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Five Things to Know

July 30, 2020

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1: SCC special meeting on budget reduction for 21-23 biennium

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) held a webinar for conservation districts on July 30th to discuss potential ways for the Commission to achieve a 15% reduction in operation budget for the 2021-2023 biennium. The webinar was recorded; watch your Commission news feed for the link to view it.

The Commission board will hold a special meeting on Wednesday August 12, 2020 to discuss options about this budget reduction. All members of the public are welcome to attend and to participate online. [You must register](#) to receive a confirmation email with the phone number and web link to use on the day of the meeting. Find the [meeting notice here](#) (PDF document).

2: Two public hearings on proposed election rule changes

The Washington State Conservation Commission will hold two public hearings on August 6th and August 11th to receive public comment on proposed changes to conservation district election rules. In late May, the Conservation Commission posted [proposed changes to conservation district elections](#). Public comments can also be submitted [here](#).

3: Weeding and irrigating underway at the PMC

A six-person weeding crew has been at it all summer at the WACD Plant Materials Center it shows. The weeding crew should finish their last pass in the next day or two and then will be laid off until the weeds return. In this warm weather, the sandy soil at the PMC can quickly dry out below the permanent wilting point for some species, so irrigation is well underway. Irrigation will start to taper off in August to induce drought stress to help plants start to go into dormancy.

4: Technology survey of conservation districts

On Monday, WACD sent a brief survey to conservation district chairs and managers asking for their opinions and potential attendance as we are mid-stream in planning this years' virtual annual conference. The week after Thanksgiving will be here before we know it and we want to ensure our transition to a digital experience matches the Association's expectations and preferences. Thank you to those who already responded. We encourage the remaining districts to respond before next

Friday August 7th.

5: Your vote counts so be counted!

Next Tuesday, August 4th is the 2020 primary election to determine the top two candidates for the general election. Ballots must be post-marked by that date or returned to a voting center or drop site before 8:00 PM on Election Day to count in this year's primary election. 480 candidates are running in 847 elections across Washington, plus there are 45 local ballot measures. Find more information on the [Secretary of State's primary election page](#) or from your county auditor's web page on elections.

Dues payments to WACD are arriving: thank you!

As of July 30th, 20 of 45 conservation districts (44%) have paid their WACD dues assessment of \$3,889.89 per district. We know these are tough times for many of our conservation district members so we are deeply grateful for your continued support.

It takes many people working on your behalf to build and maintain the foundation for success that all conservation districts enjoy. The most obvious outcome of the hard work of those people is the funding your conservation district receives from state and federal sources. That is the result of advocacy: tireless, constant, day-to-day advocacy that happens throughout the year and across the decades.

Although dollars are easier to measure than other metrics like productivity, effectiveness, and people retention, we commonly measure dollars because funding is a foundation piece for conservation district success.

Communication and information are also key to success in our conservation district world. More specific examples of direct services to districts include technical reports, a directory, meetings and webinars, and an annual meeting.

And intervention and representation play important roles. Over the years we have received many calls from district people seeking help. Every year we meet with county commissioners, agency directors, and legislators and their staff. We testify in support of legislation and budget asks and rates-and-charges proposals that are important to our members.

An emerging opportunity for all of us who support conservation districts is in leadership development. We see many newer, younger board members now than ever. It's important to help them get off on the right foot and to be there for them as they continue to grow to become better leaders.

So while it is easiest to measure the dollars your district receives because of the efforts of so many, those dollars are not the only things that help your district, and your people, succeed. It's important to support those who support you.

How to support NACD

The mission of the [National Association of Conservation Districts](#) is to promote responsible management and conservation of natural resources on all lands by representing locally-led conservation districts and their associations through grassroots advocacy, education, and partnerships.

Just as WACD is your statewide conservation district voice in Washington State, NACD is your national voice. Support NACD in three ways: through your conservation district's annual dues to NACD, by individuals becoming a [Friend of NACD](#), and through [donations](#).

How to support WCS

The [Washington Conservation Society](#) is a charitable 501(c)(3) organization formed to support conservation activities and natural resource education programs in Washington State. The WCS supports districts by acting as a pass-through entity for grants. The [Leaving a Legacy book](#) is published annually to memorialize late conservationists who have made a notable impact on the natural resources in Washington State.

[Become a member, donate](#), or support WCS at no extra cost by purchasing goods through [Amazon Smile](#).

