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# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

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## Five Things to Know

August 20, 2020

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### 1: All six area association meeting dates are set

All area associations have set the dates for their annual meetings (the host conservation district for each meeting is shown in parentheses):

- **October 7:** Northwest Area Association of Conservation Districts resolutions work session (Whatcom CD)
- **October 13:** North-Central Area Association of Conservation Districts (Grant CD)
- **October 15:** Southwest Area Association of Conservation Districts (Cowlitz CD)
- **October 20:** Northeast Area Association of Conservation Districts (Stevens County CD)
- **October 21:** Northwest Area Association of Conservation Districts (Whatcom CD)
- **October 28:** Southeast Area Association of Conservation Districts (Pine Creek CD)
- **October 29:** South-Central Area Association of Conservation Districts (North Yakima CD)

This information will also be published on the WACD website.

### 2: Several free training webinars available

Three upcoming opportunities for free training on racism, bias, and a respectful workplace are offered by [Enduris](#). A registration link is provided for each event. After Enduris approves your registration you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the training.

- **August 27: Racism in America** - Presented by Janice Corbin - 9:00 am to 10:00 am. Attendees will explore the meaning behind: unconscious and implicit bias, social justice, and white privilege; and where to go from here in addressing racism in your workplace. Register at: <https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/6087384963102085122>
- **September 16: The Basics of Bias** - Presented by Jim Webber - 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. This class covers the different types of bias and stereotypes, including how they form and how they impact the workplace. We also discuss tips for reducing bias and for dealing with bias-related conflict. Register at: <https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/8323184683447143937>
- **October 14: The Respectful Workplace** - Presented by Jim Webber - 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. This class covers general diversity issues, including how bias and a lack of respect in the workplace can adversely affect the work environment. The class addresses conflict that may

stem from biases, how to recognize biases, and how diversity issues can affect the workplace. Register at: <https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/9029143716246841857>

### 3: WACD Plant Materials Center plant availability remains good

I visited the WACD PMC this week and can confirm that plants in the ground are looking incredibly good. PMC Nursery Manager Jim Brown said, *"This may be the best looking crop of plants we've ever had!"* Those plants will be available for shipment in the next one to three years.

Meanwhile, sales volume as measured by customers is normal but dollar volume is down. Some large orders haven't come in as soon as they usually do. That is good news for our members! If you haven't yet ordered your conservation-grade native plants from the PMC, now is the time to reserve those plants while availability is still good.

If your conservation district sells plants to homeowners, this is also a great time to boost your order because COVID-19 has resulted in much stronger demand for landscaping. Nursery plants are in high demand. Why not make native plants available for landscaping? Native plants provide habitat and natural beauty that fit so well into our Pacific Northwest character.

### 4: Share and learn through Slack topic channels!

Share your knowledge to help your peers and learn something new by participating in the many topical channels available in the Washington Conservation Society Slack account. We cover dairy planning, farm planning, forestry, plant sales, riparian restoration, stormwater practices, information technology, district operations, outreach and education, and more. And if you don't see a channel you need, bring it up in the suggestion box! You have to join a channel to participate but [it's easy to do](#). Slack is a useful supplement to email communications, making it easier to work in small groups on specific topics. Request your Slack account at <https://bit.ly/waslack>.

### 5: Thank you to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Department

WACD tried something new this week by hosting a webinar that featured a presentation by two folks with the Washington Fish and Wildlife Department. Carrie McCausland and Jeff Davis discussed WDFW's draft 25-year strategic plan and then had a relaxed, open conversation with conservation district folks. We've heard good feedback from that event so stay tuned for future events like this. You can review [WDFW's draft 25-year strategic plan](#) is online and their [strategic planning team](#) will gladly take your questions and feedback.

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## Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

Recently, the idea that "we need to stay in our lane" has bubbled up in several conversations with conservation district folks about diversity, equity, and inclusion. This week I took some time to reflect more deeply about social equity vs. focusing only on natural resource issues.

The Australian [National Academy of Public Administration](#) defines social equity as: *"The fair, just and equitable management of all institutions serving the public directly or by contract; and the fair and equitable distribution of public services, and implementation of public policy; and the commitment*

*to promote fairness, justice and equity in the formation of public policy."*

The key phrase in that definition that relates to conservation district work is "*...the fair and equitable distribution of public services, and implementation of public policy...*"

Fair and equitable means we have to know who is in our conservation district and I wonder: do we really know that? For example, what are the demographics of the area served? Are people from those demographics reflected in the board of supervisors and staff? If not, who is missing and does that group have natural resource concerns we're not aware of? Would it be helpful to have someone from that part of the community serving on the board to help address those natural resource concerns? Are there certain demographics that are not socially connected to the district's communication channels? Are there other ways to communicate with those folks about the technical or financial assistance opportunities the district can provide?

