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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know

September 3, 2020

*"Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. Don't resist them—that only creates sorrow.
Let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward"—Lao Tzu*

1: Thank you for your dues payment!

As of this morning, WACD had received dues payments from 35 of 45 conservation districts. Your support for WACD's work to advocate for conservation districts is crucial, especially as we face a tremendously challenging economic situation in Washington State. We thank you and look forward to continuing to provide excellent service to our members.

2: WACD Board meeting agenda is available

The agenda for the September 15th meeting of the WACD Board of Directors is now [available on the WACD website](#). The Board will hold a [work session on September 8th](#) to allow more time to review some topics. No action will be taken at the work session.

3: WACD Plant Materials Center sales still down but improved

Measured in dollars, PMC sales continue to be lower than last year. As of September 2nd, the PMC has booked \$480,430 in sales, as compared to sales totaling \$737,077 on September 16, 2019. Revenue from sales is 35% below last year at this time. However, the August 11th sales report showed a wider gap with sales volume at 40% below the year before so it appears that the gap is closing.

Measured as total number of orders, we actually have more orders compared to last year at this time. The key difference is that on average, the orders are smaller this year. It seems that some of our customers who typically place larger orders are holding back, perhaps waiting to see if COVID will continue to be a significant factor. If COVID becomes less of an issue in fall and winter, additional sales will likely allow us to catch up on dollar volume.

4: Zoom training before area and annual meetings

We think that it's important for every person who will be attending virtual meetings to be comfortable using video conferencing software. To that end, we have established two time slots dedicated to helping you test your system. Tom Salzer will be available from 3 pm to 4:30 pm on Mondays. Ryan Baye will be available from 9:30 am to 11 am on Fridays. We'll maintain this schedule through September and into October. If you need to practice at a different time, please

[contact us](#). We will both be using the same link for these practice sessions:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2466479813>

5: Best wishes for a great Labor Day weekend

This year, [Labor Day is Monday, September 7th](#). What is it about? [From the US Department of Labor](#): *"Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country."*

Seems like a great opportunity to express your appreciation for the great work of conservation district staff who work in concert with boards of supervisors to advance conservation programs and put conservation on the ground. Imagine how much less effective we would be without conservation district professionals working locally across Washington State! Thank you!

Help us test a new service and support system

We are testing [Freshdesk](#) as a tool to help us better coordinate our member support. It's easy to help us test: just send a note to us at support@wadistricts.freshdesk.com. Alternatively, visit the portal at <https://wadistricts.freshdesk.com/> and click *New Support Ticket*.

A help desk system like this sounds a bit "over the top" for a small organization like WACD. However, physical separation makes customer service much more difficult. WACD's operations are not centralized in a single office so coordinating issues and responses can become challenging.

As a service organization for our members, we are committed to excellence. With 45 very unique conservation districts in Washington State containing a multitude of board supervisors and district employees, coordinating our service can become confusing. A cloud-based service and support system may help us save time and assure that your issue receives timely attention.

Anyway, that's the plan! We appreciate your help!

Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

I've been thinking about service to others and service to ourselves. Service to others is what we do in our conservation district world. To be good at it often means we have to strive to be more selfless. That can be a hard thing to do, but sometimes we give too much and we harm ourselves in the process.

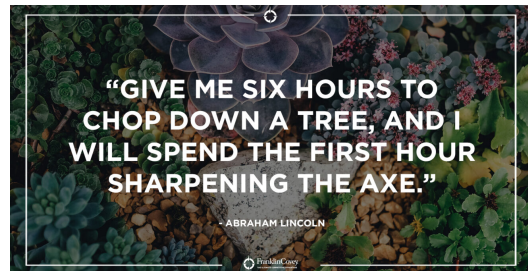
That leads me to speak about taking good care of ourselves. We can't be of service if we don't remain physically and emotionally and socially well. I know from personal experience how easy it is to fall into this trap. The new conservation district facility at my prior district was a seven-year effort that escalated to the point of unhealthy obsession in the last year, consuming my days, nights, weekends, and even holidays. At the same time, my district had an opportunity to acquire a half-

square-mile of commercial forest, something that was on our list of long-term goals. My staff were already working at maximum capacity so I added the forest acquisition to my plate. By the end of 2019 I was exhausted, both physically and emotionally. Along the way, I also put off some training I really had been looking forward to because there just wasn't enough time.

