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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know

November 19, 2020

1. WACD Committee meetings next week

WACD committees are required to submit their recommendations on adopted area association resolutions. The committees have been studying the resolutions adopted in October and will vote on these recommendations next week. All are welcome to attend the meetings on Monday morning and Tuesday evening being held through Zoom, either to observe or to weigh in before the committees vote. The text of each resolution is available on our conference webpage, under the Resolutions tab (<https://wadistricts.org/conference>).

Finance Committee, Monday, November 23rd at 8:00 am - The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84333530764> or dial in to +1 253 215 8782 with the meeting ID of 843 3353 0764#

The Finance Committee will hear a resolution on establishing a revolving fund for conservation districts brought forward by Whatcom CD and the Northwest Area Association.

Legislative, Bylaws & District Policies Committee, Tuesday, November 24th at 6:00 pm - The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84204537507> or dial in to +1 253 215 8782 with the meeting ID of 842 0453 7507#

This LB&D Committee will hear resolutions on:

- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Statement – Pierce CD
- WACD Shared Services Review – Pierce CD
- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Statement – King CD
- CD Elections Improvements – King CD
- Voting at Annual Meetings – Snohomish CD
- DEI Resolution – Clark CD
- WSCC Employee Evaluations – Thurston CD
- Increased Use of Electronic Training – Okanogan CD
- Rural Broadband Internet – SC Area Association

- NRCS & CD Board Cooperation – Stevens County CD
- SCC Budget – Palouse CD

2. Annual conference update

28 districts registered with 10 days to go - With only a week-and-a-half to go, 62% of Washington's conservation districts have registered for the 2020 annual conference.

Associates need written approval to vote - A reminder that if a conservation district board wishes to have one or more associate supervisors vote at the annual conference, written approval authorizing each associate must be received by WACD before the annual business meeting. Remember, too, that a conservation district gets only five votes at the annual meeting.

Sponsors still needed for us to balance our costs - We drastically lowered the registration cost of the conference this year but that means [we need more sponsors](#) to help balance our books.

Check out our partners! - We have a great list of partners who support the good work of conservation districts. [Check them out](#).

Envirothon needs auction items - The online Envirothon silent auction will run from November 29th – December 3rd and proceeds will support [Washington State Envirothon](#). Event organizers ask that you support these efforts by providing an item for the auction. [Learn more](#).

3. Motions from WACD Board meeting

The WACD Board of Directors held their regular meeting on Monday, November 16. The draft meeting minutes will be published in December. Find a summary of the motions below in the Executive Office section or [download a summary of the motions as passed](#) at the meeting.

4. PMC update

Sales are up a bit – The sales total from last week of \$803,700 have increased some but not enough to warrant a new sales report. They have been smaller orders for the most part. Overall sales remain about 10% less than this time last year but are still the second highest sales year to date for this time of year. We are working on marketing and hoping that COVID does not continue to increase to the point where it causes further cancellations.

Plant Sale roundtable held – A virtual plant sale round table was held on the 18th with a focus on dealing with the challenges of conducting plant sales during the pandemic. PMC Sales Manager Jess Oman facilitated the session that was attended by 25 people. They discussed how conservation districts are planning to operate their sales including social distancing, how orders are packed, and how to operate a “drive thru” style pick up. Some districts are not allowing any changes to the order once placed and m districts require orders to be placed online. [Please contact Jess](#) to learn more about the meeting.

5. CD elections meeting Saturday, November 21

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](#)
-

Welcome Hilary Sepulveda to the WCS Board of Directors

At the annual meeting of the Washington Conservation Society on November 19, 2020, Hilary Sepulveda was elected as the Northeast Area Director, replacing Jerry Scheele.

Hilary currently serves as the Outreach Specialist for the [Spokane Conservation District](#) (SCD). Her communications experience includes over ten years in social media marketing and customer service. She received a BA in New Media Communications from Oregon State University with a focus in digital marketing.

