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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know

November 12, 2020

1. WACD annual conference update

[Registration remains open](#) for WACD's 2020 statewide annual conference. The [conference home page](#) has all you need to know about the conference. We ask for registrations to arrive by November 25 so that we have time to compile the list of authorized voters.

The schedule is looking firmer and we continue to line up great speakers. Our [Monday morning sessions](#) promise to provide a tremendous start to the three-day statewide conference. If you haven't checked out the Monday morning speakers, you should. We're going to have the top three officers of NACD all together in our house for the first time!

And did you know that if you [find at least one sponsor](#) your conservation district's registration fee will be waived or refunded? Our [list of partners](#) is growing! Help us demonstrate the broad coalition that helps us all succeed by asking your partners if they would like to be listed, then [let us know](#).

2. OPMA proclamation extended

WACD's lobbyist, Brynn Brady, has been keeping us up-to-date on COVID-related changes by the State of Washington. Find these updates on the [Members page](#) (password **password removed**) under the COVID tab. The proclamation about the Open Public Meetings Act is linked in the [November 10th update](#) (Word DOC format), along with 26 other proclamations that were extended.

3. PMC sales down, new Crew Supervisor hired

Sales are lagging – We have posted approximately \$9,200 in new sales the past week to bring the total to \$803,700. That is less than a comparable date last year when sales stood at \$894,045, which represents a \$90,350 decrease, or 10%. Some of the decline can be attributed to funding but a majority of it is due to COVID. Hopefully some of these sales will come back at a later date.

Welcome our new Crew Supervisor! – The vacant Crew Supervisor position has been filled. We hired Maria Ramirez who has experience as a packing shed crew supervisor and a quality control person. She also has experience at a couple of local nurseries. We think she will do a good job with a good crew.

4. Elections and legislation

And now we know more – Now we know that the Chair of the [House Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources Committee](#) will not be [Representative Brian Blake \(D-Aberdeen\)](#) after [January 11, 2020](#). Representative Blake lost to [Joel McEntire \(R-Cathlamet\)](#). For those who don't follow the tides of politics, you may not be aware that southwest Washington has been shifting from blue to red...and with the 2020 election, that shift seems to be complete.

While many of us have been consumed by the election drama at the national level, remember that ["all politics is local."](#) Don't forget to take a look at your county commissioner races. This year, we are seeing more new county commissioners elected than in a long time. This presents challenges for districts that have had strong relationships with their commissioners and opportunities for all districts where new county legislative folks are coming into office. Your county commissioners are important and can be very helpful so do get to know them.

5. Friday, November 13 is deadline to confirm emails

Friday, November 13th is the deadline for conservation districts to respond to a joint WACD/Washington State Conservation Commission request for confirming supervisor emails. This is part of our process to prepare for voting and elections at the virtual WACD Annual Conference. Ballots will be sent electronically for the WSCC Central Area Commissioner Representative and for WACD voting. Both organizations need to ensure the contact emails in our database are correct, and to make special arrangements for those without internet access. If your district has not responded to Lori Gonzalez and/or Stephanie Crouch, please do so soon!

We welcome Chris Porter to the WACD Board of Directors

Chris Porter, a King Conservation District supervisor, was recently elected to serve with Alan Chapman (Whatcom CD) as a [Northwest Area Director](#). This means that Chris is now also on the WACD Board of Directors!

From the [King CD website](#):

Chris Porter is a beekeeper that recognizes that a cleaner, healthier environment for the survival of bees is necessary. Bees are a critical component in sustaining our food chain. They are also like the "canary in the coal mine" – and their survival is at great risk, along with the fruit we grow on our trees, the vegetables we plant in our garden, and the crops our farmers plant and harvest to feed us all. More than one out of 3 bites of food we eat is there because of pollinators such as bees.

As a KCD Supervisor, Chris works to raise awareness of how vital bees are for the survival of our environment. Hundreds of thousands of species of plants, flowers, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and spices around the world require pollination. They require clean water and pollen free from pesticides. What happens to our water sources, the plants we plant in our gardens and farms, and the use of pesticides, all play a major role in the declining population of bees.

We are grateful to all of our area directors for their service. In the Northwest Area, our outgoing AD Libby Reed has been a wonderful voice for conservation districts. We look forward to working with

our newest Northwest Area AD Chris Porter!

Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

How do we move beyond divisive politics and refocus our attention on why we belong to our conservation community? How do we remain a strong, close-knit family without letting political differences tear us apart?

In the [view of some researchers](#), our two major political parties have become too extreme. Extreme partisanship can result in [dividing friends and families](#).

"...remember that politicians aren't your family members, and they aren't your friends. Ideologues want power; your loved ones want love. Don't lose your actual family or friends over politics. Similarly, the people on your political side shouldn't be your 'tribe.' Your actual tribe are the people who know you and care about you, not just people who vote your way. Your tribe are your neighbors, the people at your church, the other parents at your kids' school. They aren't the people raving on social media on the same side as you." - Karol Markowicz, New York Times

In spite of our political differences, you are part of our conservation district family. You belong to a group of people who know you. They care about you. We may not always agree but that's okay because [we share some fundamental beliefs](#) that transcend political leanings.

