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Five Things to Know

December 23, 2020: The Christmas/New Years Edition



What does Christmas mean to you? The history of Christmas is fascinating. If you're interested in this topic, here are some links to get you started on an interesting journey:

- [History of Christmas](#) | The History Channel
- [The unexpected origins of popular Christmas traditions](#) | CBS News
- [Do You Know the History of Christmas? Find Out Everything You Need to Know Here](#) | Country Living
- [Pagan Roots? 5 Surprising Facts About Christmas](#) | Live Science

All of us at your Washington Association of Conservation Districts extend our best wishes to you that this season will be a time of good health, happiness, and hope.

1. WACD offers scholarships to NACD annual conference

Since the NACD Annual Conference (February 1-10, 2021) will be virtual and the cost is low, WACD sees an opportunity to increase participation/representation from Washington conservation districts. **We are pleased to announce that WACD will cover the NACD registration fee for one district**

supervisor from each of our 45 conservation districts!

We need your district to respond with the name of the board supervisor and his/her email address in order to complete the registration on their behalf. The deadline for this is January 22nd. Please contact [Ryan Baye](#) with your conservation district's selection.

For more information about the NACD annual conference, visit NACD's conference website (<https://events.bizzabo.com/NACD/home>).

Potential conference highlights include: a presentation in part by **Laura Johnson** on district communications, a session hosted by **Pierce CD** on two of their projects (Floodplains by Design and a new carbon credit program), and the inauguration of NACD President-Elect **Michael Crowder**.

2. No COVID at Plant Materials Center!

Great news this week that our WACD Plant Materials Center folks were tested for COVID and everyone tested negative! We continue to follow our COVID plan to keep people safe and well.

3. House RDAN committee members appointed

2021 [House Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee](#) members:

- Chair: [Rep. Mike Chapman](#) (D – Port Angeles), Ranking Member: [Rep. Bruce Chandler](#) (R – Granger)
- Democratic Reps: Shewmake (Vice Chair), Fitzgibbon, Kloba, Lekanoff, Morgan, Ramos, and Springer
- Republican Reps: Kretz (Assistant Ranking Member), Dent, Klicker, McEntire, Orcutt, and Schmick

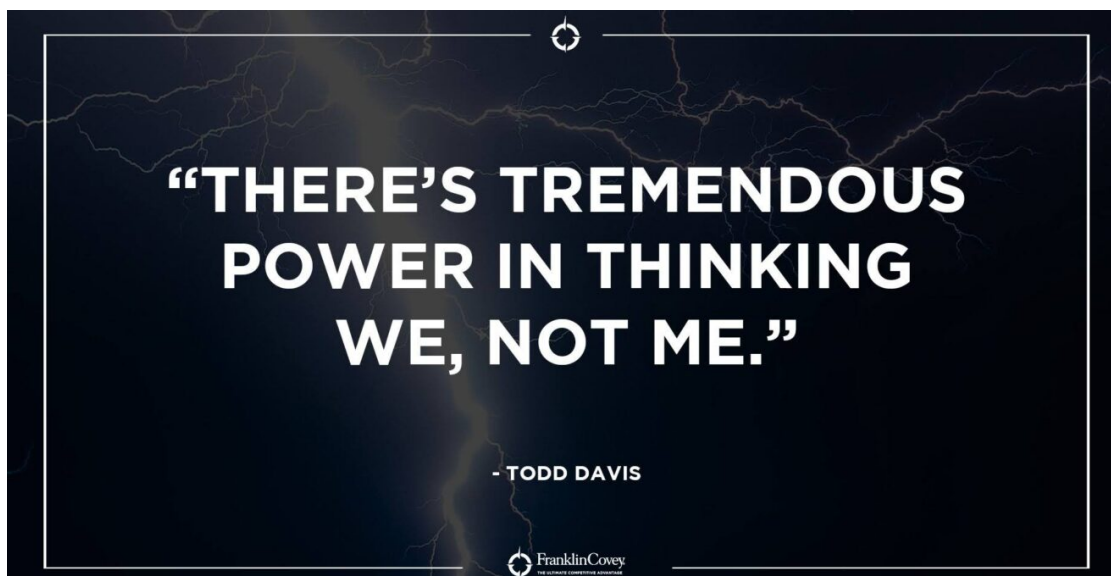
4. Senate Ag committee members appointed