Hilary looks after communications for SCD, which includes their website, social media, and digital/print materials. She oversees the annual Tree Sale and Farm and Food Expo. She is passionate about building relationships and loves helping community members connect with resources SCD can provide, which lead her to launch a podcast titled [Rocks to Roots – Conservation Conversations from the Backyard to the Back 40](#).

Her parents have owned and operated a small business in Spokane for over 50 years. Being a Spokane native, she is proud to work for an organization that teaches and promotes sustainable land use and regenerative practices in the community and its region.

When Hilary is not working, she enjoys spending time outdoors with her boyfriend and two dogs, Kevin and George. You can usually find her and her family at a local golf course, various local wineries, and lounging on the beach at Priest Lake during the summer months.

Thank you to Jerry Scheele for his service to WCS

Please join us in thanking Jerry Scheele for his remarkable work with the [Washington Conservation Society](#).

Jerry served as the Society's President from January 1, 2009 to February 15, 2012 and was the Northeast Area Director since the organization was first formed. Throughout that time, he provided exemplary guidance and leadership to the Society.



Jerry has consistently and persistently demonstrated his caring for people in our community. It is unlikely that we would have a tax-exempt charitable foundation or the [Leaving a Legacy program](#) if it had not been for Jerry's vision and drive.

His influence is perhaps best revealed by the high quality of people who make up the [Society's board of directors](#). This group of people helps assure the ongoing work of the Society.

It is with deep appreciation that we say thank you to Jerry for his long commitment to the Washington Conservation Society and to the many people in our community.

Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

Last Saturday I wrote a long column about COVID-19 and how it has affected the way our entire conservation community operates. And then as I monitored news from across the state and nation during the week, it got more and more intense. I realized that I couldn't spend my entire space on COVID so I've shortened my original column!

Despite alarming news flooding in from all points of the compass, I am not without hope. I count on sound science to guide us through the temporary steps we need to take to protect ourselves and others, and I count on our ingenuity to discover more permanent ways to prevent and treat COVID-19. The news this week that there are not one but two new vaccines that may be effective is tremendously uplifting.

[Cases are up.](#) COVID-19 was hitting our friends in the upper Midwest particularly hard a week ago, but cases are rising in more and more states.



COVID-19 may be with us for years

If the graphs above aren't frightening enough, some researchers contemplate the virus being with us for years.

In summary, the total incidence of COVID-19 illness over the next 5 years will depend critically upon whether it enters into regular circulation after the initial pandemic wave, which in turn depends primarily upon the duration of immunity that SARS-CoV-2 infection imparts...Social distancing strategies could reduce the extent to which SARS-CoV-2 infections strain health care systems. - [Projecting the transmission dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 through the postpandemic period](#) | Science

These researchers go on to say that "if immunity to SARS-CoV-2 is not permanent, it will likely enter into regular circulation."

A complete lockdown may not be necessary

But though we may be living with Covid-19 for years, that doesn't mean we have to be living in lockdown for years.

Don't take all of this to mean that we're going to have to stay in lockdown until at least 2022. There is a middle ground between lockdown and going back completely to the way things were. A massive campaign of universal masking, testing, contact tracing, and isolating suspected cases and their contacts could help reduce transmission while getting our lives a little bit back to normal. - [How long will the Covid-19 pandemic last? We need immunity data to find out.](#) | Vox

And as most of us now know, [masks help to protect the wearer and those around them](#).

Scientists urge action now

Consensus among scientists is that herd immunity won't be effective so we need to act now to maintain protective strategies in order to control the spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

Proponents suggest [herd immunity] would lead to the development of infection-acquired population immunity in the low-risk population, which will eventually protect the vulnerable. This is a dangerous fallacy unsupported by scientific evidence... The evidence is very clear: controlling community spread of COVID-19 is the best way to protect our societies and economies until safe and effective vaccines and therapeutics arrive within the coming months. - [Scientific consensus on the COVID-19 pandemic: we need to act now](#) | The Lancet

COVID-19 is surging in the PNW

A third wave of infections is causing alarm and disrupting health systems, with [long lines for testing and some people being turned away](#). Idaho has stepped back to [Phase 2 and is mobilizing the National Guard](#) to assist with testing. [Oregon's new cases shattered previous records](#) after Halloween. [West Coast governors are urging travelers entering their states to self quarantine for 14 days](#). Governors and mayors in several states are [weighing the need for more stringent lockdown measures against the anger expressed by many citizens](#).

