

RESOLUTION No. 16604

RESOLUTION OF FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS FOR
THURSTON COUNTY
LAKE LAWRENCE LAKE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT No. 26

A RESOLUTION adopting findings and determinations consistent with RCW 36.61.070 regarding the establishment of Lake Management District No. 26 for Lake Lawrence and submitting the establishment of Lake Management District No. 26 to a vote of property owners within the proposed district.

WHEREAS the current Lake Lawrence Lake Management District No. 20 will sunset on December 31, 2026; and

WHEREAS property owners within the current District petitioned the Board of County Commissioners for Thurston County to begin the process of establishing a new LLLMD; and

WHEREAS in response to this petition, the Board of County Commissioners for Thurston County adopted Resolution No. 16564 on November 4th, 2025, setting out its intention to consider formation of Lake Lawrence Lake Management District No. 26 (LLLMD No. 26); and

WHEREAS a public hearing was held on January 20th, 2026, to consider formation of LLLMD No. 26 and the County Commissioners heard comments from people affected by the formation of LLLMD No. 26 and other comments regarding the proposed work program; and

WHEREAS representatives from the Washington Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources and Office of Financial Management and members of the general public had the opportunity to make presentations and comments on the proposal.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THURSTON COUNTY DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The Board of County Commissioners adopts the following findings and determinations:

A. Lake Lawrence property owners created Washington State's first Lake Management District (LMD) in 1986 and have consistently renewed its status for the past 40 years.

- B. Lake Lawrence property owners have demonstrated overwhelming support for forming LLLMD No. 26, evidenced by 205 petition signatures, representing 38% of the total acreage within the existing LLLMD.
- C. The formation of LLLMD No. 26 is in the public interest as evidenced by the proposed plan for lake improvement and maintenance activities detailed in Section 2, which is approved as part of these findings.
- D. The financing of the lake improvement and maintenance activities is feasible since the revenues to be raised match the activities set out in the proposed plan for LLLMD No. 26.
- E. The plan for proposed lake improvement and maintenance activities avoids adverse impacts on fish and wildlife and provides for measures to protect and enhance fish and wildlife.
- F. Forming a new LLLMD will protect Lake Lawrence's water quality and beneficial uses, serving the public and property owners' best interests. The Integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan (IAVMP), the Lake Lawrence Phosphorus Control Strategy, the Lake Lawrence Integrated Phosphorus Management Plan, and the Aquatic Nuisance Weed Control Prescription (approved via the County Integrated Pest Management Policy) will continue to guide extended and annual work plans. These plans prioritize the lake's restoration and maintenance to support continued human use and enjoyment while protecting fish and wildlife habitats.
- G. The beneficial uses of Lake Lawrence's are highly dependent on water quality. Lake Lawrence supports significant public recreational activities, including swimming, water skiing, and boating. The LLLMD funded lake management program aims to protect all beneficial uses, including wildlife. It is a popular fishing destination and home to several warmwater fisheries. Other wildlife, such as bald eagles, beaver, and other important species, also use the lake.
- H. The proposed annual charges for each property category within the LLLMD are related to factors like property use, services provided, and benefits received. The proposed LLLMD includes the following property categories:

Private Residential Lakefront Property: Primarily used for single-family residences. Shoreline and lake access are secondary uses that significantly enhance these properties' value. Protecting water quality by controlling nutrient loading will preserve lake enjoyment and use. Aquatic weed control will ensure the lake remains suitable for boating and other recreation by shoreline property owners. The proposed LLLMD will employ appropriate manual, mechanical, and chemical techniques to remove noxious aquatic plants such as Eurasian Watermilfoil, Curly Pondweed and Fragrant Waterlilies.

This proposed LLLMD work program offers substantial value to private residential property owners.

Private Canal Front Property: Primarily used for single family residences. Lake access through canals or sloughs is a secondary use that adds value to these properties. However, their restricted access to the lake means the benefit is less than that of residential parcels with direct lake frontage.

Private Upland Property with Community Lake Access: Primarily intended residential use. While lacking direct private lake frontage, these parcels share common ownership with one or more community parcels with lake access. Through this shared ownership, upland properties benefit from the proposed LLLMD program to control nutrient loading and aquatic plants. The benefit is less than that of residential parcels with direct lake frontage and access.

Improved Public Boat Launch Property: Primarily used for public access to the lake and lakeshore for recreational activities like boating, fishing, water skiing, and swimming. The existing handicap public access site, provided by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, offers boat launches, docks, handicap bathrooms, and a shoreline for fishing.

The intended use of this property is highly dependent on lake water quality. Blue-green algae blooms occur annually and are potentially toxic to humans and animals. These blooms are becoming more frequent and will increase without effective action to control phosphorus and other nutrient loading. Declining water quality will reduce all beneficial uses of the lake, including public access. Public health and safety concerns will increase due to limited lake visibility and potentially toxic algae blooms.

The proposed LLLMD will provide aquatic weed control, supporting mixed recreational uses. Navigation areas will be maintained for all boaters, and habitat areas will be preserved for fish and wildlife.

Higher charges for public access properties are appropriate compared to residential lakefront parcels, given the much larger number of people accessing the lake through these sites, and the increased potential for introducing invasive aquatic plant species.

