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Five Things to Know

December 3, 2020

**Thank you for a
tremendous WACD annual
conference!**



We enjoyed great content and as much camaraderie as was likely possible, given the wholly remote nature of the conference this year. The most well-attended session was the kickoff with our panel of the top three National Association of Conservation District officers, demonstrating the relevance of, and support for, our national association. Many, many thanks to NACD President Tim Palmer, NACD President-Elect Michael Crowder, and NACD 2nd Vice President Kim LaFleur for investing so much time with us on Monday morning. That was very special.

Since late September, WACD staff have had countless interactions like "what if we try this," "that won't work," "how about this," "if we modify that," "oh, I like that," and "let's lock that in" while we built this virtual conference from the ground up. Fortunately, we also had the Conference Planning Team from across the state to help keep us moving in the right direction! It has been a great team effort with strong trust extended throughout the process and with continual respect for the ideas and concerns of everyone on the team.

We deeply appreciate our [sponsors](#) and [partners](#) who helped provide the resources and support for us to provide a high-value experience to our members. Our sponsors this year are shown below. Please reach out to thank them for their support! Links to their websites are on the [sponsors page](#).



1. WACD resolutions posted

Final resolutions as adopted yesterday are posted to the [conference web page](#) under the Resolutions tab. Ryan and I rushed through these to get the information to you quickly so let us know if you see any needed edits!

2. Congratulations to our two newly elected officers

Jeanette Dorner re-elected as WACD President – When our members authorized a temporary change to the Association's bylaws, that allowed Jeanette Dorner (Pierce Conservation District) to run for, and be elected to, an unprecedented third term as WACD President. Jeanette's continuation as President helps us maintain capacity and momentum as we embark on a very challenging year ahead!

Mike Mumford elected as WACD Vice President – Mike Mumford (Pend Oreille Conservation District) was elected to the position of WACD Vice President position. If you know Mike, then you know the depth of knowledge and experience he brings to our executive team. Mike's election strengthens our leadership and positions us well to tackle 2021.

3. Please complete our feedback survey

WACD's Conference Planning Team would like to know how the conference went for you. It takes just a few minutes to complete our online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BV5Z2BV>, and we suggest doing it soon while the conference experience is still fresh and clear in your mind. The Team will use your responses as we develop an after action report to help guide us in planning the 2020 conference.

4. Shipping season has started at the PMC

When the PMC begins the harvest process, the first priority is to bring in plants for those who want

them as soon as possible. Many customers try to get a start on their planting projects in December which is an option in areas where the ground does not freeze. Early planting allows the plants to start becoming established earlier with the hopes that they can better survive when things start to warm up and dry out. One problem with early planting is that these plants could be exposed to damaging cold temperatures which varies based upon species. Many deciduous species can withstand fairly cold temperatures; conversely, some of the conifers like Western Red Cedar can be damaged if exposed to very cold, drying winds.

5. Envirothon auction extended to December 15th

The Envirothon auction began at 8:00 AM on Sunday, November 29th, and will conclude at 5:00 PM on TUESDAY, December 15th. **Why stop the fun just because the WACD conference has ended? Do some holiday shopping and raise money for Envirothon!** The auction is being held on the [BiddingOwl auction site](#).

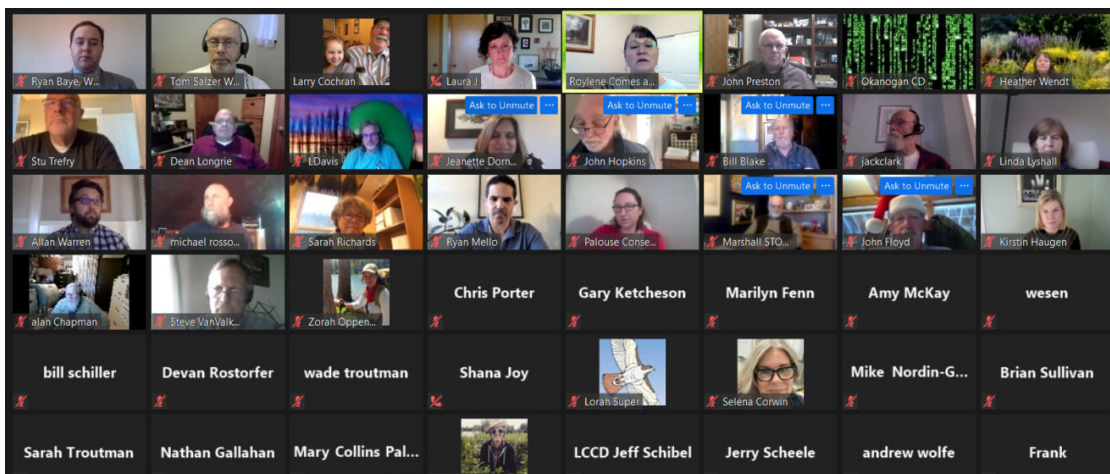
Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

There is so much for us to unpack from the 2020 WACD annual statewide conference and business meeting that I almost don't know where to begin!

