



WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

RESOLUTION 2022-08

SHORT TITLE: 2022-08 Shared Conservation District Resources

SPONSOR CD: Clark Conservation District

AREA: NW SW NC SC NE SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- Policy
- Position Statement
- Recognition
- Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY (check any option that applies):

- WACD
- WSCC
- OTHER STATE AGENCY \_\_\_\_\_
- NRCS
- NACD
- NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER \_\_\_\_\_

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Because of our locally-led nature, Conservation Districts (CDs/Districts) throughout Washington State are unique. However, we all operate with many commonalities in our requirements, services, and the challenges we face. In addition, each of Washington's CDs has drastically different financial positions, enabling or limiting the various resources each District can engage with, including legal counsel, human resources, information technology, file/data management and archiving, etc. And while there are do-it-yourself resources for some activities, such as the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC), Enduris, the State Auditor's Office, and others, more generalized resources do not always meet District's needs.

Lower-resourced Districts are frequently required to make trade-offs in the expertise they employ or contract, and most often choose to employ technical staff who conduct the on-the-ground work that benefits our constituents. This trade-off comes at the expense of hiring or contracting with specialists and disproportionately burdens Districts with smaller teams to become the experts in everything. Working with experts is essential to ensuring our compliance with laws and best practices, as well as creating efficiencies for the long-term success of Districts.

We have seen examples of successfully sharing resources across CDs, for example, Area Engineers and IT staff, and this could be expanded based on the needs of Districts. As communication has become more regular in the last few years, the increased District to District collaboration between District



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Managers/Executive Directors as well as their staff have benefited all of our Districts. Several key areas of need have been identified\*:

- Human Resources
- Legal Counsel
- Information Technology
- File/Data Management and Archiving (paper and electronic)
- Financial Consulting for Software, Processes, and Policies
- Grant Writing

\* Listed generally in the order the sponsoring District has heard agreement from other Districts participating in conversations about the topic.

### PROPOSED RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

Resolved, that WACD shall work with WSCC staff and a group of District Managers/District Staff to engage the Association's membership to address the need and opportunity for expanded shared resources and services for the following areas of need and service:

- Human Resources
- Legal Counsel
- Information Technology
- File/Data Management and Archiving (paper and electronic)
- Financial Consulting for Software, Processes, and Policies
- Grant Writing
- Capacity Building
- Training and Education

Based on that work, WACD shall develop a list of next steps that shall include the following items:

- Funding options for the support of best practices and compliance for Districts, including:
  - Grants;
  - Budget requests;
  - The creation of a 501(c)(3) to support District training, infrastructure, education, capacity, and facilitate discounted shared resources.
- Opportunities to fund a part-time position to assist with setting up resources and services that Districts could use at a discount.
- A list of the most needed resources that are able to be shared.

WACD shall report to the membership by June 30, 2023.

### TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

- Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- New policy.



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**ARE WACD RESOURCES (FUNDING, STAFF CAPACITY, ETC.) REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?**

**NO**

**YES** (briefly explain): Some WACD staff time will be needed to facilitate collaboration and potentially to explore funding options.