Or let me start out much simpler and clearer: are there constituents in your conservation district who you don't know and who don't know you? As useful starting point might be to look at the very high-level information for your county in the [Washington State Data Book](#). It's a much easier view of the demographics in your county compared to diving headfirst into reams of census data!

Natural resource issues can't be separated from people, at least not in our line of work. People (as individuals, families, businesses, and entire communities) depend upon natural resources. Plants and animals also depend upon the quality of natural resources to thrive. Fair and equitable conservation district work is about the connection between natural resource needs and those who use those resources. They are inextricably linked.

The lane I see for conservation districts is more fundamental than trying to address all of society's ills. The lane we occupy is narrower and is bounded by the aforementioned connection between natural resource needs and how we use those natural resources. A relatively simple step forward may be to pause for a moment to look in the mirror and ask ourselves: do we know who our constituents are, do they know us, and if not, how do we better connect with them so that we can understand their natural resource concerns?

(By the way, as was pointed out this week in a thread in Slack, often the agencies we work with don't really know what conservation districts are or what they do. Perhaps we should be thinking in all dimensions as we examine our relationships and the gaps in understanding that may exist!)

From my own life experience I know that while this sounds easy it is often rather difficult. We are usually most comfortable talking with people who are most like us. It's harder to talk with individuals and groups who spring from different peoples and places or with those who don't necessarily share our exact belief in locally led, voluntary conservation. However, it's exactly these more challenging conversations that allow us to learn what others are concerned about and how we might have a role in assisting them. Such conversations can expand our constituency and may sometimes lead to larger opportunities in the form of new projects or partnerships.

Improving how we include people in conservation programs and services is undoubtedly going to become a stronger focus for legislators. Please do keep this in mind. It has already surfaced in the context of special district elections. The issue of being inclusive lives in the hearts and minds of elected folks who will have to make some very difficult decisions next year. Anything you do in your

conservation district to reach more people will be helpful, not only in your own district planning but also as we engage this year and next with legislators.

For those who want to take a much deeper dive on social equity and local government, you might enjoy reading [Local Governments, Social Equity, and Sustainable Communities](#) from the [International City/County Management Association](#). I found it to be a good, in-depth introduction.

Tom Salzer, Executive Director

[exec@wadistricts.org](mailto:exec@wadistricts.org)

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## More from the WACD Plant Materials Center

The end of summer is closer than the beginning as is the growing season. In the past we have encouraged customers to visit now through fall to see what the plants look like full grown. Of course, in-person visits are not recommended right now due to COVID-19. Therefore, this week's WACD PMC update consists of several photos that [show how the stock is looking](#). The PMC will also provide photos of specific plants upon request. As usual, please [contact the PMC with your questions](#). PMC staff are happy to field your requests and concerns.



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## Shop AmazonSmile 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](#). AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

Shop AmazonSmile for WCS!

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## More from the WACD Executive Office

**Alan Stromberger obituary** - An [obituary has been published](#) and it gives a good overview of the life and accomplishments of Mr. Stromberger. One way to memorialize his lifetime of work is to contribute to the [Lincoln County Conservation District](#).

**Contributions to support conservation district work** - The call for contributions to the Lincoln County Conservation District in Alan Stromberger's obituary brings to mind the fact that any conservation district can accept donations. Talk to your WSCC Regional Manager about this if you haven't heard this before. Consider, too, that there are a lot of people in our farming and forestry communities that love their land and have no heirs willing to carry on their legacy. Sometimes those folks would love to know that the land in which they have invested so much of themselves will remain in production. The work they are doing now on their land will benefit the land for many years to come. If you have a good relationship with a cooperator, don't be afraid to ask if they have particular wishes for their land for future generations. Sometimes this opens conversations about additional conservation work they want to do now. Sometimes it brings to mind what they can do to protect their legacy. If your cooperator wishes to consider a donation or bequest, in addition to your local conservation district as a recipient, you might also suggest the Washington Conservation Society as a recipient or put them in touch with a local land trust. This is one more way each of us can help keep our best farms and forests intact.

**In case you missed it: WACD's Olympia office is moving** - [Ryan](#) and [Tom](#) loaded a U-Haul this week to move some excess furniture to the WACD Plant Materials Center where it will be used or stored. Next week, a local moving company will haul the rest of WACD's furniture and boxes to our new office at [1219 11th Avenue SE](#). We will keep you updated as we settle into place!



