



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

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## 5 Things to Know for September 8, 2022

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**This year marks WACD's 80th anniversary, a remarkable achievement by our conservation community.** The draft annual conference page is available at:  
<https://hub.wadistricts.org/annual/2022meetings/conference/>.

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**Dear Thomas,**

### 1 – WACD Board meeting on September 19th

The WACD Board of Directors will meet on Monday, September 19th. A draft agenda will be published on Monday and available on [WACD's Board Meetings webpage](#). Meanwhile, we know that a couple of interesting topics are likely to make the agenda.

One such topic is potential bylaw amendments that the WACD Board would like members to provide feedback on at the area meetings before any official proposal is made. One idea under consideration recognizes the way in which conservation districts function has evolved over the past few decades. It would acknowledge that WACD could benefit from the professional knowledge, skills, and abilities of conservation district staff. This possible change to the bylaws would allow one of the two area director positions in each area to potentially be filled by a conservation district employee.

### 2 – Would you nominate for these wildlife awards?

It is WACD Award season, and there are [seven awards now open for nominations](#), ranging from Associate Supervisor of the Year to Educator of the Year and more who might deserve recognition.

However, two awards offered previously — the Wildlife Farmer of the Year award and the Wildlife Steward of the Year award — are not available for nomination this year. Those two awards have recognized the work of local district cooperators both large-scale and small-scale for more than twenty years. Unfortunately, WACD's policy automatically drops awards that have not received a nomination for the prior two years and these two had to be removed,

The WACD Board of Directors holds the power to reinstate these awards. Our question to you is: would you nominate someone for one of these awards if the Board reinstated them for

2022? [Please let Ryan or Tom know](#) before September 19th so that this information will be available to the WACD Board at their September meeting.

### 3 – Area meeting schedule has changed!

An unexpected scheduling conflict arose after the area meeting schedule was set, resulting in a change for the Southeast Area Association. Previously scheduled for Thursday, October 25th, the meeting in Clarkston has been moved up to Friday, October 21st. The schedule on the page for 2022 area meetings has been updated to reflect this change. Link:

<https://hub.wadistricts.org/annual/2022meetings/areas/>

Actions for area associations will include electing representatives to the WACD Board of Directors and deliberating resolutions to advance to WACD's statewide annual meeting.

- Tuesday, October 11th – Coupeville – NW Area Meeting hosted by Whidbey Island CD
- Wednesday, October 12th – Chehalis – SW Area Meeting hosted by Lewis CD
- Wednesday, October 19th – Waterville – NC Area Meeting hosted by South Douglas CD
- Thursday, October 20th – Davenport – NE Area Meeting hosted by Lincoln County CD
- *Updated:* Friday, October 21st – Clarkston – SE Area Meeting hosted by Asotin County CD
- Wednesday, October 26th – White Salmon – SC Area Meeting hosted by Underwood CD

### 4 – Resolution template and primer now available

Resolutions are how WACD sets its priorities, based on proposals from member districts and input from the entire membership through local, regional, and state-wide deliberation over several months. To help conservation districts craft resolutions, Ryan has updated the resolution template and resolution primer.

Resolutions are completed using a standard template [available in Word format](#), so the necessary information is available to all to read the proposal. And for those not familiar with the process and requirements, please refer to this [resolution primer](#). Staff is also available to answer any resolution questions or assist with crafting proposals.

**Reminder: September is the time to be working on resolutions to take to your area association meeting in October.**

### 5 – September Building Better Session – Wednesday, September 14th

This month's [Building Better session](#) (Wednesday, September 14 starting at 1 pm) is meant for non-managers to learn about the pathways to becoming a District Manager. Managers will discuss their expectations going into the job, the reality of the position, and how to prepare for the job. There will be plenty of time for your burning questions. All conservation district supervisors and employees are welcome!

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### Fall nears: new schedule for the Five Things

For May, June, July, and August, WACD published the Five Things to Know newsletter twice a month. As fall approaches with all the area association meetings and inklings of potential

legislation arise for the 2023 session, we are shifting the publication schedule back to weekly for September, October, and November.

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## Recent Posts on the Hub

- [Conservation District invites everyone to 75th Anniversary open house | \\_Orcasonian.com](#)
- [NACD Hiring Pacific Region Representative](#)
- [Communications and Marketing Specialist - Snohomish CD](#)
- [USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant Open for Applications](#)
- [Jobs: Natural Resources Technician — Clark CD](#)
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- [WSDA seeks Senior Nutrient Management Inspector, SW WA](#)
- [To Make Better Hires, Learn What Predicts Success | \\_HBR](#)
- [Engineer in Training - Snohomish CD](#)
- [Community Conservation Program Manager - Snohomish CD](#)

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

### *We're different than we were 30 years ago*

As I begin to write this piece for our Five Things newsletter, I am reflecting on how things were when I entered this community 30 years ago. Back then, most districts had very few employees; only a few districts had more than a handful. Conservation districts are different now than they were before. They operate differently than before. Our people think differently than before. From my point of view, conservation districts are more effective and more capable than ever before in the entire history of conservation districts!

Those thoughts are in my mind as I think about the upcoming area association meetings in October and WACD's conference and business meeting at the end of November. These meetings provide ways for members to reinforce what they believe to be important, seek changes they believe will improve conservation delivery, and rise to leadership positions within WACD...and even serve on the Washington State Conservation Commission.

It is a time when we remind ourselves of what we care most about, what binds us together, and how we can become better. This mix of past, current, and future thinking can be confusing to some folks during the area meetings, especially when faced with new ideas that shake our

foundation a bit. I counsel patience. Ask a lot of questions. Seek to understand the issue and solution from the other person's point of view, and then compare that to your own thinking. The goal is not always to remain comfortable, but instead, to become better able to achieve your conservation mission. Sometimes, getting to better doesn't feel completely comfortable.

Two years ago, WACD sought to capture what we care most about by adopting mission and vision statements along with ten top principles. If you haven't reviewed that information recently, please take a look at the post at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/2020/11/wacd-adopts-new-strategic-plan/>. The ten principles remain strong guideposts for how WACD chooses to operate on your behalf:

- 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.*

## **Focus on flexibility**

To move forward in ways that honor what we believe but also respect the needs of others, we need to embrace our principles while simultaneously being flexible and forgiving. Every conservation district person I know has strong beliefs. When strong beliefs are voiced, you may be viewed as strident, inflexible, and even demeaning to others. What is really more important: making sure you get your voice heard or making sure you hear other voices? More than ever, we are faced with changes in every aspect of our lives, so if you wish to be a part of the present, it becomes imperative to understand the issues that others are bringing to the table.

And that brings me full circle to area association meetings and resolutions. I guarantee you will hear ideas you don't like. You will also hear ideas you do like. My suggestion is that you seek to understand what you are hearing before trying to help others understand your point of view. If every one of us can pause and reflect on what we are hearing, we stand a better chance of being able to move forward as a community.

Of course, none of us is a perfect, completely logical processor of information. I certainly know

that I do make mistakes. Sometimes, because I care so deeply about conservation districts and the voluntary, locally-led process, I react emotionally rather than logically. Like you, I am a great example of an imperfect human. It is really quite bothersome to be faced with that reality every day!

With that, I'll bring this long piece to a close. I hope you have an amazing end-of-summer, beginning-of-fall season. We have much to be thankful for in our lives, and embracing a sense of gratitude — even if it is just for a few moments as you read this — can make the day better.

I am grateful for you.

Yours in conservation,

Tom Salzer, Executive Director  
[tsalzer@wadistricts.org](mailto:tsalzer@wadistricts.org)

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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.

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