2021 [Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources, & Parks Committee](#) members:

- Chair: [Sen. Kevin Van De Wege](#) (D – Sequim), Ranking Member: [Sen. Judy Warnick](#) (R – Moses Lake)
- Democratic Senators: Salomon (Vice Chair), Stanford, and Rolfes
- Republican Senators: Honeyford (Assistant Ranking Member) and Short

5. See you next year

The WACD-Olympia staff are taking a post-conference break between Christmas and New Years. That means this is the last 5 Things newsletter in calendar year 2020. You can still [email us](#) and [leave us phone messages](#). It's likely that we'll succumb to temptation and check our email and messages at some point next week so do reach out if you have questions! Our very best wishes to you!



Executive Corner

Dear weblinx,

This week I am focused on spending time with my family. Particularly this year, I feel the need to hold my family close. While we can't all be together in person, we can be together in spirit. While technology can [divide us](#), it can also help us to [stay connected](#).

As we approach the end of calendar year 2020, I want to express my appreciation to many folks.

You welcomed me back from my nine-year sojourn in Oregon. There were a few curve balls tossed my way but nothing too hard to handle. You expressed how you really felt, and even when that was uncomfortable, the underlying spirit of caring about each other was there. You remained committed to your success in your local community and to the success of your collective community in Washington State and beyond.

I appreciate that most of us have retained our health despite enduring COVID-19 and wildfires this year. I appreciate that our conservation districts and partners have found ways to weather those challenges and still focus on delivering services to the people in their local communities.

I appreciate that the reputation and credibility of our conservation district community not only remains strong, it is ascendant. I appreciate the many partners and sponsors who lined up with us this year to help us deliver better service and support to our conservation district members.

I appreciate the flexibility and adaptability of our entire Washington conservation district community: your sense of grace and patience, and your continued desire to serve when and where needed.

Within Washington State, the one entity that consistently shines like a beacon of hope is our very own [Washington State Conservation Commission](#). Having seen how state conservation agencies operate in several other states, I know how unique and precious are our Conservation Commission folks...not just the staff but also the commissioners. Our community is much stronger because of guidance and assistance from the Commission.

I appreciate our incredible, steadfast national partners...not only the [National Association of Conservation Districts](#) and the [National Conservation District Employees Association](#) and the [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#), but also the [National Association of State Conservation Agencies](#) and the [National Association of Resource Conservation & Development Councils](#).

Even though we have had many moments when we weren't sure how the year was going to go, we

have a lot to be thankful for. I am thankful for my entire family -- not only the people I am related to, but also the people I relate to.

I am looking toward 2021 with a sense of hope and anticipation.

With deep appreciation,

Tom Salzer, Executive Director
exec@wadistricts.org



As we begin to work on updating our five-year summary of adopted resolutions and the status of each, we begin with an updated list of all such resolutions.

We will work on updating the status of each during January. Download the five-year summary in PDF format from the [Resolutions page](#). Once we finish updating the status of each resolution, we'll post that information to the Members page under the Resolutions tab.

We need you on Slack!

Slack stands for *Searchable Log of All Communication and Knowledge*. The Slack account exists to promote conservation community success in Washington State by facilitating communication and the exchange of information. [Contact Tom for an invitation](#). We would love to see you there!



More from the WACD Plant Materials Center

COVID-19 Update – As mentioned last week, two employees tested positive for COVID and the Skagit County Health Department requested that we have all employees tested to determine if there were more employees that have it. As it turns out, everyone tested negative, thank goodness. All precautions continue since there are around 30-40 new cases being reported daily in Skagit County.

Sales – There is not a new sales report this week to review but several new sales have been posted. Sales should still be close to this time last year which is a pleasant surprise, what with a pandemic going on.

Harvest Continues – The PMC continues to lift plants from the field and bring them in for processing, adding more and more stock to the cooler. The crew deserves kudos for their hard work, especially the outside crew that help bring in the plants from the field. They worked in cold, windy rain yesterday. The temperature was almost freezing and we got over an inch of rain that was blowing sideways in the wind. Another thing to be thankful for is the sandy soil at the PMC. If we had heavy clay soil, we would have been shut down by muck and standing water.