More from the WACD Plant Materials Center

- COVID-19 update** – The WACD PMC continues to follow COVID-19 workplace regulations which include providing masks, hand wash stations with water in the field, personal distancing, frequently cleaning surfaces, and promoting sanitation at all times. The Farm Bureau notified us of two new regulations. One concerns testing: if an employee has a temperature above 100.4 degrees they are required to be tested, and anyone who was exposed to that person are also required to be tested. Fortunately no one has had a fever. If someone does then the Skagit Department of Health will be contacted and testing will be done as required. The other new regulation concerns isolation: a person who has had COVID-19 no longer needs a negative test to return to work. Instead, the person needs to remain in isolation for 10 days. They also should not return until it has been at least 24 hours without a fever and without taking fever-reducing medications. No one at the PMC has had COVID-19 so isolation has not been an issue so far.
- Weeding success** – A six-person weeding crew has been at it all summer and it shows. There are very few weeds at present. The weeding crew should finish their last pass in the next day or two and then will be laid off until the weeds return. And they will return! But for the time being the PMC is in good shape from a weed competition perspective. Weeding crews in the early days were as much as 20 people. Today is so much better than that. The crew has done a great job taking on a tough task and should be commended. Thank you to the entire weeding crew!
- Irrigation is underway** – The labor cost to run an irrigation set is about \$30.00. The price of electricity to run an irrigation pump for one set is around \$6.00. And a certified water right is priceless. The PMC has a certified water right that allows it to draw ground water from three wells on the property. Each well has a 40 HP pump that is rated at 500 gallons per minute. They can be run individually or together. When all three pumps are used together they can irrigate approximately 23 acres through a 3" x 30' hand line with an impact sprinkler. The PMC irrigates crops sporadically in May and June, but this has become a critical

activity later in July. The sandy soil here can quickly dry below the permanent wilting point of some species in this warm weather. Irrigation will start to taper off in August to induce drought stress which can help the plants start to go into dormancy.





- **Seed collection** – Years ago the PMC started developing a seed block. Several plants from a variety of species that the PMC grows have been planted over time to produce seeds that are used in propagation. It takes years before they produce a significant quantity of seeds but that time has arrived with this year providing bumper crops. The plants produce berries, hips, capsules, or achenes which are collected and processed to extract the seeds. It has taken an unprecedented commitment of time and labor as a result but it cuts the cost of seeds purchased from commercial collectors, better insures that there will be an adequate supply of seeds, and the plants can be cared for during droughts that might affect seed production in the wild. The photo of the Red Flowering Currant seeds shows a tray with four pounds of seed with a total retail value of \$3,200. The PMC added more plants to the seed block this year that were part of a study to investigate if it is possible to hold bare root seedlings in gravel beds and out-plant them in summer. Most of the plants that were planted are surviving and growing which will result in a significant increase in the size and diversity of the seed block.
- **Life goes on** – Most of this update has focused on propagating and growing plants. They will not become conservation plants until practitioners utilize them in conservation practices and that is important. The PMC is fortunate to have developed relationships with a wide array of people, groups, and organizations which together make up the region's conservation community. We look forward to doing what we can to help conservationists continue their good work. Thank you!

More from the WACD Executive Office

- **Lease is being signed for new office space in Olympia** – As we reported last week, WACD's Olympia-based operation is moving in August to [1219 11th Avenue SE](#) where we will occupy two offices of 132-square-feet each. Almost all services are bundled with the lease so WACD's cost will be less than our total cost at the old location.
- **Annual conference details to be published in September** – WACD staff expect to publish the WACD annual conference registration packet and schedule on or before Friday, September 11th. The three working groups (Content, Finance, and Technology) of the Conference Planning Team are working on the building blocks for a successful conference.
- **Next regular WACD Board meeting September 15th** – We are beginning to build the draft agenda for WACD's September Board of Directors meeting (also called the Officers and

Directors meeting or the O&D meeting). WACD's strategic plan work will be discussed. We will also review financial reserves and related policies.

Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

You may not realize that your conservation work depends on conversations. We think of conservation as implementing and doing, but before we can do, we must talk.

Think about about almost any major decision you have made in your life. Odds are that before we made that decision, you talked about it with someone. An invention, a choice, a new way of doing things, a decision - all of these things usually start with a conversation.

Our conservation delivery system is no different.

We talk about best practices and ways to improve them. We discuss programs and services and ways we can do better. Over kitchen tables and telephones and email and now video conferencing, we visit with clients to build trust-based relationships before they will allow us onto their land to help them implement important conservation practices.

It starts with a conversation. Sometimes that conversation is with someone who sees things very differently than you do. We've learned to listen to and respect the wishes of landowners and to collaborate with them on solutions that will work in their unique situations.

How did you choose your higher level schooling or your career? How did you get that special someone to go on a first date? How did you propose a long-term commitment to your partner? How did you find and get your current job?

Important, sometimes life-changing things begin when we have authentic, sincere conversations. The conservation-conversation duality is a crucial part of who we are and how we do business.

Tom Salzer, Executive Director

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NACD produces plethora of products

Maybe you are a newer conservation district supervisor or staff member, or maybe you've just never subscribed to the resources provided by the National Association of Conservation Districts. We want to be sure you know that these resources are available to you.

Descriptions of the several NACD publications and information on how to subscribe is [here](#). In addition to information resources, NACD also has an online store. [Find it here](#).

- **eResource** – eResource is an electronic collection of weekly news briefs sent to our members and partners every Tuesday. You can read eResource online or subscribe to receive

eResource by clicking [here](#). Archived "Did You Know?" content can be found on the [eResource page](#).

