secondary classroom workshops
- Green Schools: Recognized 69 schools for sustainability achievements
- Focus: Technical assistance and tailored school support. School and district partnerships strengthened for long-term engagement

We have a high participation rate of active green schools per district. We are focusing on some specific areas like Enumclaw, Highline, Renton, and Skykomish to get higher participation rates.

We frequently hear from schools, particularly regarding funding challenges. In 2023, we launched the Re+ School Vouchers program.

Re+ School Vouchers Pilot: Background and Goals

- Reduce barriers
- Reduce waste
- Reach more schools & districts

Re+ school vouchers pilot: support

- Support: \$319,912 worth of supplies distributed, largely focused on durables and organics. We provided a list of items that would best support their needs, and they were able to choose from that list.
- Types of Support:
 - Durables (57 schools): e.g. utensils, meal trays, bulk condiment dispensers, energy/water efficient dishwashers, wash racks, magnetic collection lids, etc.
 - Composting (33 schools) e.g. utensils and meal trays where durables weren't feasible
 - Recycling/Composting Collection Containers (39 schools)
 - Water refill stations and reusable water bottles (56 schools)
 - Food waste reduction (8 schools) e.g. Food Share Table containers, signage, portable coolers, ice packs, pop-up tables, etc.

Re+ School Vouchers Pilot: Reach

- Reach: Supports 70 schools in 13 districts, impacting 108,500 students
- Recipients:

City	Schools	City	Schools
Auburn	7	Private Schools	3
Bellevue	3	Renton	27
Federal Way	8	Shoreline	1
Highline	4	Snoqualmie Valley	1
Issaquah	3	Tahoma	1
Kent	5	Tukwila	2
Lake Washington	3	Vashon	2

- Priority schools received 75% of the Re+ vouchers
 - Title 1 schools: 50% or more free/reduced lunch and a high percentage of students living in poverty

Re+ School Vouchers pilot: Waste Diversion

- This voucher program opened the door with schools that we haven't been able to build a relationship.
- Eliminated the equivalent of 105-100 cubic yard trucks full of disposable waste that won't end up in the landfill

Importance of school partnerships

- Impacts:
 - Broad support and positive feedback from educators and administrators.
 - Strengthened relationships with historically less engaged districts.
- Testimonials
 - "No more plastic utensils!!!" - Foster High School, Tukwila
 - Federal Way Public Schools recognized the County during their October meeting: "Now more than ever, schools can't do it alone. You are invited to be recognized at our board meeting to show appreciation for donating dishwashers and reusable trays!"
- Future potential for growth and even more profound impact
 - Additional Food waste reduction and organics diversion
 - Increased recycling rates
 - Greater waste reduction through durables

Comp Plan Chapter Review Process and long-Term Disposal Study Feedback

Liu presented this.

LTD Study

- Members of MSWAC and SWAC have access to draft report with comment responses and track changes
- Final report to be released in April
- We aren't looking for additional comments on the study.

Comp Plan

- Chapter 6 – Landfill Management and Solid Waste Disposal has been shared with MSWAC and SWAC
 - Everyone should have received this chapter in their email. Reach out to Blum if you haven't.
- Subgroup to set discussion boundaries happening on March 12.
- Deep dive discussions in April
- The goal is to introduce new chapters every month.

- For some of the chapters, we will probably need two months for discussion rather than one.

Comp Plan SEPA

- Currently preparing for SEPA checklist
- Expecting determination of significance
- What information would you like to see out of the EIS?

Possible impacts to be studied (included in scope of work):

- Air and earth impacts
- Soils and water
- Animals
- Plants and noxious weeds
- Energy and natural resource
- Environmental Health
- Noise (during construction and operation)
- Land Use
- Housing
- Aesthetics
- Light and Glare
- Recreation (parks, trails)
- Historical and Cultural Preservation
- Transportation
- Public Services
- Utilities

State Legislative Update

Scholes and Tan provided this update.

The 2025 legislative session started on Jan. 13 and will be a long session of 105 days. The policy committee cut-off date was Feb. 21, and the fiscal committee cut-off date was Feb. 28. The last day to consider bills in the house of origin is March 12. The last day is expected to be April 27, 2025.

For those that are newer to the process, you can get email notifications on the status of a bill by visiting leg.wa.gov. Go to Bills --> meetings --> session and insert the bill number. If you don't know it, click "Go to Bills" to browse through prefiled bills, bills by topics, etc., and once on the bill page, click "get email notifications" and enter your email.

2025 Legislative Session – solid waste related bills. Those that have been filed, have numbers.

- **HB 1150 / SB 5284 Recycling Reform Act** (EPR for Packaging & Paper Products)
 - a. Passed out of the Senate and is moving forward
- **HB 1607 / SB 5502 Recycling Refund Act** (*Deposit Return-System (DRS) for Beverage Containers*)
 - a. It has until March 12 to make it out of the House or the Senate
- **HB 1071 / SB 5058** Implementing strategies to achieve higher recycling rates
- **HB 1154** Changes to issuing permits for solid waste handling facilities
 - a. Passed through the House
- **HB 1550 / SB 5586** Improving the End-of-Life Management of Electric Vehicle Batteries
 - a. It has until March 12 to move.
- **HB 1483 / SB 5423** Right to Repair – Digital Electronic Products

- a. Passed out of the House.
- **HB 1826 / SB 5680** Right to Repair – Mobility Devices
 - a. Passed out of the Senate.
- **HB 1497** Organics Management (*building on 2024 bill*)
 - a. Passed out of the House
- **HB 1789/SB 5175** Delaying Solar Panel Stewardship (*Agency Request*)
 - a. Passed out of the Senate
- **HB 1422** Amending Safe Medication Return (*Agency Request*)
 - a. We are looking to see if it will pass.
- **HB 1462 / SB 5438** Promoting use of reclaimed hydrofluorocarbons
 - a. Passed out of the House
- **HB 1420** Extended Producer Responsibility for Textiles