Sometimes when we strive to be selfless, we give so much that we don't take care of our health. Sometimes we also put off those pesky professional development goals that seem to get in the way of getting things done. But those professional skills are important tools in our tool box and we need to maintain them if we want those skills to work well when we need them.

One of my favorite authors, Dr. Stephen R. Covey, addresses this concept in his [7 Habits of Highly Successful People](#). Habit 7 is [Sharpen the Saw](#): *"Seek continuous improvement and renewal professionally and personally."*

As we enter the long Labor Day weekend, this is a good moment to remind ourselves to pay attention to our own well being, to "sharpen the saw." If we do this, we can continue to achieve the kind of service to people and conservation that makes our investment of self so fulfilling.



Tom Salzer, Executive Director
exec@wadistricts.org

More from the WACD Plant Materials Center...

COVID-19 Update – The PMC continues to adhere to all of the workplace COVID regulations. Skagit County remains in phase 2. All employees remain healthy. Harvest is still three months away but the PMC will need to be ready to bring the crew on in a safe, responsible and legal manner. It is likely that a lot will happen with COVID workplace regulations between now and then. Regardless of how that all shapes up, the PMC will adapt and carry on.

Finances – The financial reports for August (the second month of the fiscal year) are out. There is not substantial revenue to speak of and most expenses are in line with last year. Two variances to look at are Staff Wages and Seasonal Labor. The expense for Staff Wages are up this year. Last year they were \$50,466 and this year they are \$57,031 fiscal year to date. This increase is largely due to filling the Crew Leader position that was vacant last year. There were also some wage increases. Seasonal Labor went down from last year which is surprising since the minimum wage rate increased 12% since this time last year. Seasonal Labor was \$11,145 fiscal year to date compared to \$17,408 last year. One explanation is that all of the work on weed control over the years is paying off as the seed bank of weed seeds in the ground becomes depleted.

Conifer Seed – This is the time of year that the seed and cones of many of our native conifer species start to mature. Cone collections are under way. Conifers do not reliably produce viable seed year after year. Many species of conifers average good cone crops every 7 years. Last year was a bust for most and this year things are looking spotty. It seems to harder and harder to get the species and seed transfer zones that are required. (The photo below is of Noble fir cones.) We will

keep on working the problem.

Life Goes On – The plants and fields at the PMC are looking good! It has been a good growing season. As usual, please [contact the PMC with your questions](#). PMC staff are happy to field your requests and concerns.



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[Become a member, donate](#), or support the Washington Conservation Society at no extra cost to you by purchasing goods through [Amazon Smile](#). Amazon Smile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on Amazon mile, the [Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price](#) of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

Shop AmazonSmile for WCS!

More from the WACD Executive Office...

Area Association meetings – The basic list of dates for fall meetings of area associations is posted on the [Our Area Associations page](#) in the [WACD website](#).

WACD annual awards – [WACD's Annual Awards Program is now available](#). Please nominate an outstanding member of Washington State's conservation community who deserves recognition. Nominations are due to [Lori McLaughlin](#) by October 30th and winners will be announced in

coordination with the WACD annual conference.

Annual conference – A rough schedule containing three days of content is beginning to come into focus. We should have more information on planned content in the next week or so.

It's finally final: WACD Olympia has moved – We are out of the old office and into the [new office](#). Next comes a new phone system. Stay tuned!

Links to what we are reading

Below are links to interesting items we are reading. Disclaimer: inclusion of these links in this newsletter do not imply official WACD support or endorsement of particular positions or information. Some news sources may be behind paywalls.

Jobs

- [Farm Resource Specialist, Pierce Conservation District](#)
- [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](#)

Conservation and conservation districts

- [Conservation districts helping to update CWPPs](#) | NACD
- [Woodland Owners and Conservation Districts: Why Should You Care?](#) | NWOA (Attribution: [National Woodland Owners Association](#), 374 Maple Ave. E., Suite 310, Vienna, VA 22180)