- **The Resource** – NACD's quarterly print and electronic publication – The Resource – provides in-depth coverage of the association's recent activities and features columns from NACD's CEO, president, and closest partners. [Click here](#) to view the most recent issue and subscription information.
- **Forestry Notes** – Forestry Notes is an electronic, monthly publication funded through a cooperative agreement between NACD and the U.S. Forest Service. Forestry Notes highlights forestry issues and district-led forestry projects of particular importance to our members. Forestry Notes Special Reports can be accessed [here](#).
- **Conservation Clips** – Conservation Clips are a weekly round-up of the latest conservation news affecting our members and partners. Clips are sent to subscribers electronically every Friday morning. To find an archived issue of Conservation Clips or to subscribe to receive this service, [click here](#).
- **Daily Roundup** – NACD's Daily Roundup is a collection of conservation news articles relevant to our members and partners. Roundup is distributed every Mon.-Thurs. You can subscribe to this daily publication [here](#).

Links to what we are reading!

Links to information indicate interesting items we are reading. Inclusion of these links in this newsletter do not, however, imply WACD support or endorsement of particular positions. Some news sources may be behind paywalls.

Jobs

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

Training, webinars

- NACD – [NACD Forestry RPG 2020 Webinar Series](#)

Alerts

- New proclamation by Governor – [STATE/FEDERAL PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR AMENDING PROCLAMATIONS 20-05 AND 20-46, et seq. 20-46.2 High-Risk Employees – Workers' Rights](#) (PDF) **which leads to** [Proclamation 20-46.2, "High-Risk Employees – Workers' Rights"](#) (PDF) **which leads to** [People with Certain Medical Conditions](#)
- The Olympian – [With wildfire danger increasing, an outdoor burn ban has been issued in Washington state](#)
- The Takeout – [Mysterious packets of seeds arriving on people's doorsteps—but the likely cause isn't that mysterious](#) (provides a theory of why you may have received seeds from China: it may be about generating verified product reviews on Amazon)

Natural resources, agriculture

- Yakima Herald – [New bill crucial for Central Washington's conservation efforts](#)
- Northwest Public Broadcasting – [Northwest Clean-Energy Advocates Eye Pumped Hydro To Fill Gaps, With Tribes Noting Concerns](#)
- The Columbian – [Sending surplus crops to food banks helping Washington farmers, hungry families](#)
- Capital Press – [Walla Walla sweet onion harvest passes halfway mark](#)
- Northwest Treaty Tribes – [WEAVER CREEK RELOCATION SUPPORTS SALMON HABITAT IN SKOKOMISH VALLEY](#)
- The Optimist Daily – [Future of food: The world's biggest rooftop urban farm is now bearing fruit](#)
- Medical Xpress – [Study finds wild blueberry extracts influence blood vessel formation](#)
- Bloomberg – [BlackRock Says Investors Underestimate Risk of Water Scarcity](#)

Diversity / equity / inclusion

- CNN – [Your big questions about race, answered](#)
- The Spokesman-Review – [Inland Northwest lawmakers push for House vote on bills to protect Native women](#)
- West Multnomah SWCD – [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#)

Pandemic news

- Seattle Times – [Yakama Nation says at least 6% of tribal members have had COVID-19](#)
- State of Washington – [WHEN AM I REQUIRED TO WEAR A FACE MASK OR CLOTH FACE COVERING?](#)
- American Hospital Association – [Rural health system faces financial cliff due to COVID-19](#)

Other

- The News Tribune – [You'll be quake smarter with this free booklet if the Big One hits Washington](#)
- KXLY – [Buffaloes escape from Glenrose farm, found roaming near Underhill Park](#)
- Links on "thoughtful leadership" – [Kevin Costner: Thoughtful Leadership Does Not Involve Ego and 5 Ways to Become a More Thoughtful Leader and Moving From Thought Leadership to Thoughtful Leadership and 6 Tips to Become a Thoughtful Leader](#)

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](#)
- [How to subscribe to Conservation Commission news \(PDF file\)](#)
- [NACD publications - find them here](#)

On a lighter note...

- Good News Network – [93-Year-old Ex-Chopper Rider Has New Lease on Life After Getting Mobility Scooter That Looks Like A Harley](#) – Perhaps this gives some of us something a bit more fun to look forward to!
- Psychology Today – [Why We Don't Hear Each Other](#) – Insightful: *"...each person speaks against the background of his or her personal history, experiences, impressions, beliefs, values, and more" and "So much disagreement, especially in politics, is just people talking past each other instead of with each other" and "...try to understand each other, where each other is coming from, and what each other really means. And remember that the best way to improve your communication is to do more of it."*
- KREM 2 News – [Spokane staple says goodbye: The White Elephant officially closes](#) – So many memories of shopping at the White Elephant in Spokane! Entering the store, you were instantly overwhelmed by the floor-to-ceiling fullness of the store. It was hard to move through the store because there was so much to look at as you navigated the narrow aisles, seeking what you came for. The store's contents filled your eyes and swamped your senses!

WACD hears you and is here for you!



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