- We are working through the final cleanup on resolutions and actions.
- In item #3 in the 5 Things above, you'll see that there is a [survey link](#). We encourage you to complete the survey as that will help us plan the 2021 conference.
- We'll get recorded sessions posted as soon as possible but it will likely be closer to Christmas for those because we have some editing to do. Downloading the video files isn't a problem; uploading them is horribly slow because of the file sizes. If you have vid editing skills and a strong internet connection, we'd love some help!
- Also on our post-conference list is updating our table of resolutions so that we can track the status and progress of each one.

I brought a 32-inch screen into the office for the conference. Most of the time, I could see a 7x7 grid of participants at one time. This was a great help as we watched for folks who wanted to speak to an issue.



Now that the conference is over and we are beginning to grapple with what we heard from members, we'll need to roll some of that information into a new annual work plan. To that end, I formed a small group of six people to help us develop our annual work plan. The composition of the annual plan work group is three conservation district supervisors from the Northwest, Northeast, and South Central areas and three conservation district managers from the North Central, Southeast, and Southwest areas.

The annual plan working group will begin to pull together elements from a variety of sources, including:

- WACD's new strategic plan;
- Our contracts;
- Elements from the conference survey;
- Resolutions as adopted by the membership; and
- Our normal operational items that occur each year.

We'll be tracking our work publicly as a [GitHub project](#) so do feel free to follow along.

That is plenty for now. It's been a long week for all who participated in the WACD annual conference and even longer for those stalwart individuals who stuck around for the WSCC regular meeting today!

We appreciate your passion for conservation and your connection to your community!

Tom Salzer, Executive Director
exec@wadistricts.org

More from the WACD Plant Materials Center...

COVID-19 Update – The combination of increasing the seasonal crew to 20 people and the advent of the predicted surge in COVID cases have made implementing the COVID safety procedures our top priority. In spite of all of these efforts, one person on the seasonal crew had to go into quarantine because his spouse tested positive for COVID. One thing that is particularly concerning is that was on the second day of harvest. What does the next four-and-a-half months

have in store? What ever it is, the PMC will continue to promote safe practices and try to maintain production. We must also acknowledge the possibility that there could be a surge sufficient to cause a considerable slow down or even a stoppage in harvest for a time. If that should happen then one focus will be on how to get customers their plants as soon as possible given the challenges. Time will tell.

Sales – As of November 30 the PMC had posted \$865,000 in sales for this year. They were at \$895,000 at a similar date last year, which is a \$30,000 or 4.5% decrease. That is not too much of a concern if that pace can be maintained. It would still come in as the 2nd best year for sales ever. There is always the possibility that the lost ground can be made up and more which would result in the best year ever. Whether or not that is possible will depend in large part on the infection rate of COVID and how we adapt to those conditions.

Bare Root Harvest Started – Bare root harvest started on December 1 as planned. 20 seasonal employees were hired and all but two of the positions were filled by returnees which made for an easy startup. Hopefully, a full-sized crew can be maintained throughout harvest so that over two million plants can be lifted and packed before the end of March, which is when plants start coming out of dormancy and the bare root season comes to a close. It should also be pointed out that stock will be kept dormant in the cooler after that date so that customers can get plants through April into early May.

Life Goes On – Saying that harvest is the main priority now is a huge understatement. As important as it is, there are other tasks that have to be accomplished too. One is propagation. Almost all of the species that we propagate by seed at the PMC have dormant seeds. That means that the seeds will not germinate if they are planted without pretreatment, which is typically a cold, moist period. Some receive this naturally when we plant the seeds in the fall to expose them to real winter conditions. (Nothing like mimicking mother nature!) Some seeds cannot be left out all fall so they get their pretreatment in a refrigerator in a bag of moist perlite in a process called stratification. The stratified seeds are then planted in the spring. The attached photo shows a bag of Beaked Hazelnut undergoing a six-month stratification period.