"It's a powerful thing to realize that there is a place where you matter and belong. A place where you'll be accepted and forgiven even when you screw up and where others depend on you as much as you do them." - Joshua Dalzelle

When we work together on positive projects that benefit our communities, we create a [safe zone for each other that transcends political beliefs](#). Our work together benefits everyone, no matter which way they lean. When we come together in support of our communities, it is easier to set aside our political differences as we focus on combining our energy to achieve meaningful results.

I think this is the magic that conservation districts provide. Conservation districts are not political organizations. They don't regulate the actions of others. Instead, they seek cooperative, collaborative solutions to natural resource issues. They create relationships and build trust. They work with people who want to work with them. They are active partners with individuals and organizations acting as stewards of natural resources.

Conservation districts are also agents of healing in the way that they bring people together to fix problems in natural resources. I have often seen people with very different views agree to work together on natural resources issues they have in common. I've seen — as I'm sure you have — new relationships blossom between individuals who were at polar opposites on the political spectrum, and this happened over time as they learned to work together and to appreciate the unique value that the other person brings to their shared effort.

"There is immense power when a group of people with similar interests gets together to work

toward the same goals.” - Idowu Koyenikan

Our conservation districts will be here for a long time. While dominance of any one political party comes and goes, conservation districts persist. The people who make conservation districts work persist. The work we do persists. Conservation district work benefits entire communities, and this goes on every day no matter the political flavor of the moment.

Some lessons seem clear to me: the more we come together on big, meaningful work, the less weight we give our differences. When we are able to set aside our differences and focus our combined energy on important goals, we achieve wondrous things. Throughout all of our work together, we remain part of a wide, strong family composed of numerous people who exhibit wonderful, exasperating, surprising, challenging differences. By choosing to work together, we grow together.

“True community is based on upon equality, mutuality, and reciprocity. It affirms the richness of individual diversity as well as the common human ties that bind us together.” - Pauli Murray

As [some people celebrate](#) and [some are angry](#), remember what brings us together and what continues to bind us together: love of land and water and communities and creatures, a desire to serve others, investing in a better future, and a need to be part of something meaningful. That's what our conservation districts provide to those of us who govern them and work for them and partner with them. It is what our people provide to the many individuals who choose to work with their local conservation district.

“You can cut the ties that bind but not without losing a part of yourself. You can walk away and hide from the people who made you, but you'll always hear them calling your name.” - Lisa Unger

We belong together and I am honored to be on this journey with you.

Tom Salzer, Executive Director

exec@wadistricts.org



More from the WACD Plant Materials Center...

COVID-19 Update – In spite of an increase in COVID cases in Skagit County everyone at the PMC is currently COVID free. The two affected people on the crew have gone through quarantine and have tested negative. We have been stocking up on PPE and cleaning supplies in anticipation of increasing the crew to 20 people for harvest.

Harvest Prep – The main activity now is preparing for harvest which is tentatively set to begin on December 1st. We are in the process of lining up a crew. Most or all of the 14 packing shed positions have been filled by returnees, which is great. We have not heard back from any of last year's six people that were on the outside crew but we will contact them this week. We also have a signup sheet of names of others who have expressed interest in working here this year. Hopefully by weeks end we will have a full crew in place. Once that is accomplished, we have set November 23rd for paperwork and an orientation.

Life Goes On – The plants are going dormant. Leaves on many of the deciduous species are turning yellow and dropping off. Determining dormancy on the evergreen conifers is a bit trickier. We track a chill requirement to determine how far along they are with dormancy induction. We keep a tally of how many hours below 40°F they experience. We can assume they are dormant when they accumulate over 300 hours below 40. As of yesterday, we had posted 170 hours below 40 which is more than average for this time of year. There have been years when we had zero hours below 40 at this time of year. At this rate we will be ready to begin harvest by December 1.

Give the gift of Envirothon!

From our friends at the Washington Conservation Society: We ask you to consider designating the Washington Conservation Society as your [AmazonSmile charity](#). Donations created from purchases made October 1, 2020 thru January 31, 2021 will go toward supporting the [Washington State Envirothon](#). Recent budget cuts, COVID19, and other challenges have put the amazing Envirothon education program at risk. Please join WCS in supporting this wonderful and worthwhile program by [giving the gift of the Envirothon for Christmas!](#)

More from the WACD Executive Office...

November 16: WACD Board of Directors meeting – The WACD Board of Directors will meet on November 16 to conduct regular Association business. This meeting would normally be held in conjunction with the WACD Annual Conference but this year, we felt that we could provide more value to conference registrants if we held the regular meeting early. Meeting information will be announced on the [Board of Directors Meetings page](#) two weeks before the board meeting on November 2nd, per WACD procedure.

November 18: Plant sale roundtable – On November 18th, WACD will host a roundtable for conservation districts who will be holding, or wish to hold, a plant sale. [Jessica Oman \(WACD PMC Sales Manager\)](#) will facilitate a sharing session with conservation districts about delivering a plant sale in the face of COVID restrictions. We'll open the Zoom line at 9:30 am and the roundtable will begin at 10 am and last for an hour.

