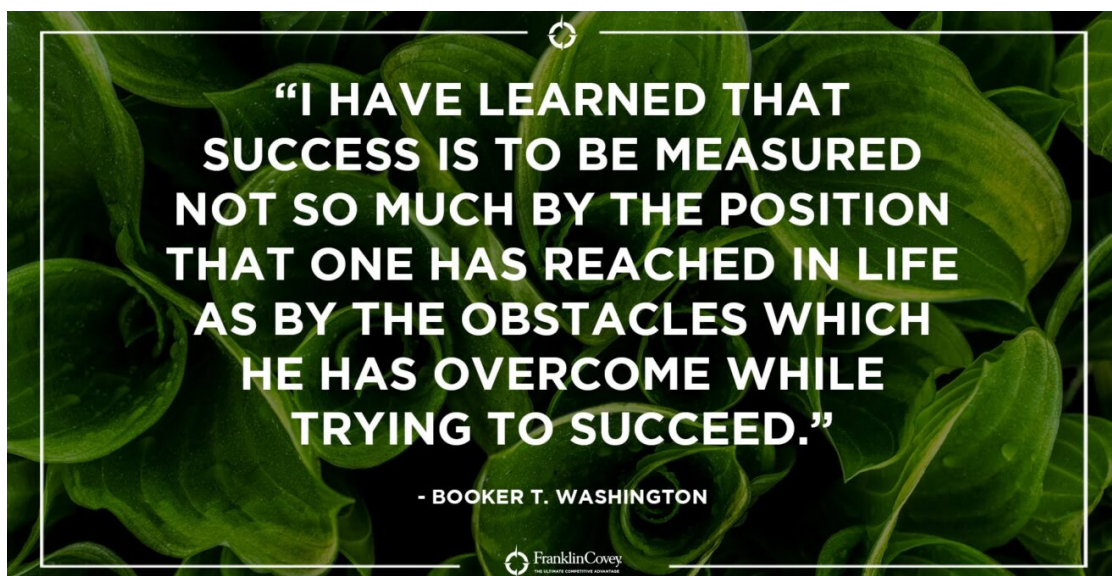


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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know

September 17, 2020



We dedicate this quote to the many people and enterprises that have suffered devastation and difficulty over the past few weeks. Your strength and resiliency are inspiring!

1 – Wildfire assistance from FSA, NRCS, and WSCC

An online event will be held at 9 am on September 22 with the USDA-Farm Service Agency and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. You will get an explanation of all available programs for disaster recovery from fire. The meeting will use Microsoft Teams. [Click here to register.](#)

USDA-NRCS will hold a one-hour online session on September 29 from 10 am to 11 am. You will be able to meet with local NRCS conservationists to discuss NRCS services and programs available for agriculture producers impacted by recent wildfires. Details are available on the [meeting announcement page](#).

The Washington State Conservation Commission also announced [limited funding available](#) for outreach to landowners, site assessments, and data collection on fire impacts/losses.

2 – WACD and WSCC meetings held this week

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts held a [Board of Directors meeting](#) on Tuesday.

The Washington State Conservation Commission [met on Thursday](#). Highlights from both meetings are summarized in this 5 Things newsletter.

3 – Comments invited on second draft of WACD strategic plan

The strategic planning group has continued to refine the draft strategic plan. Find it on the [WACD website](#). We invite feedback from across our conservation community. Please let us know where we are hitting the mark and where we may have left something important out.

4 – PMC sales continue to lag compared to last year

Sales continue to lag behind last year. The number of orders so far received is higher than ever before for this time of year. Unfortunately orders for larger restoration projects are off, which results in far less demand for willow stakes and other wetland/streamside plant materials. Let us know if anyone knows of others looking for these types of plants. Some customers appear to be holding off to see what happens this winter with COVID-19.