More information on bills above:

- **HB 1150:** Recycling Reform Act (EPR for Packaging & Paper Products). In previous years, this was known as the WRAP bill. This is our highest priority to get passed this year.
 - Sponsored by Rep. Liz Berry and Senator Lovelett.
 - Extends recycling to all residents with curbside garbage and is partially funded by producers.
 - Increases recycling & reuse. Materials must be sent to verified responsible markets.
- **HB 1607 / SB 5502: Recycling Refund Act (Bottle Bill)**
 - Sponsored by Rep. Monica Stonier and Senator June Robinson
 - Refund Value (deposit) of \$0.1 charged on beverage containers – redeemed when returned
 - Convenient and equitable collection infrastructure
- **HB 1071/SB 5058: implementing strategies to achieve higher recycling rates within Washington’s existing solid waste management system**
 - Sponsor: Rep. Jake Fey
 - Statewide recycling lists for residential curbside and drop-off collection and a statewide needs assessment.
 - Post-consumer recycled content requirements for plastic PP tubs, PET thermoforms and single-use cups.
- **HB 1154: Changes to issuing permits for solid waste handling facilities.** This would change the facility permitting process for solid waste handling facilities to require approval from Ecology in addition to the current local health jurisdiction.
 - Sponsor: Rep. Davina Duerr
 - Amendments to the process of issuing solid waste handling permits.
- **HB 1550 / SB 5586: Improving the End-of-Life Management of EV Batteries**
 - Sponsored by Rep. Chipalo Street and Sen. Derek Stanford
 - Requires EV battery providers to be responsible for the end-of-life management of EV batteries
 - Defines roles for battery providers, secondary handlers and users, battery recyclers, people seeking to discard an EV battery and Ecology.
- **HB 1483 / SB 5424: Supporting the servicing and right to repair of certain products with digital electronics** (Right to Repair – Digital Electronic Products)
 - Sponsored by Rep. Mia Gregerson and Sen. Derek Stanford
 - Access to tools and information to repair electronic devices such as computers, cellphones and appliances
- **HB 1826 / SB 5680: Establishing a right to repair for mobility equipment for persons with physical disabilities** (Right to Repair – Mobility Devices)
 - Sponsored by Rep. Mia Gregerson and Sen. Drew Hansen
 - Mobility devices designed for people with physical disabilities
 - Access to documentation, parts, embedded software, firmware, and tools to repair mobility devices

- **HB 1497: Improving outcomes associated with waste material management systems (Organics Management)**
 - Sponsored by Rep. Beth Doglio
 - Contamination outreach program
 - Food waste reduction in schools
 - Collection bin colors
 - Multi-family service planning
 - Business service enforcement
- **SB 5175: Delaying solar panel stewardship (Agency Request)**
 - Sponsor: Sen. Sharon Shewmake
 - Delays the effective date of the Solar Panel Stewardship and Takeback Program until 2029.
 - Establishes a photovoltaic module advisory committee that would develop recommendations the law. Stewardship plans were due earlier this year, but many producers didn't submit their plans which would put them out of compliance.
- **HB 1422: Modifying the drug take-back program (Amending safe medication return – Agency request)**
 - Sponsored by Rep. Strom Peterson
 - Updates current safe medication return program (EPR for unused medicine)
 - The changes would allow the Department of Health to better manage and secure funding for the program.
- **HB 1462 / SB 5438: Reducing GHG emissions associated with HFCs**
 - Sponsored by Rep. Devina Duerr and Sen. Liz Lovelett
 - Supporting refrigerant recovery and promoting the reuse of refrigerants
- **HB 1420: Establishing producer responsibility for textiles (EPR for textiles)**
 - Sponsored by Rep. Kristine Reeves
 - Establishes an EPR program for textiles

Other bills we are tracking:

- **HB 1236 & HB 1293:** Litter penalties & litter task force
- **HB 2018:** Increasing solid waste collection tax
- **SB 5033:** Concerning sampling or testing of biosolids for PFAS chemicals.
- **SB 5183/HB 1203:** Prohibiting the sale of certain tobacco and nicotine products

These bills didn't advance:

- **SB 5045:** Including Electric Vehicle Batteries in the Battery Stewardship Law
- **HB 1901** Extended Producer Responsibility for Mattresses
- **HB 1107:** Concerning environmental impacts of fashion.
- **HB 1134:** Promoting resource conservation practices in public schools.

Member Comment

McInnis shared in chat that she just received a message from SWD that Houghton, Factoria and Algona are closed to commercial haulers for the rest of the week.

Van Orsow asked who could pause the trial if not McLaughlin. McLaughlin said that the memorandum has no terms for pausing and restarting the trial, thought it could be negotiated. We could end the trial, but restarting would require renegotiation. Pausing is a possibility if both parties agree.

Moldver reached out to Waste Management to assess impacts, and they reported missed collections and higher commercial costs. He urged SWD to find a solution for haulers and cities.

Sweet recognized McLaughlin understanding of the challenges faced by cities and haulers.

Gire noted that this was McLaughlin's last MSWAC meeting, thanked him for setting a high standard, and wished him well in retirement.

McLaughlin encouraged everyone to maintain their high expectations and assured that SWD will continue to deliver.

Sweet highlighted McLaughlin's significant impact in building the current partnerships between the county and cities.

McLaughlin thanked everyone for their well-wishes.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.