Environment & Natural Resources

- Carbon (and fish) - [Why seagrass meadows are the carbon capture solution we need](#) | The Optimist Daily - *"According to the United Nations Environment Program, seagrass can capture carbon an incredible 35 times faster than rainforests...The overall goal is to plant 1 million seeds while inspiring similar projects in other areas around the country."*
- Fire - [Is increased DNR wildfire funding paying off?](#) - Lens **and** [Smoke from fire 200 miles southwest of Spokane touches horizon](#) | The Spokesman-Review **and** [A fast air attack is vital to fight wildfires; those aircraft are even more important this year](#) | yakimaherald.com **and**
- [Evans Canyon fire spreads into Kittitas County, no homes or property threatened in county as of Wednesday Morning](#) | Daily Record **and** [Fire near Yakima grows to 52,000 acres, threatens 900 homes](#) | King5.com - *"A wildfire burning near Yakima has grown to an estimated 52,000 acres (81 square miles) and residents of about 900 homes are under evacuation orders."*
- Forest - [Perdue has found the right path in National Forests](#) | The Hill
- Invasives - [Two new Asian giant hornets found in Washington state](#) | KOMO **and** [Agriculture officials report two Asian giant hornet sightings, one captured in Whatcom County](#) | Q13 Fox

Agriculture

- [Inslee relaxes COVID-19 restrictions on agritourism](#) | capitalpress.com **and** [Agritourism guidance changed to allow hayrides, animal viewing, more](#) | 1170 KPUG-AM
- Apples - [Team ensures Vancouver's Old Apple Tree lives on](#) | The Columbian - *"Thanks to a team of local experts, Vancouver's beloved Old Apple Tree is moving on to the next chapter of its long, historic life by growing a new tree out of its root system. Scientists also discovered from genetic testing that the apples are unique to anywhere in the world."*
- ['Nourish your soul': Spokane farmers' markets provides buyers, sellers stability during pandemic](#) | The Spokesman-Review
- [China study favorable to cranberries](#) | capitalpress.com
- [Tillamook to donate 10% of September sales to farmland grants](#) | capitalpress.com

Diversity / Equity / Inclusion

- [Dyson's 'Long Time Coming' addresses history of racism in US](#) | AP News - *"One of the country's most prominent scholars on race has a new book out in December. Michael Eric Dyson's ["Long Time Coming: Reckoning with Race in America"](#) will be released Dec. 1, St. Martin's Press announced Tuesday. The book traces the history of racism from slavery to the killing of George Floyd."*
- [Our Window of Opportunity to Tackle Racism](#) | PA TIMES Online

Pandemic

- [Latest Washington state coronavirus and COVID-19 numbers](#) | The Olympian
- [CDC tells state health departments to prepare for potential vaccine as early as November](#) | The Spokesman-Review
- [How will office life be different in a pandemic?](#) | AP News

Management and Leadership

- [Wanna Quit? Don't.](#) | PA TIMES Online - *"It's never been easy to be in the public service, and lately it seems harder than ever. The most divisive political landscape in history? A pandemic? A disconnected and isolated public? All at the same time? Still, those who dedicate their lives to serving their communities toil on. They do so not for the money they earn, or the prestige they gain, but for the difference they make."*
- ["Culture Eats Strategy For Breakfast" - What Does it Mean?](#) | The Alternative Board Blog - *"No matter how detailed and solid your strategy is, if the people executing it don't nurture the appropriate culture, your projects will fail."*
- [Allow Others To Be Smart](#) | FranklinCovey - *"Do you need to be the smartest person in the room? Are you the genius or the genius maker? Are you a Multiplier (someone who uses their intelligence to bring out the best in others) or a Diminisher (the 'smartest person in the room' who shuts everyone else down)?"*
- [How to set powerful intentions](#) | The Optimist Daily - *"...all our life outcomes begin with an intention. Some we stick with and some we change, but how can you set meaningful, productive intentions?"*

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](#)

Resources and Publications

- [District directory published by WACD](#)
- [How to subscribe to Conservation Commission news \(PDF file\)](#)
- [SCC/CD shared photo gallery](#)
- [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."*
- DEI resources for those who are ready to learn more
 - [Center for Diversity & the Environment](#) - Check out their [articles](#) and [videos](#).
 - [Coalition of Communities of Color](#) - See their [research and publications](#) plus a [Tool for Organizational Self Assessment Related to Racial Equity 2014](#)
 - [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) | East Multnomah SWCD (and see their page on [discussion group resources](#) designed to facilitate conversations)
 - [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#) | West Multnomah SWCD
 - [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) | North Cascades Institute
 - [Equity & Inclusion](#) | Pierce CD
 - [Managing Unconscious Bias](#) | Facebook
 - [Training materials \(free\)](#) | Hollaback!

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1219 11th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501