Other Public Access: Primarily used for low-intensity recreation activities and habitat preservation. However, this property, over 14 acres with 1,500 linear feet of shoreline, offers open public access for hiking, picnics, fishing, swimming, and other passive activities. Higher charges for year-round public access are appropriate compared to residential lakefront parcels, given the high number of people accessing the lake through this Thurston County Parks owned site.

Exempt Property: Exemptions are appropriate for properties exclusively used for private roads, utilities, or designated as Agricultural or Forestry use. Community open space or lake access areas are also reasonably exempt, as the benefited property owners are already subject to an LLLMD assessment. Lake bottom property is exempt from rates and charges pursuant to RCW 36.61.010.

- I. The LLLMD formation process provides many opportunities for property owners, resource agencies, and the County to consider whether to form an LLLMD, as well as appropriate purposes, rates and charges, boundaries, and other details.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THURSTON COUNTY, STATE OF WASHINGTON, DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Pursuant to RCW 36.61.030, the Board of Thurston County Commissioners hereby designates proposed Thurston County Lake Lawrence Lake Management District No. 26.

Section 2. The proposed Lake Management District's purpose is to protect Lake Lawrence's water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and aesthetic values through implementing appropriate lake management activities including:

- a. Maintaining a Steering Committee of neighborhood representatives to Thurston County responsible for directing LLLMD work plans and budgets.
- b. Maintaining Lake Health and Balance: Fund activities that ensure ecological balance for both humans and wildlife.
- c. Implement Vital Management Plans: Implementing the IAVMP and Cyanobacteria Management Plan (CMP) [also referred to as a phosphorus management plan]. These plans are essential for the lake's long-term health.
- d. Controlling Invasive Species: Monitoring and controlling noxious and invasive aquatic plants and vegetation.
- e. Optimizing Plant Management: Monitoring and managing submerged aquatic plants for recreation, aesthetic, and habitat.
- f. Enhancing Water Quality: Improving and maintaining water quality.
- g. Proactive Problem Solving: Funding studies to investigate and resolve lake quality problems.
- h. Ensuring Lake Safety: Monitoring and addressing safety issues on the lake, creating a safer environment for recreation.
- i. Empowering Lake Stewardship: Educating members on effective lake management practices.

j. Efficient and Effective Administration: Managing and funding essential administrative, engineering, testing, legal, and operational costs, including the initial expenses of establishing the lake management district.

Section 3. The proposed duration of the LLLMD is thirty-five (35) years, from January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2061.

Section 4. Annual special assessments will increase from the 2026 levels and include a 10% increase in 2027 for private upland and public property, and a 130% increase for all lake and canal front properties.

For purposes of this resolution, a “parcel” refers to a legally recognized lot under applicable land use law.

- A. Private Lakefront Property: \$765.97 per parcel
- B. Private Canal Front Property: \$378.51 per parcel
- C. Private Upland Property with Community Lake Access: \$91.25 per parcel
- D. Improved WDFW Public Boat Launch Property: \$22,456.57
- E. Other Public Access (Thurston County Park): \$11,403.74
- F. Exempt Property:
 - Lake bottom property
 - Land designated as Agricultural or Forestry Use
 - Parcels used exclusively for private roads or utilities; and
 - Community owned space.

Section 5. The funds raised from property owners’ annual special assessments for the first year (2027) are estimated to be \$192,558 and will not exceed \$200,845. Annual assessments may increase each year to adjust for inflation, with a maximum annual escalation of 5% if approved by the LLLMD Steering Committee and the Board of County Commissioners. However, the total funds raised in any single year will not exceed the maximum allowed in RCW 36.61.170. These limits may be amended, if allowed, pursuant to any legislative changes to RCW 36.61 that take effect during the 35-year duration of the district.

Section 6. The LLLMD boundary encompasses all property with lakefront, canal front, or community lake access on Lake Lawrence, as depicted on the map maintained by the Environmental Health Division of the Public Health & Social Services Department.

Section 7. The question of whether to form Lake Management District No. 26 for Lake Lawrence shall be submitted to the property owners within the proposed district. The Department of Public Health and Social Services shall prepare the ballots for submittal to

the property owners. Ballots will be received by the Office of the County Commissioners, Suite 200, 3000 Pacific Avenue, SE, Olympia, WA 98501 no later than 5:00 p.m., March 11th, 2026.

Section 8. Property owners and other interested parties may observe the ballot count at the office of the County Commissioner, 3000 Pacific Avenue, SE, Olympia, WA 98501, Room 110, at 10:30 a.m., March 12th, 2026.

Section 9. If the proposed LLLMD No. 26 is formed, the Lake Lawrence Management Steering Committee, a non-paid committee consisting of LLLMD property owners, will continue to partner with the Environmental Health Division on managing the LLLMD pursuant to the Thurston County Lake Management District Standard Operating Procedure (6/13/2024) and as modified during the 35-year duration of the LLLMD No. 26.

ADOPTED: February 3, 2026

ATTEST:



Clerk of the Board

Approved as to form:

Seth Dickey, Thurston County

Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

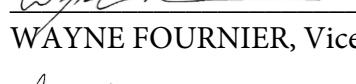
By: 

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Thurston County, Washington

Absent

TYE MENSER, Chair


WAYNE FOURNIER, Vice Chair
CAROLINA MEJIA, Commissioner
RACHEL GRANT, Commissioner
EMILY CLOUSE, Commissioner