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...

Vacancies in Area Director seats – We have two great opportunities to join in the governance and leadership of your state association. One Area Director position in the Southeast Area is vacant, and with the election of Mike Mumford to the role of Vice President, one Area Director position in the Northeast Area is also open. Learn more about being an area director in our [blog post from September 23rd](#).

WACD meeting scheduled changed for 2021 – Beginning in January, the WACD Board of Directors will meet during the evening of the third Monday of each month. In January, the meeting will be a work session and in February it will be a regular Board meeting. We follow that same cycle throughout the year: work session, regular meeting, work session, regular meeting, and so on. We expect these will be Zoom sessions but we are hoping that conditions change enough to allow the Board to meet safely for a few in-person meetings.

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.

Conservation community

- [USDA Engages Public for Input on Water Quantity in the West](#) | NRCS
 - Job: [King CD seeks Ag Drainage Coordinator](#) (PDF)
 - Job: [Asotin County CD seeks Archaeologist - Cultural Resource Specialist](#)
 - Job: [Multiple opportunities to join the Palouse CD!](#)
 - Job: [Jefferson County CD Seeks District Manager](#)
 - Job: [Area Forester and Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator](#)
 - Job: [Riparian Habitat Stewardship Coordinator, King Conservation District \(Renton, WA\)](#)
-

Agriculture / Food

- [Farms Under Threat: The State of the States](#) | AFT
- [Judge sides with USDA on protecting farmer data](#) | capitalpress.com

Climate / Weather

- [Pollinator-Friendly Solar Could be a Win-Win for Climate and Landowners, but Greenwashing is a Worry](#) | InsideClimate News
- [Working together to define and promote shared climate policy priorities](#) | Ag Climate Alliance

Conservation districts

- [Washington conservation districts warily mull election reform](#) | capitalpress.com

COVID / Pandemic

- [Mayo study shows effectiveness of masks and social distancing](#) | krem.com
- [Washington health officials provide details on how COVID vaccine will be handed out](#) | My Northwest
- [Our Pandemic Society: Distance is necessary, but it's also a true burden](#) | The Spokesman-Review

Fire

- [BLM plan aimed at reducing massive wildfires in West](#) | capitalpress.com *and* [Plan released to reduce massive wildfires in U.S. West](#) | Columbian.com
- [We Can See Clearly Now The Smoke Is Gone: 2020 Fires Greatly Affected Northwest Wildlife Habitat](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting
- [Whitman County Fire-Ravaged Farming Town Of Malden In Limbo As It Awaits Aid To Rebuild](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting

Fish / Wildlife / ESA

- [Could ocean conditions, not dams, be salmon's nemesis? BPA-funded study says declines seen even when rivers run free](#) | oregonlive.com *and* [Study looks at impact of ocean and dams on salmon runs](#) | The Olympian
- [Idaho Chinook Salmon Numbers Rise, For Now...But Extinction Looms](#) | Northwest Public Broadcasting

Health

- [Study finds your personality may change but this will always stay the same](#) | The Ladders
- [Learn How to Play Chess Online: Free Chess Lessons for Beginners, Intermediate Players & Beyond](#) | Open Culture

Invasives

- [Oregon, Washington enlist tiny ally in fight against knotweed](#) | capitalpress.com

Management / Leadership

- [Three ways to plan for an uncertain future](#) | Management Issues
- [This tip from Harvard will make you the ultimate public speaker](#) | The Ladders
- [Old habits die hard, new habits die easy](#) | Management Issues
- [The Organization's Chief Credibility Officer: Thinking well, Talking Well and Ethical Leadership](#) | PA TIMES Online (see below for a snippet):
 - "Smart talk," is learned, consisting of five skills:
 - **Being genuine:** Don't imitate others.

- **Projecting confidence, humility, and transparency:** Even when scripted, speak authentically and conversationally about the subject (both the good and bad), what is and isn't working, as well as what's coming next.
- **Reiterating the *why*:** Continuously recall the organization's purpose, mission, and strategy in a way people can visualize.
- **Reiterating the *what*:** Repeat goals and important procedural points to ensure the widest possible audience gets it.
- **Telling stories:** Paint a verbal portrait of the destination, inspiring and replete with examples connecting with people across all levels of the organization, relating to their daily service to it, and building a cohesive team.

We welcome your [feedback](#).



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