



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

5 Things to Know for August 12, 2021

Dear weblinx,

1. Conservation Commission strategic plan comments due Monday

This coming Monday, August 16th is the deadline period to comment on the draft goals from the State Conservation Commission's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. Please take a look, if you haven't done so yet, at their outlined five priority areas and goals, then drop them a line on their website. Find their comment form at:

<https://www.formstack.com/forms/?4427616-YnVVjtKqf=>.

2. CD elections listening session done, comments by August 18

The Joint Committee on Elections held a listening session yesterday with good participation and questions. The JCE is tasked with providing recommendations on conservation district election reforms to the Conservation Commission in September.

You can review the JCE's draft proposal and submit feedback. Comments are due by the close of business on August 18, 2021.

1. [Review the JCE's draft proposal for CD election reform](#)
2. [Submit feedback and ideas using this form by COB on August 18, 2021](#)

3. District Directory question: delete contact information?

Last week we asked for feedback on this question: **should we include personal contact information or not in the District Directory?** With only 20 responses in, the result is almost a tie. We'll extend the deadline for responses to August 25 in the hope of being guided by more people. Here is the survey form link:

<https://forms.gle/YXLfEKjL3wAK2TSH8>

4. Building Better series has a smashing debut

The first Building Better webinar went very well. Jeremy Peters, CEO of the National Association of Conservation Districts, was the featured speaker. His calm grace and openness made for a great session. Building Better is a regular series with events scheduled several months forward. Learn more at the [Center for Technical Development](#) (and please note that the CTD site has a link to automatically add the Building Better events to your calendar).

5. When talking with legislators, ask for what you need

We've had interesting conversations with several conservation district community members over the past few weeks about how much funding to seek from the Legislature. There is a difference between individual districts asking for financial support and asks from groups like

WACD and the Conservation Commission. Ours is a grassroots system, so your asks become powerful drivers in the overall system.

Don't sell yourself short when seeking funding. Just like selling a car, it usually works better to start high and compromise downward; doing this in reverse just doesn't work! If you ask your legislators for funds, please tell them what you really need.

While WACD may ultimately have to work toward a compromise package at lower funding levels, the process will likely work better if you don't lowball what you need. Asking for what you really need also demonstrates your belief in your district and your commitment to your community.

From your Executive Director

Two Executive Corner columns!

I bring you not one but two Executive Corner columns this week. Late last week, a conversation with WACD President Jeanette Dorner and others sparked some reflection about my own discomfort in talking about diversity, equity, and inclusion. I share my thoughts on this in ***The Discomfort of Discussing DEI*** at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/08/discomfort-dei/>. I'm sure that I'm not alone in sometimes feeling uncomfortable, but those are also growth moments.

Yesterday, I captured a more complete version of my comments at yesterday's first Building Better webinar event. Some attendees had asked for the list of books I mentioned so I have included those books with links to learn more about them. Read ***My Transition from Management to Leadership*** at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/08/transition-to-leadership/>.

Your Plant Materials Center continues to grow

While there might be a double meaning in the title above, it's true that plants continue to thrive at the PMC and sales have grown to a surprising level for this time of year. Please remember that when you utilize the PMC for your plant sale and project needs, you are also supporting your state association. Some of the earnings from the PMC pay for other WACD services, effectively reducing your WACD dues. Just as important, your support means that the PMC can continue to provide native plant materials for you well into the future. Read the latest PMC update at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2021/08/pmc-update-20210812/>.

Conservation district email system: what to do?

Back in the long ago when I worked at the Conservation Commission, I set up a couple of Google Apps instances so conservation districts without email could get it at no cost. That system appears to have been running fairly smoothly for well over a decade, but what you don't see is what goes on behind the curtain. It is sometimes surprisingly difficult to manage the system. When I left the Commission in 2010, other Commission staff picked up this work and I applaud them for sticking with it for so long.

WACD is in discussion with Commission staff about how to move forward with managing the work of administering the Google mail system for conservation districts. The more I dig into this, the more complicated it becomes. I expect to survey conservation districts before the end of the calendar year on this topic so that your needs can guide us as we work to find more robust solutions. Please reach out to me anytime at tsalzer@wadistricts.org with your thoughts and questions.

Always yours for conservation,

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- [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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