The Holiday Season Nears – The PMC is going to be closed for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day so if anyone needs anything please let us know ASAP. We will also be closed for New Year's. A short break is welcome after three solid weeks of harvest. The staff at the PMC wishes everyone Merry Christmas,

a Happy New Year and many thanks for hanging in there in 2020, a year that will live in infamy.

Life Goes On – As demanding as the job is this time of year, I think everyone here appreciates that there is still a job to do and most importantly for their health and everyone's health. We wish the same to all.



More from the WACD Executive Office

Olympia office closed between Christmas and New Years – Ryan and Tom will be taking annual leave starting December 24th. Call (360-999-5151) or [write](#) if you need us but please don't expect an immediate response!



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!](#)

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.

Our conservation community

- [USDA Seeks Public Input on Guidance Defining Nonindustrial Private Forest Land Eligibility](#) | NRCS
- [NACD Urban Agriculture Conservation \(UAC\) Grant Initiative](#) | NACD - The deadline to apply is February 15, 2021 at 11:59 p.m., local time. [Click here](#) to access the online application form. To learn more about this initiative, contact NACD Pacific Region Representative [Ariel Rivers](#).
- [USDA Announces Increase to Certain Incentive Payments for Continuous Conservation Reserve Program](#) | FSA
- [USDA Engages Public for Input on Water Quantity in the West](#) | NRCS
- Job: [Columbia CD Seeks District Manager](#)
- Job: [Walla Walla County CD seeks Project Manager for Restoration Projects](#)
- Job: [King CD seeks Ag Drainage Coordinator](#) (PDF)
- Job: [Asotin County CD seeks Archaeologist - Cultural Resource Specialist](#)
- Job: [Palouse seeks Grants and Development Manager](#)
- Job: [Jefferson County CD Seeks District Manager](#)
- Job: [Riparian Habitat Stewardship Coordinator, King Conservation District \(Renton, WA\)](#)

Agriculture / Food

- WA: [Central Washington farm fined more than \\$2M after COVID-19 deaths](#) | king5.com
- MAINE: [Seaweed Industry Stays Afloat, Seeks Growth During Pandemic](#) | US News
- US: [Distant Cousins Of Food Crops Deserve Respect And Protection](#) | NPR
- US: [Bees Absolutely Love Cannabis and It Could Restore Their Populations](#) | The Mind Unleashed
- FRANCE: [France to help farmers to abandon glyphosate weedkiller](#) | Reuters

Budget / Legislature

- [Meet Washington's New Legislators: Panel 1](#) | Washington State Wire
- [Meet Washington's New Legislators: Panel 2](#) | Washington State Wire
- [Democrats and Republicans reveal their parties' priorities for the next session](#) | Washington State Wire
- [Washington lawmakers face a tall order, including balancing the budget mid-pandemic](#) | The Pacific Northwest Inlander
- [WA state Gov. Inslee unveils budget, capital gains tax plan](#) | Bellingham Herald **AND** [Inslee dusts off capital gains tax and proposes new tax on insurance plans to fund public health](#) | NW News Network

Climate / Weather

- WA: [Governor Inslee announces climate package as part of his 2021-2023 budget](#) | Washington State Wire

- [Australian cattle feed invention equal to taking '100 million cars off the road' wins international prize](#) | TheHill **AND** [Australian 'super seaweed' supplement to reduce cattle gas emissions wins \\$1m international prize](#) | ABC News

COVID / Pandemic

- NEW STRAIN: [UK coronavirus variant: What we know and what we don't](#) | CNN **AND** [Scientists urge concern, not alarm over new virus strains](#) | Columbian.com
- US: [US deaths in 2020 top 3 million, by far most ever counted](#) | AP News **AND** [Why Americans are numb to the staggering coronavirus death toll](#) | The Washington Post

Diversity / Equity / Inclusion

- [Getting People to Care About Economic Inequality](#) | Psychology Today - Drs. Pia Dietze and Maureen Craig wanted to see what kinds of messages are persuasive when it comes to getting people to support action to address economic inequality. In *a new set of studies*, they tested two types of messages: ones that emphasized the disadvantages of belonging to a lower social class versus ones that emphasized the advantages of belonging to a higher social class.
- [Survey: COVID-19 affects all aspects of life for low-income families](#) | The Spokesman-Review
- ["We Are the Same as the Salmon": A Story of Suffering and Perseverance](#) | NRDC