Should we assume COVID-19 will be with us a long time?

The most prudent course is to assume we will be dealing with COVID-19 for many more months, and perhaps even years. We'll need to continue to do what we've been doing: distancing, sanitizing, and wearing personal protective equipment. Even if a vaccine becomes widely available soon, it will take time to be properly distributed, stored, and administered. Unless you are in a highly vulnerable population, you probably won't be in the first few waves of vaccinations.

What does this mean for conservation districts?

We've all found ways to adapt through working from home, scheduling work time in conservation district offices to maintain distancing, traveling alone, sanitizing, and using video conferencing. It

seems like those adaptive behaviors will need to continue for longer than any of us expected.

Should we lean toward solutions that are not temporary?

This creates a complex set of challenges for our conservation district folks and the people they work with and serve. We have been dealing with those successfully, but most of us have viewed them as temporary steps that we will be able to discard within months.

Thinking conservatively of health and safety concerns, it makes sense to solidify our COVID-19 practices, embed them in written policies, and make them part of our everyday work culture. If a vaccine becomes available sooner rather than later, we will still have uneven immunizations in our communities and that means COVID-19 will still be present in our local populations.

Rural broadband is important

If my reasoning holds up, then we'll have distancing and scheduled office hours and video conferencing with us for a long time. These measures are hard on board members and hard on employees and hard on partners and clients. One of the unexpected intersections between COVID and our conservation community is access to broadband internet connections. We know that some of our conservation district folks have poor internet connections, so poor they find it hard to participate in video conferencing. Beyond our own conservation family, land stewards in many rural areas have the same trouble, making it difficult to run a business and to communicate with others.

These are some of the reasons that a rural broadband resolution was adopted by the South Central Area Association. It will be brought to the floor of the WACD annual business meeting for discussion and support.

If COVID-19 is going to be with us for a long time, it makes sense to support more effective connectivity in rural communities. Many of our people live at the end of long, lonely roads. Better technology could mean the difference between life and death. It could also mean more equitable engagement of folks who might otherwise find it hard to participate. (As you can tell, I'm a fan of better internet service, especially in our farm, ranch, and forest communities!)

This is all hard to deal with

What we are going through is hard. It tests us in ways we never imagined. For our board members and employees around the state, when things get harder it tests our commitment to local conservation. I confess that there are days when I just want to throw my hands up and call a halt to the world...as if I could. Fortunately, my love of land and water and communities and creatures helps me to take a deep breath, roll up my sleeves, and work harder. I know I'm not alone in that.

The most effective way to do good work is to make sure the work you're doing speaks to the things you love. - [Jeannine Kayembe](#) (and thank you to [State Forester George Geissler](#) for sharing [this quote!](#))

What else? Looking ahead...