5 – Annual conference pricing set

We reviewed proposed pricing with the WACD Board on Tuesday. We will be offering WACD annual conference registration at \$150 per organization or \$50 per person. The \$150 rate includes everyone in your entity, so if you are a conservation district, all of your board supervisors, associate supervisors, and staff can participate for that flat rate. If the individual fee of \$50 is still too much for your budget, please [reach out to Tom and Ryan](#) so that we can see what we can do to help. Our two goals are to cover our costs and to increase engagement. We will also be seeking sponsors.

Don't forget the Zoom practice sessions! We have two standing time slots for you to practice your Zoom skills. 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](#). Zoom practices sessions will be at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2466479813>

The care exhibited by our community is tremendous

The [Pearl Hill fire](#) ravaged [Wade Troutman's](#) ranch on September 7, 2020. He lost his house, ranch, and nearly all of his possessions. Check out the [GoFundMe page](#) that was set up to give Wade a head start on recovery. He has garnered significant support from all points of the compass.

Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

It's been a very full week for many of us so I'll keep this quite short.

Fire and smoke and devastation are still with us, but already some state officials are calling for more resources...for the state. I'm going to scrap the dozen paragraphs I wrote in response to this because I got a little too wound up! I'll just say this: I don't think they realize that resources at the state level don't help us do important things to keep local fires from growing to devastating

proportions.

This is, of course, a complex issue requiring complex solutions. We must work at all scales, not just the state scale. What seems clear after watching so much destruction is that we aren't well prepared as individuals to protect our homes and businesses. Like we see in other disasters, people expect government to step in with immediate help. We have just witnessed the harsh truth that large government can't respond quickly enough with enough resources to stop some events from exploding into a disaster.

We do need more state-level resources, but we also need more investments to help prepare our communities for forest and grass fires. This could very well become a talking point as we compete for very limited funds in the upcoming legislative session. Please let us know if you support this idea of increasing public investments in preparing homes and businesses for what appears to be an increasing frequency of fire in all parts of Washington State.

Tom Salzer, Executive Director

exec@wadistricts.org

How to post your district job to NACD's website

How? Log into NACD's [member's only](#) page to post your conservation district vacancies. Then go to the NACD Members Only page and post a job at this link: <https://www.nacdnet.org/general-resources/district-job-board/>

NACD's member districts and associations are able to post job openings at the above link to maximize exposure and attract qualified candidates from across the nation. All job positions will be approved by the website administrator before posting and will remain posted for 30 days. You must be [logged in](#) to submit a job.

More from the WACD Plant Materials Center...

COVID-19 Update – The PMC continues to adhere to all of the workplace COVID-19 regulations. Skagit County remains in phase 2. All employees remain healthy. Harvest is still three months away but we 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. These regulations will particularly impact those working inside in the packing shed. Regardless of how that all shapes up, the PMC will adapt and carry on.

Crew Leader Leaving – Herminia Sanchez, our crew leader, will be leaving us to go back to school full time. She has been an excellent crew leader and employee and will be missed. We wish her well in her future endeavors. We have started a search for her replacement. If anyone knows of a top-notch ag crew leader looking for a permanent, full-time position let them know about us. They will have some big shoes to fill.

Seed Collections – Work associated with growing this year's plants is winding down. Most have reached a good size; weeds have been handled and dormancy is approaching. There is still plenty to do this time of year, however. One of those things is seed collections. The PMC uses contract

collectors for most of its seed but it does an increasing amount of its own seed collections, too. Seeds of several of those species are ripening currently ready for collection and processing. They include Twinberry, Pacific Crabapple, American Cranberry, Oceanspray, Ninebark, Snowberry, Spirea, and other more. Many of these species will be planted this fall so there is pressure to complete those collections before winter arrives.

Life Goes On – Every week seems to include something out of the usual for the PMC. This week it has been the smoke. We are pretty lucky considering how tragic these fires have been for many. But the amount of smoke around here is unprecedented and sufficient to warrant limiting outside activity for the crew. Hopefully, the fires die down and smoke dissipates soon.

