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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know

July 16, 2020

Now reaching 219 subscribers weekly!

This Week: "Five Things" News Sent Only to Subscribers

This is the first week we are sending the Five Things newsletter only to subscribers. Please do share this newsletter within the conservation community so that your peers and people can [subscribe today](#) and not miss important news.

A few people reported odd or confusing results when subscribing. We did not experience this in testing but clearly something went wrong. To fix this issue for future subscribers we have separated the three available subscription forms ([Five Things Weekly News](#), [Legislative Updates](#), and [Monthly Blog Posts](#)) to be on separate pages on the WACD website.

If you wish to check on the status of your subscriptions, there is a clickable link at the bottom of your newsletter next to the Unsubscribe link that says "Manage your subscription."

Five Things to Know

1: New plant list available from the Plant Materials Center

The first edition of the 2020-21 plant availability has been published on the [PMC website](#). It is a good opportunity to see the majority of what the WACD PMC has to offer. It is also a good opportunity to check out the website in general. [PMC Sales Manager Jess Oman](#) has done a great job of putting it together and maintaining it.

We estimate over 2 million plants available to purchase between now and May. Selling that many plants seemed possible since more than 1.8 million plants were purchased last year.

The PMC has experienced a strong 5% growth

Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

I escaped western Washington over the weekend to tend old family graves in Dixie (near Walla Walla), something I look forward to each year. I carry a camp chair in my vehicle so that when I am able to swing through Dixie, I can sit beside Grandma and Grandpa Bruce's graves and talk to them. They are very good listeners.

Remembering and honoring those who came before us is important. Each of us is a product of the choices our ancestors made.

rate in recent years.

While the pandemic may make it more difficult to continue this growth, that will not stop the PMC from producing quality stock. Many of the PMC's more seasoned customers know to order now to have a better chance of getting the plants they want when they need them.

2: Two public hearings in August on conservation district election rules

The Washington State Conservation Commission will hold two public hearings in August on proposed changes to WAC 135 on conservation district elections and appointments.

Hearing #1 is scheduled for August 6 at 3:00 pm. Hearing #2 is set for August 11 at 3:00 pm. Find [details on the Commission's website](#).

3: Commission to hold special meeting in August

On August 12 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am, the Washington State Conservation Commission will hold a special meeting to discuss ways the Commission may achieve the 15% operating budget reduction for the 2021-2023 biennium. The reduction is being requested of all agencies by the Office of Financial Management. Please watch the Commission's website and your inbox for more information.

4: Stay tuned: Information request about WACD annual conference for chairs and managers

Conservation district chairs and managers should stay tuned for a request from WACD about your district's capabilities and desires regarding the WACD annual conference. We'll be asking about the ability of your board members to participate in a virtual conference, either at home or at the district office. We'll



One piece of family lore that I particularly appreciate is the story of Grandma Bruce and her first child. She (from Dixie) and Grandpa (from Troy Mills, Iowa) homesteaded in northeast Montana near [Baylor](#), living in a small sod house. It was winter when she went into labor. Grandpa drove the wagon several miles to town through the dark, snow-covered undulating prairie to get the midwife. On the way back he got lost. Finally arriving at the sod house, he found that Grandma (then only 19 years old) had given birth alone with only the family dog for company.

They [proved up the homestead](#) (amazing on such a marginal site) but then lost it after a consecutive series of crop failures. They moved to Prosser, Helix, and eventually to Walla Walla.

The courage of Grandma Bruce is a story that I treasure. When I have tough days, I think about Grandma giving birth alone in a sod house during a dark, cold, stormy night on the prairie.

Everything seems easier when I remember Grandma's courage and her can-do approach to life. I tell her so every time I sit in the sun next to her while the wind murmurs in my ear

also be asking about specific topics and sessions you would like to see included in the conference.

5: Coming soon: Annual awards nomination forms

Each year, WACD identifies organizations and individuals within our conservation community who deserve special recognition for their efforts. The [list of award categories is online](#) so please take a look and hopefully find inspiration for a partner, supervisor, staff, local cooperator, or perhaps Washington's Conservation District of the Year. Nomination forms will be available soon. Please help us highlight the amazing work by members of our conservation community this year!

and the cries of soaring hawks punctuate the big blue sky.

People in our conservation family - past and present - have a multitude of stories that form the foundation of who we are today. We all came from somewhere. It's important to remember where we came from and what shaped us. It's important to remember that through the choices we make, we create a legacy for those who come after us. Conserving our precious natural resources is a great way to honor our ancestors and to build a stronger foundation for future generations to prosper.

Tom Salzer
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A search engine that plants trees!

[Ecosia](#) uses advertising revenue to fund tree planting projects across the planet. It's free to use and has a [strong privacy policy](#). Sounds like a win-win because we all need to run searches! Visit <https://www.ecosia.org/> for more information, to install a Chrome extension, or to run your search from their home page.

More from the WACD Plant Materials Center

- **COVID-19 Update** – Most everyone remains healthy. Out of an abundance of caution, one employee was tested for COVID due to a pesky and persistent head cold. Fortunately, this turned out to be just that, a cold. The PMC continues to remain a COVID-free zone, all COVID related regulations are being observed, and operations continue to move forward.
- **CompuPlants Is Up and Running** – The new nursery sales and inventory software the PMC purchased last month has been setup and is running. It was used to compile the aforementioned availability. There is still more to learn about it but Jess is catching on quickly and doing a great job. So far it seems like everything we wanted but the real test will be during the harvest and shipping season.
- **Live Stakes** – An important part of the PMC's business are live stakes. They are the 3 to 6' long unrooted Willow, Cottonwood and Red Osier Dogwood cuttings we offer. They constitute almost a third of PMC sales. Almost all of them were sold last year. The cutting blocks are looking bigger and better than ever before so it should be less likely that we will sell of anything too early in the year. The first photo shows Hooker Willow on the left and Pacific Willow on the right, both of which are growing strong and healthy.



