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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

5 Things to Know for April 8, 2021

1. Whidbey Island CD Firewise in the news

This week, Whidbey Island residents joined the Department of Natural Resources and other agencies and organizations to clear out brush and low-hanging branches known as ladder fuels. It was part of Firewise, a national program sponsored by the National Fire Protection Association, which provides guidance and grants for communities to make their neighborhoods resistant to wildfires.

The Firewise program in Washington is coordinated by the state's largest fire department, the Department of Natural Resources. Spreading the Firewise message on the island is Kelsi Mottet, the Natural Resource Planner for the [Whidbey Island Conservation District](#).

- Video at: <https://king5.com/embeds/video/281-3d441280-8b78-4152-b08d-e255027cdd9e/iframe?jwsourc=cl>
- Published article at: <https://www.king5.com/article/tech/science/environment/whidbey-island-fire-protections-firewise/281-ae77459-feac-49cd-b0c7-3e01882e913b>

2. Save the date for the WADE conference

The WADE Annual conference is going virtual again this year. There will be some new tracks this year with plenty of great content being developed for everyone. The conference will also feature a keynote speaker, social hours, and fun activities for networking and connecting with others from our statewide conservation district family. Save the dates now and be ready for a great event!

- **June 14-16, 2021 @ 9:00-3:00 each day**
- **Schedule and registration coming soon!**

3. WACD Board of Directors to meet April 19th

The WACD Board of Directors will hold a regular business meeting on Monday, April 19 at 6 pm. As a reminder, the Board is meeting every month on the third Monday, alternating between work sessions and regular meetings. The April meeting is a regular meeting. We expect that a proposed WACD budget will be the topic of the May work session.

4. Ryan's "Legislative Flavor"

With most action on bills that could affect conservation districts has concluded, attention now turns to the state budget. And yet, even while several bills appear to be moving forward and others are no longer viable, the reality is that much can change in very short order. Ryan has more on this for you in his article at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/04/legislative-flavor->

[april-8/](#).

5. NACD and NCF annual reports published

- The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) has released their 2020 annual report. Find it at: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/ab1640c2-8088-4a3a-a736-48818a7f4e75>
- The National Conservation Foundation (NCF) has also published their 2020 annual report. Find it at: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/75487d2b-8282-4a2f-92d6-ed038328d470>

Dear weblinx,

It's a lightweight 5 Things today. The sun came out, the scheduled legislative session is more than halfway completed, and everyone is busy. And while I have a few Executive Corner topics simmering away in the background, nothing is really ready to serve up right now.

WACD office hour on Friday, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

For those who want to have a video chat, Tom will have a Zoom office hour on Friday, April 9 from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. Ask questions, share information, discuss ideas! The floor is yours.

Join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89758635550?pwd=VFBoV3VkZFNZWkV4cjV4eVJNWtc3dz09>

Meeting ID: 897 5863 5550

Passcode: 779780

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Dial by your location

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Passcode: 779780

Thank you to our member districts

Last week we suggested that it was a perfect time to reinforce budget priorities with legislators. A number of conservation districts did exactly that. Members who reached out to legislators were effective. We know that because we've heard back from some legislators about their appreciation for conservation districts and recent conversations with them.

It gives me a great feeling to say thank you to conservation district folks for maintaining quality relationships with legislators. You may think that this is a one-sided arrangement where only your conservation district benefits, but that is not so: your legislators also benefit as you become a trusted source of information. You create value just as much as they do for you!

Congratulations to NACD TA grant recipients

You'll find information on this at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/04/nacd-announces-13-million-in-2021-technical-assistance-grants-nacd/>. For those who want the snapshot summary: eight conservation districts in Washington State received Technical Assistance grants from the National Association of Conservation Districts.

Renewed focus on riparian restoration

I am certain that you'll hear more about the renewed focus of the State of Washington on riparian buffers as we move from spring into summer. Please stay tuned for more. Right now all we have is some indications that more direction may be coming from the Governor. We don't have details yet so this is merely a "please keep your ears open" alert, not a call to action. WACD will continue to support voluntary, non-regulatory, local solutions.

Ch-ch-changes coming in our conservation districts

With every conservation district having to hold an election this year, I expect that we'll see some changes in elected conservation district supervisors. Some supervisor positions are also up for appointment. In May, the Conservation Commission will certify elections and make appointments so that's when we'll know where changes are happening to our people in the local governance role.

At the delivery system level, we will also see some changes. At present, there are [several job openings](#) in conservation districts, not only in Washington but in other states as well. I am seeing some of these openings remain unfilled for many months. Fortunately, there are still some great professionals in the job market so I am hopeful that we will continue to grow our statewide capacity through the hiring of superb district staff.

All of these changes present a great opportunity to warmly welcome people into our conservation community. I think it is important that folks know that we want them to be successful. WACD, WADE, WSCC, and CTD all stand ready to help our people succeed. At the end of the day, the mantra ought to be: when you succeed, we succeed!

Committees

The **Joint Committee on Elections** (JCE) will be meeting again next week. The schedule going forward is for the JCE to meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

WACD is waiting for the third proposal from a diversity, equity, and inclusion consultant to help facilitate the **Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** (CDEI). This cost is not in our budget so we expect to make a recommendation to the WACD Board of Directors at their [April 19 board meeting](#).

Plant Materials Center

No update this week from the WACD Plant Materials Center. As you can imagine, sunny (or at least not rainy!) spring days mean lots of fieldwork at the PMC and it is "all hands on deck" right now. We'll catch you up on the great undertakings at the PMC very soon!

Always yours for conservation,

Tom Salzer, Executive Director
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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.

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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