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## 5 Things to Know for January 27, 2022

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Dear weblinx,

Here we are at the end of week #3 of the 2022 Legislature. [WACD testified on HB 1838](#) at the end of last week, and today we testified on [HB 1910 concerning conservation district elections](#). While we heard some misinformation and inaccurate assumptions about conservation district elections, the testimony provided by most conservation district representatives was quite powerful. Thank you to all who signed in, submitted comments, or testified. WACD will continue to work on HB 1910 as one of our highest priority items this session. Keep track of important bills on our frequently updated [Legislative Watch List](#).

### 1. Legislative session is consuming most of our time

You know about the [WACD Legislative Watch List](#). You should know about subscribing to [WACD's Legislative Updates newsletter](#). You probably picked up on [WACD's 2022 legislative priorities](#) in last week's 5 Things newsletter.

What you may not know is that we are tracking more than just the 23 bills this session on the Watch List. Several other bills are on our radar but they tend to be much more localized in nature. What this means is that the WACD Executive Office staff is pretty much fully consumed by legislative work on behalf of WACD's membership. We are working with WACD's lobbyist, with representatives of agricultural and environmental groups, with agencies (including the Conservation Commission), and others. It is a complex dance that shifts and spins several times each day.

### 2. WACD strongly opposed HB 1910

Our testimony on [House Bill 1910 concerning conservation district elections](#) was limited to 90 seconds and started with: *"We strongly oppose House Bill 1910. This bill would devastate the voluntary conservation model in Washington by replacing conservation projects with more administration. We should be investing in more conservation instead of diverting limited funds to pay for elections and the processing of waivers."* Read more and find the link to view the testimony at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2022/01/wacds-testimony-on-hb-1910/>.

### 3. Legislative Week went well...we think

We believe that WACD's Virtual Legislative Week went well but it's hard to know because our member districts are of course very busy! [Please let us know](#) how your appointments went and if WACD needs to follow up with any of your legislators. We will be happy to assist.

### 4. Next Legislative hurdle is Thursday, February 3

Next Thursday is the first big cut-off for bills to continue through the legislative process, needing to be approved by their initial policy committee to keep moving forward. Because the legislature (usually) schedules committee meetings in advance, we have our first look at which

bills will survive beyond next week. You can look [into the future](#) on the WACD Hub.

## 5. Plant Materials Center update

Staffing is temporarily reduced at the WACD Plant Materials Center due to following COVID protocols. This comes at an unfortunate time as harvest and packing are in full swing. Nevertheless, we believe that the PMC will meet and exceed goals. [Read more in the January 27 PMC update.](#)

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## Recent Posts on the Hub

- [First Legislative Cut-Off Next Week](#)
- [WACD's testimony on HB 1910](#)
- [Plant Materials Center update: January 27, 2021](#)
- [DNR HCP Reporting and Research Coordinator, NR Specialist 3](#)
- [Natural Resource Planner - Whidbey Island CD](#)
- [WACD opposition to HB 1910](#)
- [Summary of WACD positions on 2022 legislation](#)
- [How to Be a Great Supervisor: Insights Learned from 20 Years of Managing\\_| Blue Avocado](#)
- [Week 2 General Legislative Review](#)
- [Legislative Alert: January 20, 2022](#)

See the full list of Recent Posts at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/posts/>. Also see the articles WACD staff are reading at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/resources/wacd-reading-list/>.

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## From your Executive Director

### Unity despite our differences

I deeply appreciate the differences our people bring to the work of conservation. While we often disagree, we usually align very strongly around the values that WACD has adopted as our [ten guiding principles](#):

1. *We exist to advocate for, and support, member conservation districts.*
2. *We serve people with dignity and respect, acting with integrity and operating with transparency and accountability to all.*
3. *We continually seek to become more capable of serving members, including maintaining financial strength, enhancing board capacity, and improving staff capacity.*
4. *We value and recognize our people for excellence in performance, including teamwork, innovation, timely completion of tasks, and support of others.*
5. *Our responses to conservation issues are founded on proven methodologies and science.*
6. *We form and support strategic partnerships to maximize our effectiveness and to reduce duplication of effort.*

7. *We seek to conserve natural resources in the way we operate our organization.*
8. *We believe in, and uphold, the practice of locally-led, voluntary, incentive-based conservation.*
9. *Private lands – and those who steward them – provide unique and valuable conservation of renewable natural resources to be used today and by future generations.*
10. *Because natural resources cross jurisdictional boundaries and ownerships, all lands – and the people and entities that manage them – are important in conserving renewable natural resources.*

It's important to recognize that we will have differences and that we must give each other permission to express those differences. WACD strove to create those conditions for participants at the 2021 WACD annual business meeting, and for most of that meeting, we succeeded. One incident, though, has resulted in much introspection. I am truly sorry for the unsatisfactory experiences some of our members had at the annual business meeting but I know we will use those experiences to do better. I believe that we have room to improve in how we invite and hear different points of view.

With 30 years in our conservation district community, I have the advantage of some hindsight. I remember well some very ungracious, aggressive annual meetings. I remember being "othered" from time to time. I remember how deeply uncomfortable I felt when I was treated dismissively and with little respect. Fortunately, we have moved beyond most of the conditions that sometimes occurred three decades ago. That doesn't mean we don't need to improve. Rather, it proves that we *can* recognize the need to improve and we *can* implement positive changes.

Fast forward to today when we heard some views about House Bill 1910 from people in King County. Most of those ideas don't align well with the majority of our members. However, I urge you to not get too upset about those ideas. Being a major metropolitan center in the United States with a national and even international focus, King County often serves to push the conversation on many issues in Washington State. Translation: sometimes we hear things that don't seem to fit with the way we see things, but that doesn't necessarily mean the ideas are automatically wrong or worthless. I invite you to consider how ideas that don't fit into your worldview may still provide value.

One life lesson my mother gave me in my teens was about making mistakes: "If you learn from your mistake, it was not a wasted experience." The take-home message for me, today, in that context, is: we can not only learn from the different views that our members espouse but we must learn from them!

That's deep enough for this week. It is truly an honor to serve the Association as we strive to help build a better future for all conservation districts.

## Weekly quotation

Clearly, unity is on my mind this week!

***"Unity to be real must stand the severest strain without breaking."*** – Mahtama Ghandi

This quotation from Rudyard Kipling is one of my all-time favorites:

***"For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack."*** – Rudyard Kipling

Yours in conservation,

Tom Salzer, Executive Director

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- [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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