- **Life Goes On** – In spite of the amount of attention that is being focused on immediate concerns such as the pandemic, one cannot forget about preparing for future years. The photo to the right shows the start of the barley mowing for the year. The barley is grown to provide green manure for fields that will be planted over the coming months. It has been taking up plant available nutrients from earlier applications of chicken manure. It is mowed to prevent it from going to seed and provide needed organic matter and nutrients to the soil. Later in the summer, after more green is produced, it will be disked down and tilled into the soil. This practice almost eliminates the need for commercial fertilizer. Plants grown in these fields will be available in 2022 and 2023.

More from the WACD Executive Office

- **Is WACD moving?** - A move of WACD's Olympia office may indeed be in the works. We reached the end of our lease and the property management company proposed substantially higher rates. When we couldn't budge them from that position, we began looking for alternative locations...and we found one. We submitted our lease application this week and should know soon if we are an acceptable tenant. The best news is that we'll save a little bit of money because the lease amount is less than what we were paying.
- **Next regular WACD Board meeting September 15th** - Topics planned for the September Board meeting include: formally adopting the first three elements of the strategic plan (mission, vision, priorities) and approving the final three elements (goals, actions, scorecard) to go to members and partners for comment; and reviewing financial reserves and related policies.

Links for members and partners: what we are reading!

Some news sources may be behind paywalls. Please let us know if an item is of interest but not available to you.

Jobs

- [Cascadia CD seeking Program Director](#)
- [Pend Oreille Conservation District seeking district manager](#)

Natural resources, agriculture

- [Do you need masks for your agriculture employees so they can safely work under Washington State COVID-19 regulations?](#) (free masks offered by Washington Farm Bureau)
- [He's considered an 'essential' worker. What he feels, though, is underpaid and at risk.](#)
- [Full water supply forecast for Yakima irrigators](#)
- [Listen to President-Election Michael Crowder speak about his appointment to EPA's Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee in an interview on 1010 KSIR \(Colorado\)](#)
- [Wheat farmers hope to be included in USDA's COVID-19 aid](#)
- [How Absentee Landlords Keep Farmers From Protecting Water And Soil](#)
- [Grant County health officials waiting for test results to determine if other water areas in Moses Lake contain toxic blue-green algae](#)
- [Topping Soil With Rock Dust Could Suck Billions of Tons of CO2 From the Air and Increase Crop Nutrients – Study](#) which links to [Potential for large-scale CO2 removal via enhanced rock weathering with croplands](#)
- [Farm to fork: the open database that lets people buy food direct from source](#) which references a British program [CONNECTING WITH FARMERS FOR FOOD](#)
- [Canola, mustard 'intercropped' with peas \(making a case for no-till\)](#)
- [Wildflower corridor scheme launched to boost insect numbers in England](#)
- [New study shows rural westerners strongly support environmental protections](#)
- [Microsoft Courts New Customers on the Farm: Cows](#)
- [Could Paying Farmers to Store Carbon Help the Climate and Save Farms?](#)
- [USDA Leader Says Farmers Can Expect CFAP Round Two Next Month](#)

Diversity / equity / inclusion

- [Young farmers and farmers of color have been shut out of federal assistance during the pandemic](#)
- [OneAmerica sues Yakima County, saying voting system disenfranchises Latinos](#)
- [How to explain systemic racism to non-liberals like me](#)
- [How U.S. systemic racism plays out in Black lives](#)
- [An Incomplete Guide to Inclusive Language for Startups and Tech](#)
- [A Guide to Inclusive Language in the Workplace](#)

Pandemic news

- [Inslee extends pause on counties advancing phases to July 28](#)
- [Delays in receiving COVID test results create challenges for statewide contact tracing](#)
- [Where U.S. coronavirus cases are on the rise](#)
- [Tracking the novel coronavirus in the U.S.](#)

State government news

- [Why there won't be a special session this summer – or at all](#)
- [Federal judge in Spokane again upholds Inslee COVID-19 emergency order](#)

Partners and Associations (suggestions welcome)

- [National Association of Conservation Districts \(NACD\)](#)
- [NACD Pacific Region page](#)
- [National Conservation District Employees Association](#)
- [National Association of State Conservation Agencies](#)
- [Washington Association of District Employees](#)
- [Washington Association of Land Trusts](#)
- [Washington State Conservation Commission](#)

Publications

- [District directory published by WACD](#)
- [NACD publications - find them here](#)

Other

- [Oregon Farm Bureau Rural Road Safety video](#)

How to See Comet NEOWISE This Weekend (It's Not Coming Around Again for 6,800 Years!)

Observers in the Northern Hemisphere are hoping to catch a glimpse of Comet NEOWISE as it zips through the inner solar system before it speeds away into the depths of space. Discovered on March 27, 2020 by NASA's Near-Earth Object Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer (NEOWISE) mission, Comet NEOWISE is putting on a dazzling display for skywatchers before it disappears, not to be seen again for another 6,800 years.

- [How to See Comet NEOWISE](#)
- [How to view one of the brightest comets this century before it's gone for seven millennia](#)

WACD hears you and is here for you!



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