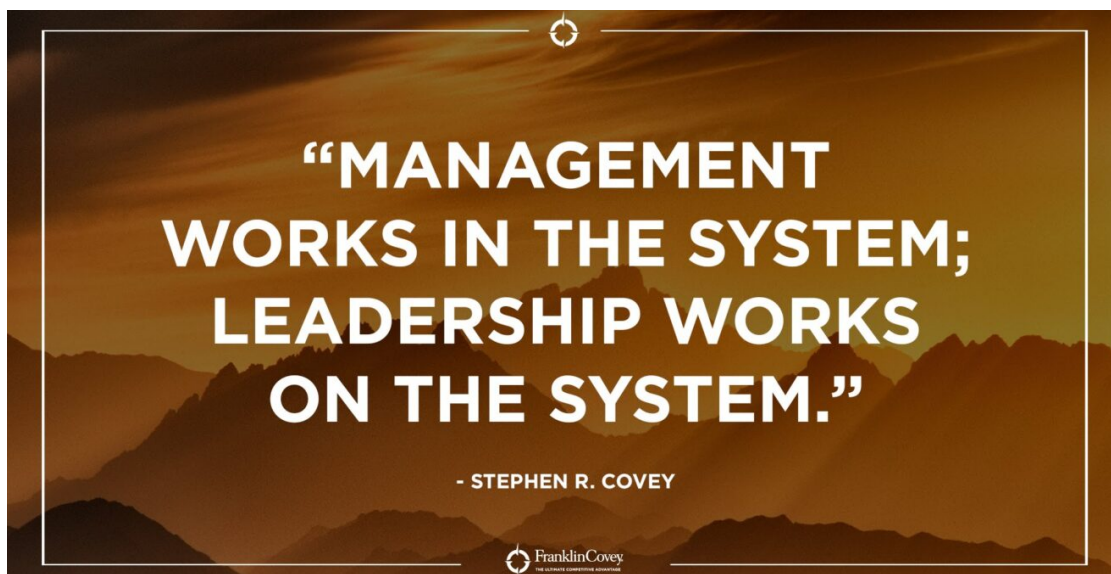
What else is in my mind this week! I have a pile of things whirling and swirling in my head! With the WACD annual conference just around the corner, Ryan and I are in total immersion mode.

Looking beyond the WACD conference, we have some tasks and opportunities ahead of us, including:

- Transitioning the concepts in the [new WACD strategic plan](#) to an annual work plan, crafting defined timelines and outcomes, and getting the work plan adopted and implemented.
- Refining our messaging for the 2021 legislative session...which starts in less than two months!
- Developing a better pipeline of future conservation leaders. This directly affects WACD because we don't have many folks "waiting in the wings" and ready to go as our board officers cycle out.
- Finding ways to better engage with members, always and in all ways. We've improved our transparency and our frequency of communication, but engagement remains a tougher nut to crack.
- Creating opportunities for all conservation districts to raise vital funds for operations, programs, and services, with sustainable, permanent funding a top priority.
- Appreciating the many people who help our conservation community succeed. We honor them when they leave us but not so much while they are with us. We can change that, and I think that we need to because although we are each different, we are one conservation family. We are stronger when we recognize and appreciate the differences and drive each person brings to our community.
- Creating a better sense of value for what WACD provides to our members. You'll hear more about this in 2021 as we seek to better understand what members want and need. We think we know but we can't afford to assume that we are right. We will need your help as we continue to strengthen our service-oriented mindset.

That is quite enough for one column. I leave you this week with a well-known benediction of hope, something many of us feel the need to hold onto during these difficult times: "[Live long and prosper!](#)" 🙌

Tom Salzer, Executive Director
exec@wadistricts.org



Latest from the WACD website

[Salmon in the Classroom: Benton & Franklin CDs](#)

Salmon in the Classroom The Benton Conservation District and Franklin Conservation District are proud to sponsor "Salmon in the Classroom" in eastern Washington. Through this program, students can hatch salmon eggs at school, learn about salmon lifecycle and habitat and learn how to test water quality. The hands-on experience of raising fish helps students realize that salmon are one of ...



[Read more](#)

[Washington State COVID-19 Status Report - Feb 16](#)



TL;DR – Washington is expanding COVID-19 testing resources for school districts around the state. Washington State COVID-19 Status Report, February 16, 2021 Washington state to expand COVID-19 testing program, adding 50 school districts, Inslee says Washington is expanding COVID-19 testing resources for school districts around the state, Gov. Jay Inslee said Tuesday. An additional 50 K-12 school districts have signed ...

[Read more](#)

[Washington Service Corps: request for applications now open](#)

From Mark Duncan, Lead Outreach Specialist, Washington Service Corps: Our partners have anywhere from 1 to 30 members serving in their organization. These AmeriCorps members typically serve 10.5 months, starting in September or October. Larger teams require greater supervision and management but is a good option for organizations with the right capacity to support such a team. If you are ...

[Read more](#)

More from the WACD Plant Materials Center...