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84097521151?pwd=Nk9PNHMwK1hpam9oMGVYWVpNHVHdz09>

- Meeting ID: 840 9752 1151# | Passcode: 045250#
- Dial by your location: +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

November 21: CD elections web meeting – The conversation about CD elections continues on Saturday, November 21 from 9 am to noon. The meeting objective is to collect CD input on options for potential changes to CD elections. Participation by CD supervisors and staff will ensure that Commission members hear from you. Your input will be shared with Conservation Commission members to help inform their discussion and potential action on CD elections at their public meeting on December 3, 2020.

- [View the agenda](#)
- [Register for this Zoom meeting](#)



Recent news...

- [NACD Sends Letter to Biden-Harris Transition Team](#)
- [NACD announces transition to virtual annual meeting format for 2021](#)
- [NACD Announces Launch of District Grants Application Period](#) | NACD **AND** [NACD announces launch of district grants application period](#) | hpj.com

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. Especially interesting items are marked with a star:



Conservation Community

- **Podcasts!** [Palouse Pulse Podcast](#) | Palouse CD **AND** [Rocks to Roots Podcast](#) | Spokane CD
- [USDA Announces Updated Conservation Practice Standards](#) | NRCS
- [New Rule Makes Enhancements to Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) | NRCS
- Jobs: [Skagit CD seeks a Forester](#)
- Jobs: [Multiple opportunities to join the Palouse CD!](#)
- Job: [Clark CD Seeks Livestock Conservation Planner](#)
- Job: [Skagit CD Seeks ACEP Liaison Project Position](#)

- Job: [Thurston CD Seeks Habitat Specialist](#)
 - Job: [Jefferson County CD Seeks District Manager](#)
 - Job: [Area Foresters](#), Puget Sound region **AND** Job: [Area Forester and Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator](#)
 - Job: [Riparian Habitat Stewardship Coordinator, King Conservation District \(Renton, WA\)](#)
-

Agriculture / Food

- [Washington court upholds record \\$18 million fine against food industry](#) | capitalpress.com
- [Key departures signal agriculture shakeup for Capitol Hill](#) | AP News
- [Key departures signal agriculture shakeup for Capitol Hill](#) | capitalpress.com
- [Ten Apple Varieties Once Thought Extinct Rediscovered in Pacific Northwest](#) | Smithsonian Magazine
- [After the fires: Farm animals face long-term feed shortages](#) | capitalpress.com
- [WSDA: Fertilizer registration, inspection fees must grow](#) | capitalpress.com
- [Washington high court alters state's agriculture industry](#) | capitalpress.com

Climate / Weather

- [Dalai Lama makes historic climate appeal to the world: 'Buddha would be green'](#) | TheHill
- ★ [Inland Northwest Trees Are Playing An Outsized Role In Curbing Climate Change, Study Says](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting

COVID / Health

- [Washington Health Officials Warn: COVID Is Surging, And It's Up To All To Prevent More Shutdowns](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting
- ★ ['We're going the wrong way fast': Experts concerned by COVID spike in Washington](#) | king5.com
- [States ramp up for biggest vaccination effort in US history](#) | AP News
- [5 things to know about the Pfizer vaccine news](#) | TheHill

Diversity / Equity / Inclusion

- [The Many Tribes In The State of Washington \[List\]](#) | 1027 KORD

Fire

- ★ [In Dry Eastern Washington, Scientists Look To Rangeland Management To Address Big Fires](#) | NW News Network
- [Study reveals patterns that shape forest recovery after wildfires](#) | Phys.org
- [What 13,000 wildfires teach us about Washington forests](#) | Crosscut

Fish

- [★ A dam blocking 348 miles of salmon streams hasn't generated electricity since 1958, but who will take it down?](#) | The Spokesman-Review

Health

- [5 Recommendations for Giving Thanks During a Pandemic](#) | Psychology Today
- [How to cope with lockdown: Positive News readers share their tips](#) | Positive News

Invasives

- [Over 500 'murder hornets' found in first Wash. state nest](#) | KOMO

Management / Leadership

- [Coping with COVID restrictions this winter](#) | Management Issues
- [The Upside of Your Public Speaking Jitters](#) | HBR
- [City Managers and Political Party Affiliations: How to be a True Professional](#) | PA TIMES Online
- [★ Managing remote teams: Make work visible to seal process cracks](#) | Office of the Washington State Auditor

State Government

- [★ How the WA Legislature plans to go remote during COVID-19](#) | Crosscut
- [Empty Capitol building, public hearings by Zoom: Washington Legislature plans for virtual session](#) | The Seattle Times
- [Insee announces Jamila Thomas as new chief of staff](#) | Washington State Wire

Wildlife

- [Grizzlies star in hearing over Washington forest project](#) | capitalpress.com

Partners and Publications

*This content has been moved to the WACD ["For Members" page](#) for the sake of brevity. Use the password **password removed** to access the Members page.*

On a lighter note...

- [The Exploding Whale remastered: 50th anniversary of legendary Oregon event](#) | KOMO
- [Season 1 of The Joy of Painting with Bob Ross](#) | YouTube

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