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## Links to what we are reading



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

## Jobs

- [Livestock Conservation Planner, Clark Conservation District](#)
- [Job: Riparian Habitat Stewardship Coordinator, King Conservation District \(Renton, WA\)](#)
- [San Mateo Resource Conservation District Seeks Forest Health and Fire Resiliency Project Manager](#)
- [Stevens CD seeking Natural Resource Technician](#)

## Conservation districts

- See [Washington Conservation Districts](#) on Flipboard for some recent news clippings that mention conservation districts.

## Environment & Natural Resources

- Fire is increasingly in the news:
  - [Gov. Inslee declares state of emergency over Washington wildfires](#) - KING5 News
  - [Pacific Northwest entering peak fire season now](#) - KGW8 News
  - [Hot, dry weather a factor in Washington wildfire season](#) - KING5 News
  - [Hundreds have been evacuated after wildfires destroy more than 90,000 acres across 3 states](#) - CNN
  - [Two die fighting California lightning fires, tens of thousands flee](#) - Reuters
  - [About 11,000 lightning bolts strike California, igniting hundreds of fires in a state facing multiple crises](#) - CNN
  - [Oregon wildfires burn throughout state, from Columbia River Gorge to California border](#) - The Columbian
  - [Wildfires Are Picking Up In Northwest. So Is Possibility Of Smoke Inundating The Region](#) - Northwest Public Broadcasting
- Fire information sources:
  - [Northwest Fire Locations](#) - Northwest Interagency Communication Center
  - [NWCC Morning Brief](#) - Northwest Interagency Communication Center
  - [Current Fire Information](#) - Northwest Fire Science Consortium
- Wolves:
  - [WDFW kills last two wolves in Wedge pack territory](#) - The Spokesman-Review
  - [State Wildlife Agency Kills Final Two Wolves In Northeastern Washington Wedge Pack](#) - Northwest Public Broadcasting
  - [WDFW eliminates Wedge wolf pack](#) - Capital Press
- [Storing carbon in the prairie grass - Plans would pay landowners to keep the ecosystem in a natural state to fight climate change.](#) - Washington Post

## Agriculture

- [USDA to give out 8 million RFID ear tags](#) - Capital Press
- [FSA lowers reimbursements for organic certification](#) - Capital Press
- Governor's Proclamation on [Food Production Workers Paid Leave](#) (PDF)

## Diversity / Equity / Inclusion

- [Just conservation is where environmental issues and social justice commingle](#) - Science Daily, and the more complete article: [Just conservation: What is it and should we pursue it?](#) - Science Direct

## Washington State government

- [Getting There: As WSDOT warns of 'crisis,' hard decisions lie ahead about new construction, preservation](#) - The Spokesman-Review

## Pandemic

- [COVID-19 is a deadly disease that has long-term complications, Washington state says](#) - The Olympian
- [Washington state rolls out new COVID-19 testing rules for agricultural workers](#) - Seattle Times
- [Washington case counts on the decline; Inslee issues more protections for agricultural workers](#) - Spokesman-Review
- [U.S. recovery grinds along as coronavirus case growth eases](#) - Reuters
- [Here's Some Hope: People Have Lasting Immunity To COVID-19, Even After Mild Cases](#) - Good News Network
- [COVID-19 fatality rates fall as treatments improve](#) - The Hill
- ['None of us have lived through what we are going through right now': COVID-19 causing rise in mental health problems](#) - KXLY

## Management and Leadership

- In the realm of circles of concern, influence, and control:
  - [Focus on Your Circle of Influence](#) - Franklin Covey
  - [You have more power than you think. Discover your Circle of Influence and Control.](#) - Then Somehow blog
  - [What Can I do? The Circles of Concern and Influence](#) - Abraham Law

## Partners and Publications

### 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 Conservation Society](#) and [AmazonSmile for WCS](#)
- [Washington State Conservation Commission](#)

## Publications

- [District directory published by WACD](#)
- [How to subscribe to Conservation Commission news \(PDF file\)](#)
- [NACD publications - find them here](#)
- [Washington State Data Book](#) - Office of Financial Management - *"The Washington State Data Book presents, in one reference document, a diversity of information on Washington, its people, economy, and government. The information is obtained from state and federal agencies as well as private business."*

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## WACD hears you and is here for you!

We welcome your feedback



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711 Capitol Way South, Suite 707, Olympia, WA 98501