COVID-19 Update – The biggest COVID-related event this past week was the Governor’s announcement of new restrictions on Sunday. Fortunately, according to the Washington Farm Bureau, none of the new restrictions affects agricultural activities; they were aimed at restaurants, retail and white-collar professional offices. Ag is to continue to follow the regulations established during the summer. A lot of planning is going into complying with those restriction when we bring on 20 seasonal employees to start harvest. Like most other counties, Skagit County has seen an uptick in positive tests. There have been about 20 to 30 new cases a day.

Sales – The sales total from last week of \$803,700 have increased some but not enough to warrant a new sales report. They have been smaller orders for the most part. Overall sales remain about 10% down from this time last year but are still the 2nd most sales for this time of year to date. We are working on marketing and hoping that COVID does not continue to increase to the point where it causes further cancellations.

Live Stake Shipping Has Waned – The PMC has been steadily shipping live stakes for the past month. Those are the Willow, Cottonwood and Red Osier Dogwood cuttings we sell for directly planting in riparian and wetland sites. Many customers like to plant them in the fall because they can be successfully harvested and planted before they go dormant, and it is a good planting window for in-stream and near-stream work. The 6-person crew that was needed to keep up with demand has been temporarily laid off until bare root harvest since things have slowed down.

Life Goes On – Winterizing is almost finished. Throughout the fall, implements and equipment are cleaned, maintained and stored. That includes the fertilizer spreader, root pruner, irrigation pumps and pipe, boom sprayer, seed drills, etc. The next step is to get the lifter on the Case tractor for harvest, get the field trailers and totes ready, along with the shuttle tractors. The next milestone will be the start of harvest, followed by the winter solstice which means the days will start getting longer and that is only a month away. We take our light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel where we can find it.

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...

WACD Board of Directors meeting – The Board of Directors met on Monday, November 16. Draft minutes will become available in December. [Download the summary of motions](#) which include:

- Authorizing the Executive Director to renew medical coverage for WACD staff.

- [Proclaiming November as Native American Heritage Month.](#)
- Adopting the [new WACD strategic plan and scorecard.](#)
- Adopting policy about regular outside reviews of WACD's accounts and transactions.
- Authorizing the purchase of a social media archiving service.
- Recommending a non-voting membership class for consideration at the WACD annual business meeting.
- Recommending the temporary extension of the current President's term for consideration at the WACD annual business meeting.
- Renewing WACD's contract with our lobbyist.
- Adopting new meeting schedule for calendar year 2021: monthly on the 3rd Monday of each month in the evening, with a work session one month, then a board meeting the next month, and so on throughout the year.

Douglas County Virtual Tour 2020 – Check out the excellent videos produced on the Conservation Reserve Program in Douglas County. The short version is about 5 minutes long and the long version is 17 minutes long. The videos feature a number of people from our conservation community.

With approximately 1.2 million acres enrolled, the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is one of the most successful conservation programs in Washington state. As part of the CRP, the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative plays a particularly critical role in restoring and recovering wildlife by establishing habitat through voluntary conservation efforts. It also highlights CRP's success in our state because it is tailored to the type of landowner and their land, and the importance of local, state and federal partnerships in perpetuating its success.

- [Conservation Reserve Program: Douglas County Virtual Tour 2020 - SHORT version](#)
- [Conservation Reserve Program: Douglas County Virtual Tour 2020 - LONG version](#)

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: [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

- [TOP HANDS: Poll shines positive spotlight on farmers](#) | capitalpress.com
- [Environmental Groups And Dairy Farmers Unhappy With State's Regulation In Central Washington](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting
- [20 farms fined for not protecting workers from COVID-19](#) | AP News
- [State issues fines for not protecting farm workers from COVID](#) | The Olympian
- [Will Northwest Seaweed Farming Finally Take Off?](#) | Seattle Met

Climate / Weather

- [La Nina getting cooler, could be a strong one](#) | capitalpress.com
- [Chances for a La Niña winter in Pacific Northwest a 'sure bet,' meteorologists say](#) | king5.com
- [North Cascades Highway Closed for Season](#) | NewsRadio 560 KPQ

