



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

5 Things to Know for April 6, 2023

Dear Thomas,

This week we give a special shoutout to the Pierce Conservation District for [hosting Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland and USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Xochitl Torres Small](#) in a tour of The Farm at Franklin Park Schools in Tacoma. PCD Chair Jeanette Dorner and PCD Executive Director Dana Coggon were joined by representatives of the State Conservation Commission and WACD to talk about priorities for the next Farm Bill.

THE FIVE THINGS TO KNOW

1 – WACD Budget Reconciliation Priorities

[WACD published a letter](#) sent earlier this week to legislative budget leaders stressing the importance of funding for Conservation Technical Assistance and riparian restoration projects in the FY23-25 state budget. We only get a few moments of time in the flurry of work facing legislators so we highlighted the most critical of needs for our community. We strongly encourage individuals and districts to contact their legislators with your local budget priorities. We expect a final budget to be available by Friday, April 21st. The Conservation Commission's financial staff did an excellent job [detailing the differences](#) between the House and Senate proposals, and WACD staff would be happy to provide additional assistance.

2 – Spokane CD Urban Forestry Initiative Highlighted

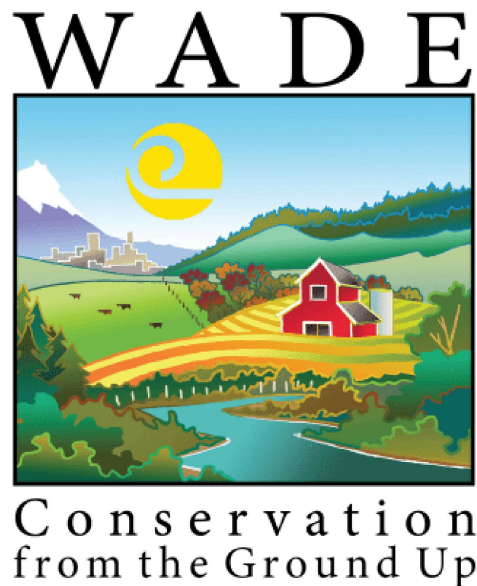
Those who subscribe to the NACD Conservation Clips already saw [this article](#) about Spokane's Urban Forestry Initiative posted on the NACD blog. WACD always appreciates the opportunity to showcase a district's success to the rest of our membership. We encourage you to check out the article and give it a read.

3 – District Employee's Conference Open for Registration

[Registrations and scholarships are now open](#) for the 2023 WADE Training Conference. The opening session will feature Ken Bevis, Stewardship Wildlife Biologist with the Department of Natural Resources. As usual, a wide range of topics suitable for conservationists of all ages will be presented!

The WADE Conference will once again be at the Sleeping Lady in Leavenworth on June 12-14, 2023 with an option for virtual participation. A silent auction will be held again this year.

Early registration ends April 21st so [check out the agenda](#) and [register and apply for a scholarship](#).



4 – PMC Update for April 6

It's not an April Fools Day joke: the PMC really is caught up on field activities, sales, and shipping! Sales are still above budgeted targets. Some money was moved from a bank account into certificates of deposit to protect those assets and guarantee interest growth.

After 16 years with the Plant Materials Center, Bill Mulder (Farm Operations Supervisor) is retiring. Replacing him is Oscar Arias who brings years of farming and mechanic experience to the operation.

The PMC continues to encourage conservation districts to order their plants early. This is a big help to the PMC and it helps assure that districts get the plants they need. Districts can also contract for plants. [Get the full report on the Hub](#).

5 – WACD Board Meeting on April 17

The WACD Board of Directors will hold a regular business meeting on Monday, April 17 at 6:00 pm. Details will be posted on the [Board Meetings page](#) as they become available.

Executive Corner: Trust

In my comments [a few weeks ago in this newsletter](#), I managed to ruffle some feathers. I wrote:

...there remains a perceived lack of trust between some conservation districts and the Commission. Lack of trust is usually not a one-way street. The Conservation Commission and conservation districts need to work on improving this relationship.

My observation was based on comments WACD board members and staff have been hearing from conservation district folks. I was speaking of the entire organization (not of any individual Commissioner or employee) as reflected to us from the community.

There is also a larger context here, and that is how we choose to react and respond in such situations.

I subscribe to the concepts put forth by Don Miguel Ruiz in his bestselling book, [The Four Agreements](#). His thesis is: ***everything we do is based on agreements we have made — agreements with ourselves, with other people, with a supreme being/creator, and with life. The most important agreements are the ones we make with ourselves.***

The Four Agreements are:

- Be impeccable with your word.

- Don't take anything personally.
- Don't make assumptions.
- Always do your best.

I think in this instance, agreements #2 and #3 may be in play. I think some people did take personally my comments about trust not being a one-way street. I hoped my observation would cause our community members to engage in some introspection. To work through such an important issue as trust, we need to acknowledge such feelings, particularly when we don't understand or see the basis for such feelings.

To have meaningful, productive conversations on important topics, we need to slow down enough to take in what others are saying. No one of us has a monopoly on truth. I certainly don't! Each of us sees only a fragment of the totality of a situation and we see it from the context of our own life experiences. My life has not been your life, so I see things from my perspective. Your life has not been my life, so I can't expect that you will automatically see things from my point of view.

Mom helped me understand this maxim: if there's a problem, first look in the mirror. Whenever she said this, she was trying to teach me that problems are rarely one-sided and that my actions or beliefs might actually be contributing to the problem. That was a tough lesson when I was 12 years old! But I think the lesson has great value. Whenever we are experiencing some kind of discord or disconnect, it pays to look at ourselves in the mirror and ask why we feel this way.

That's deep enough for this week!

Always yours for conservation,

Tom Salzer, Executive Director

Recent Posts on the Hub

- [Plant Materials Center Update April 6, 2023](#)
- [Watershed Restoration and Assessment Intern](#)
- [WACD Budget Reconciliation Priorities](#)
- [Week 12 General Legislative Review](#)
- [Plant Materials Center Update March 30, 2023](#)
- [WACD Special Board Meeting](#)

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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