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## The 5 Things for March 26, 2021

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Dear weblinx,

Please accept my apologies for the 5 Things being one day late this week. I spent Wednesday and Thursday on the road, visiting member districts...and I have to confess that I did not want to stop! Our year of isolation has been difficult on all of us and I found my in-person visits affected me emotionally much more deeply than I had expected.

### Budgets are coming out into the light

With **budgets emerging** this week from behind House and Senate doors, WACD staff have been busy with numerous phone calls and emails. While we are still waiting for one more budget to be announced, so far the budgets are looking pretty good for our conservation district members and for the Washington State Conservation Commission. By early next week, we'll have a much clearer picture of what the House and Senate are proposing. That information will help shape our messaging as we work toward garnering the funding that our member districts and the Commission need to succeed.

Ryan's "Legislative Flavor" for March 25 provides great context. Find it at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/03/legislative-flavor-for-march-25-2021/>.

Simultaneously, we are working with others during **NACD virtual advocacy week** to carry member needs to Washington D.C. Between the budget revelations from the Washington State Legislature and work toward congressional messaging and visits, it's been a bit overwhelming.

### Committees

The first meeting of the **Joint Committee on Elections (JCE)** was held this week. It went well, with open sharing and a review of some of the history leading up to the formation of the Committee. The JCE has some members who are deeply experienced in conservation district election matters and some who are new to district elections, and these folks are drawn from across the state. It's a good mix of knowledge, experience, and perspectives. I am hopeful that the JCE will help us move forward with choices that will work well for our conservation district family. Stay up-to-date at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/wacd/committees/joint-committee-on-elections/>.

This week, WACD also interviewed another consultant experienced in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) challenges. Our intent is to hire an experienced facilitator to help the **Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CDEI)** as it works toward developing the recommendations contained in the DEI resolutions adopted in December 2020. We have not yet formally appointed members to this committee but I expect that will happen quite soon. Once we complete that step, committee members will be listed on the Committees page (<https://hub.wadistricts.org/wacd/committees/>) and we will set up a special page for the

CDEI, similar to the JCE page.

## Plant Materials Center

The WACD PMC is at an annual inflection point when winter harvest and packaging transition to preparing fields and growing new stock. While most of us are thinking of the next year or two of goals and tasks, our PMC staff are often looking a bit farther down the road, predicting species and quantities that will be needed three to five years ahead. I am constantly amazed at how well they are able to forecast those needs and then fulfill them! Find their weekly report at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/03/plant-materials-center-update-march-25-2021/>.

## Washington Conservation Planning Partnership

Last week, I mentioned the [National Conservation Planning Partnership](#), also known as the NCPP. A new group is forming in Washington State that we are calling the **Washington Conservation Planning Partnership** (WCPP). We met early this week to begin working through a proposed plan to help move the capacity and quality of conservation planning forward.

My personal perspective is that there is no magic wand when it comes to building capacity. This kind of thing is a long-term investment of time. More than that, it's an investment of heart and appreciation for the vital work done by conservation planners. I say vital because where would we be without our conservation planners helping landowners make great choices? I am hoping that the WCPP can help to inspire greater interest and excitement in planning.

## Finance Committee met this week

The WACD Finance Committee met this week to discuss some direction received from the WACD Board of Directors in November 2020 and to begin work on tasks for 2021.

## WACD reading list

There are more new links for you to peruse in **WACD's Reading List** that we maintain at <https://raindrop.io/collection/15979489>.

## Executive Corner

Since I've been on the road the past few days, I'm way behind. The draft column I had prepared earlier in the week doesn't fit with the positive, upbeat tones I've been experiencing this week, so I'm going to quickly craft a new column this morning. It will be about the need to appreciate your people in all of their important roles. Find my thoughts posted in [The importance of appreciating our people \(or where I use the L word\)](#).

Always yours for conservation,

Tom Salzer, Executive Director  
[exec@wadistricts.org](mailto:exec@wadistricts.org) – (360) 999-5151 X101

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# 5 Things to Know

## 1. Legislative Flavor: budgets!

Find this at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/03/legislative-flavor-for-march-25-2021/>.  
Teaser from Ryan's article: "...I will shout from the rooftops that **\$5,000,000** in Conservation Technical Assistance is included in the proposed Senate Operating budget for the '21 - '23

*biennium."*

## 2. Plant Materials Center transition time

It is a time of transition as harvest has concluded and preparation for planting begins. Read Jim's report at: <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/03/plant-materials-center-update-march-25-2021/>.

## 3. WACD financials

In the interest of transparency we have posted WACD financial summaries for the current fiscal year at: <https://hub.wadistricts.org/wacd/dues/finances/>

## 4. Applications for RCPP alternative funding arrangements

Potential partners are invited to propose RCPP projects where NRCS and partners co-invest in impactful and innovative solutions to on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns. A webinar for partners will be held on April 1, 2021 at 3pm EDT. Learn more at: <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/03/applications-open-for-rcpp-alternative-funding-arrangements/>

## 5. WACD signs onto letter to USDA Secretary Vilsack

WACD is pleased to partner with others to welcome Secretary Vilsack back to USDA and extoll the virtues of the Sustainable Farms and Fields program. Get more at: <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/03/wacc-letter-to-usda-secretary-vilsack/>

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### Partners are important!

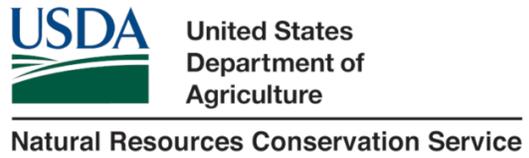
Find our list of partners at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/wacd/partners-sponsors/partners/>.

- [Friends of NACD](#) – Your contributions provide funding for technical assistance grants to conservation districts.
- [Washington Conservation Society](#) – WCS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization so your contributions are tax-deductible. If you make purchases through Amazon Smile, a portion of your purchases goes to WCS in support of their programs and initiatives.

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### We appreciate our great sponsors

Many thanks to our generous sponsors for helping us support Washington State's conservation districts. Find links to these organizations at <http://bit.ly/WACDSponsors>.



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1219 11th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501  
(360) 999-5151