Fire

- WA: [Malden gets new fire truck](#) | The Spokesman-Review
- OR: [Heat, wind and a cruel twist of nature: inside Oregon's nightmarish wildfire season](#) | The Guardian - *What was about to unfold would test resources to unprecedented extremes, all while smoke poisoned the air for miles around. Nine Oregonians would die, nearly 1m acres would burn, 4,500 buildings, too. Several woodland towns and two suburbs would suffer the brunt of it.*
- [Wildfire Smoke Is Loaded With Microbes. Is That Dangerous?](#) | WIRED **AND** [Wildfire smoke can carry microbes that cause infectious diseases](#) | Phys.org

Fish / Wildlife / ESA

- [For the first time in more than 80 years, salmon spawning in the upper Columbia River](#) | The Spokesman-Review - *Colville Tribal biologists counted 36 redds (a gravelly nest in which female salmon lay their eggs) along an 8-mile stretch of the Sanpoil River, a tributary of the Columbia, in September. "I was shocked at first, then I was just overcome with complete joy," said Crystal Conant, a Colville Tribal member from the Arrow Lakes and SanPoil bands. "I don't know that I have the right words to even explain the happiness and the healing."*

Forests / Forestry

- [Genetic engineering can save the American chestnut tree from a deadly fungus](#) | Massive Science **AND** [History of the American Chestnut](#) | The American Chestnut Foundation

Health

- [Why 'how are you?' is such an important question](#) | Management Issues - *Looking at aggregated data from 1.75 million employee engagement surveys carried out this year, more than five per cent of employees provided free-text comments that spoke of fatigue, feeling overwhelmed and other warning burnout signals...According to the data, this is in uncharted employee-burnout territory...How can HR leaders respond? ...our recommendation is to start with one of the most straightforward habits to help your employees rebuild connections and best direct their energy: conversations...Conversations allow us to develop a shared understanding, encourage creativity, and help us to make decisions. One-to-one conversations are critical for making sure that people are not only focused on the right things, but also getting the support they need within the team.*
- [Your Answers to These 3 Questions May Show You're More Stressed Than You Think](#) | Inc.com
- [Are you on the brink of burnout?](#) | Thrive Global
- [People Who Confuse These 3 Critical Words Have Very Low Emotional Intelligence](#) | Inc.com

Invasives

- [Spotted wing drosophila's Asian foe found in Washington](#) | capitalpress.com **AND** [Giant hornet trap finds potential tool for fighting second invasive pest](#) | KIRO7

Management / Leadership / Governance

- [Want Someone to Be a Better Leader? Send Them This Link and Watch What Happens](#) | Inc.com
- [Gary Vaynerchuk Says if Your Employees Aren't Performing Now, You Need to Do 3 Things](#) | Inc.com
- [Understanding Why Some People Reject Science](#) | Psychology Today
- [When Work Feels Like Family, Employees Keep Quiet About Wrongdoing](#) | HBR - *It may be easy to believe that if you witnessed a crime at work, you would immediately report it to the authorities. But in the 2019 National Business Ethics Survey, 45% of people worldwide reported witnessing wrongdoing at their workplace, yet around one-third of those potential reporters did nothing about it. As our research illustrates, there are many reasons — some that may seem well intended — which stop people from reporting.*

Soil

- [Dirty Trees Shape Earth's Hydrologic and Carbon Cycles](#) | Eos
- [Ecologists study how soil fungi respond to wildfire](#) | Phys.org

Technology / Information Technology

- [Cyber-attack halts services at Ellensburg city hall, potentially comprising private data](#) | ifiberone.com **AND** [City of Ellensburg hit with ransomware attack, all data and drives inaccessible](#) | KIMA
- [SolarWinds hack continues to spread: What you need to know](#) | CNET
- [Microsoft Teams: This new feature will let you wipe out annoying background noise](#) | ZDNet
- [5 cybersecurity predictions for 2021](#) | Security Magazine

Water

- [Targeting U.S. wetland restoration could make cleaning up water much cheaper](#) | AAAS
- [Scientists develop new land surface model including multiple processes and human activities](#) | Phys.org

We appreciate our sponsors!

Many thanks to our generous sponsors for helping us support Washington State's conservation districts. Find links to these organizations at <https://wadistricts.org/sponsors>



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