



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

## 5 Things to Know for March 17, 2022

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Dear Thomas,

### 1 – WACD Board to hold work session March 21

The WACD Board of Directors will hold a work session at 6:00 pm on Monday, March 21st. This is a public meeting and we invite you to attend. The draft agenda with meeting connection details are posted on the [Board Meetings page on the main website](#).

### 2 – Additional budget details

In addition to the State Conservation Commission's budget, WACD and WSCC track funding in other agency budgets for conservation district-related activities. Pulling from the Operating, Capital, and Transportation budget, Ryan Baye (WACD) provides additional budget details built from work done by Ron Shultz (State Conservation Commission). Learn more: [Additional Budget Details](#)

### 3 – When will the Governor approve the budget?

The short answer to the question of when the Governor will approve the operating and capital budgets is: we don't know. We have heard that he is expected to approve budgets in early April. The Governor has 20 days after the legislative session ends to sign bills. To determine the 20 days, the days counted are weekdays, Saturdays, and holidays. By our count, he will have to sign the budget by April 1st. We should know the outcome by April 2nd.

### 4 – Conservation Commission meeting held today

Today the Washington State Conservation Commission thanked Kirk Robinson for his service as Interim Executive Director and officially welcomed Chris Pettit as the Commission's new Executive Director. Many topics important to conservation districts were covered. The distribution of new money by the Conservation Commission will be decided in May. See the agenda: [WSCC March 17, 2022 agenda](#)

### 5 – NACD Spring Fly-in next week and issue papers

NACD's Spring Fly-in will be [held virtually on March 22](#). The Conservation Commission and WACD are coordinating on several messages to share with our congressional delegation in Washington DC. NACD has published [issue papers for fiscal year 2023](#) to assist conservation districts in 2022 Spring Fly-in meetings with legislators. Those issue papers include the topics of [Appropriations](#), [Climate Change](#), [Forestry](#), and [Wildlife Management](#).

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See the full list of Recent Posts at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/posts/>. Many news articles that mention Washington State conservation districts are [shared on Flipboard](#). In the [WACD Reading List](#) we capture many articles of interest to segments of our community.

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## From your Executive Director

### Can we deliver?

Now that the Legislature has passed the operating and capital budgets, conservation districts are understandably eager to get started on delivering results. If you are one of those districts, you've probably already heard the advice to wait until the Governor signs the budgets. Why? Because the Governor can veto parts of the budget. We don't really know what is final until he finishes brandishing his veto pen.

My suggestion is to make plans but don't make commitments until we know what the final outcome is.

***"Good fortune is what happens when opportunity meets with planning."*** – Thomas Edison

### The real question is: what do you need to succeed?

Some worry has been voiced that with such an unprecedented windfall of money, conservation districts may not have the capacity to effectively use those funds. In a few camps, folks think that the voluntary conservation approach is being set up to fail. Others have been heard to say that conservation districts should be very careful not to overcommit.

It seems to me that both of those perspectives come from a glass-half-empty view based on fear (fear can mean "forget everything and run!" or it can mean "face everything and rise!"). Instead of thinking about what could go wrong, we should invest some energy in figuring out how to overcome the barriers to conservation district success.

***"Because some people see a wall, and assume that's the end of their journey. Others see it, and decide it's just the beginning."*** – Angeline Trevena

For many districts, that barrier is staff capacity. It takes time to plan for new positions, recruit, hire, and onboard people. It also takes infrastructure: a place to work, vehicles, cell phones, email accounts, and more. Everything takes time and as we all know, conservation districts are already using all their available time.

Some barriers may be insurmountable, at least in the short term. For example, project

permitting can take a year or more, depending on the locale and the type of project. If money must be spent quickly, the projects with long timelines may see little benefit.

## Preparing for next year

By the time the Governor approves funds and systems are put in place to grant those funds to conservation districts, there may not be much time left to utilize those resources this summer. Without results to show, that could set the stage for a more difficult fight for conservation funding in the 2023 Legislative session.

***"There is no more neutrality in the world, you either have to be part of the solution or you're going to be part of the problem — there ain't no middle ground." – Eldridge Cleaver***

This summer is when WACD needs to start strategizing for the 2023 session. The Conservation Commission's two-budget proposal will be due to the Office of Financial Management in September 2022. That gives our community very little time to parlay district successes into budget requests.

It is paramount that conservation districts keep WACD and Conservation Commission staff informed as they use new money this year. We need every advantage in working with legislators and budget writers so that we can continue to find support for voluntary conservation in the upcoming two-year budget.

## Work with your legislators

Just as important this year is your relationships with legislators. This summer, more than most, presents a critical opportunity to invite legislators to see your projects and meet your satisfied landowners. The quality of your relationships is a foundation stone in the effectiveness of WACD and the Commission as we work to support conservation districts.

***"They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."***  
– Carl W. Buechner

Yours in conservation,

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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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