Photos – The photos below show American Cranberry and wildfire smoke at the PMC.



Support WCS When You Shop at Amazon

Support the Washington Conservation Society by [becoming a member](#), [donating](#), or 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

More from the WACD Executive Office...

WACD Board meeting – Sales booked so far by the Plant Materials Center are lagging far behind prior years. While some sectors are holding steady, sales to foresters and conservation districts have been slower than usual. We believe the reason is primarily due to COVID-19 restrictions and the unpredictable nature of operating in the coming months. Some foresters have reported that they may not be able to get crews for planting. Some districts have cancelled plant sales until it is safe to bring people back together.

Strategic planning was discussed. Updated mission, vision, and principles statements are available for conservation district and partner review. Please do provide feedback as that will help us continue to refine the concepts and language we are creating. The strategic plan will be the

signposts we use to guide our work with and for conservation districts for many years to come so feedback is particularly important.

Dues income from member districts is down a bit compared to last year with seven conservation districts not having paid dues yet. (*Edit: since the WACD meeting, another district has paid WACD dues so we are at six district who have not yet paid.*) We do know this is a very difficult year for everyone, unlike anything we've ever seen before. If you need more time or would like to spread dues out in payments, please let us know.

WSCC meeting – The Commission voted to move forward on the Stevenson Conservation Easement. King CD Supervisor Chris Porter gave an excellent presentation on election challenges he observed in 2019 and 2020. Bill Eller presented the work that has been done to improve the Commission's rules and election guide; the Commission did approve rule changes so you'll hear about those very soon.

Carol Cowling gave a good virtual tour of the [South Douglas CD](#). Bill Eller updated the Commission on the Voluntary Stewardship Program. Ron Shultz gave a quick preview of possible legislative topics that the Commission and WACD will be tracking. Ron also updated the Commission on Food Policy Forum work.

Laura Johnson gave a great walk through of the redesigned [Conservation Commission website](#). Executive Director Carol Smith updated the Commission on wildfire resources.

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](#).

As your district writes resolutions this year, please consider talking with your [Area Directors](#). We are aware of resolutions on these topics: conservation district elections; diversity, equity, and inclusion; WACD dues; and WACD shared services.

Salzer appointed to DEI task force – NACD President Tim Palmer has appointed WACD Executive Director Tom Salzer to serve on a task force about [NACD's statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion](#). NACD's statement calls for the creation of a task force to provide a set of recommendations back to the board on DEI issues for NACD and for 3,000 member conservation districts.

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

- [Position Opening: Engineer-In-Training, Snohomish CD](#)
- [Farm Resource Specialist, Pierce Conservation District](#)
- [Livestock Conservation Planner, Clark Conservation District](#)

- [Job: Riparian Habitat Stewardship Coordinator, King Conservation District \(Renton, WA\)](#)

Fire

- [State geologists warn of increased landslide risk following Western Washington wildfires](#) | KNKX
- [Air quality is so bad in Washington that it broke the monitoring system](#) | Raw Story
- [Smoke from wildfires causes headaches, respiratory issues](#) | The Olympian
- [Here's how families affected by wildfires can apply for help](#) | The Olympian
- [Central Washington Wildfire Resource Kit](#) | Congressman Dan Newhouse

Climate

- [NOAA says La Nina has begun](#) | 790 KGMI
- [Why the West's Wildfires Are So Enormous](#) | The Atlantic
- [Climate crisis intensified the West Coast fire season, officials say — and scientists say it could get worse](#) | CNN

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

- [Resources to learn about race, racism and inequity in Pacific Northwest](#) | king5.com

Videoconferencing

- [Is Learning on Zoom the Same as In Person? Not to Your Brain](#) | EdSurge News

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](#)
- [Post your district job to NACD's website](#)

- [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](#)
 - [NACD statement on diversity, equity and inclusivity](#)
 - [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!

WACD hears you and is here for you!

We welcome your [feedback](#).



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