COVID / Pandemic

- **General**
 - [U.S. COVID-19 hospitalizations rise by nearly 50% in 2 weeks, ushering in new shutdowns](#) | Reuters
 - [U.S. coronavirus cases and state maps: Tracking cases, deaths](#) | Washington Post
 - [U.S. Hits 11 Million Coronavirus Cases, Adding 1 Million In A Week](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting
 - [Coronavirus: 184,000 new US cases shatters record set day before](#) | king5.com
 - [Where U.S. coronavirus cases are on the rise](#) | Reuters
 - [Here's the coronavirus risk for a Thanksgiving dinner with 10 people](#) | The Washington Post
 - [Governors ratchet up restrictions ahead of Thanksgiving](#) | AP News
 - [Covid: How close are we to a vaccine?](#) | BBC News
 - [How the pandemic might play out in 2021 and beyond](#) | Nature
- **Washington State / Pacific NW**
 - [Washington Governor Announces: Bars, Restaurants Closed Again; Most Indoor Gatherings Banned](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting
 - [Washington asks all incoming travelers to self-quarantine for 14 days](#) | KOMO
 - [California, Oregon, Washington issue virus travel advisories](#) | Columbian.com
 - [Third wave of COVID-19 spikes in King County — and we aren't ready](#) | Crosscut

- [Idaho Gov. Brad Little Activates National Guard, Moves State Back To Phase 2 As COVID Cases Grow](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting
- [Where are COVID-19 outbreaks coming from in Washington?](#) | king5.com
- [How bad is it? What data says about Washington's coronavirus outlook](#) | king5.com
- [Wash. state in 'red zone' for new COVID cases, White House report says](#) | KOMO
- [There's no need for panic shopping to happen now, stores say](#) | The Olympian
- [Panic Buying, Washington Businesses Close For Good As New COVID Restrictions Loom](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting
- [Kroger imposes purchase limits as panic buying picks up again](#) | News Break
- [COVID-19 Restrictions Cause Panic Buying in Yakima](#) | KFFM
- [Spokane grocery store shelves empty amid new COVID-19 rules](#) | krem.com
- [New state COVID restrictions based partly on new scientific data](#) | KOMO
- [Washington's New Covid-19 Restrictions Are a Gut Punch to Restaurants](#) | Seattle Met
- [New lockdown ordered as coronavirus cases surge in Washington state](#) | Crosscut
- [New Washington COVID-19 restrictions draw pushback from small businesses, GOP lawmakers](#) | king5.com
- [How Long Do You Need To Be Exposed To A COVID-19 Patient To Be At Risk?](#) | NPR

Diversity / Equity / Inclusion

- [Latinos in Washington disproportionately hurt by COVID-19 pandemic](#) | king5.com
- [The group excluded from diversity programs](#) | Management Issues

Economy

- [Economist: COVID-19 downturn anything but typical](#) | capitalpress.com

Fire

- [Western Washington wildfire is different — and it's coming](#) | Crosscut

Fish

- [Northwest leaders urge holistic approach to four-state salmon recovery process](#) | WAWG

Forest

- [Forest Area Percentage Of Land Area On World Map](#) | paintmaps.com

Health

- [The Power of Responding to Anxiety with "I Wonder?"](#) | Psychology Today

Management / Leadership

- [What Inclusive Leaders Sound Like](#) | HBR
- [Write to Reward Your Reader](#) | HBR
- [In praise of inconspicuous leadership](#) | Management Issues
- [Two Hidden Traits Found in High Achievers](#) | Psychology Today
- [You're Delegating. It's Not Working. Here's Why.](#) | HBR

State Government / Special Districts

- [Washington's economic forecast improves slightly](#) | The Spokesman-Review

- [Special Purpose Districts in Washington](#) | MRSC

Water

- [Palouse, Walla Walla, Touchet rivers among state's dirtiest, according to report](#) | khq.com
- [Wildfires Emerge as Threat to Water Quantity Across Parched West](#) | Bloomberg

On a lighter note...

- [National Pickle Day: 5 facts that make pickles a big dill](#) | CNN
- [How a city of 2.5 million ensures everyone has free access to healthy food](#) | The Optimist Daily

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