

[View this in your browser](#) | [Send us feedback](#)

# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

---

## 5 Things to Know for April 27, 2023

### Sine Die Edition

The 2023 legislative session is officially over. The primary focus of WACD for the last six months, since last October's area meetings, reached its conclusion Sunday when the legislature adjourned "Sine Die" (indefinitely). Everyone's outreach contributed to this year's historic funding increase, but this would not have been possible without the self-evident success of your local projects and programs alongside our conservation on-the-ground mentality. While the impact of this budget on the Conservation Commission is still being sorted ([a copy of which is available here](#)), this was a significant year for voluntary conservation funding.

---

## THE FIVE THINGS TO KNOW

### 1 – Operating Budget Highlights

Over **\$55 million dollars** was granted in new programmatic funding, bringing the Conservation Commission up to \$97 million in operating funds for the FY23-25 biennium. WACD's priority in Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) funding was not fully realized, but a \$1 million increase to nothing to sneeze at. WACD is grateful that this increase will be ongoing. Among the other new funding to help conservation districts achieve the goal of on-the-ground conservation:

- \$3 million for outreach and implementation of salmon riparian habitat projects with an additional \$2 million to develop and implement a riparian buffer outreach plan.
- \$5 million for CDs to address unhealthy forests and build community resiliency to wildfire with \$10 million for the Commission to provide Firewise grants.
- \$30 million to the Sustainable Farms and Fields Program, with up to \$6 million of that total available for technical and financial assistance.

### 2 – Capital Budget Highlights

**\$63.5 million** is the total the Conservation Commission is set to receive in capital budget funding for FY23-25, an increase of almost \$40 million compared to the previous biennium. The bulk of that expansion comes from \$25 million for riparian restoration grants, satisfying a WACD priority that riparian grants be funded through the capital budget. Other programs were funded at, or above, target amounts including:

- \$15 million for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- \$4 million for Natural Resource Investments
- \$4 million for Farmland Protection
- \$3.5 million to Improve Shellfish Growing Areas
- \$3 million for VSP Project Funding

### 3 – District Election Study

As expected, \$154,000 is allocated in the final operating budget to the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to study the costs and benefits of shifting all five supervisor positions to the general election ballot and Title 29A. A preliminary report will be due December 1 of this year, and the final report must be published by June 30, 2024. You can view the [full proviso language](#) on the WACD Hub.

### 4 – Legislative Report

The policy bill most likely to impact WACD's member-districts going forward is [SB 5353](#). This is the Voluntary Stewardship Program re-enrollment bill, allowing the twelve counties not currently participating in VSP a new opportunity to enroll in the program. There are seventeen other bills on our final WACD's [2023 Legislative Watch List](#).

WACD Lobbyist Brynn Brady provided a breakdown of all the bills adopted this session, you can view that, along with all the new legislation related to agriculture and environment on the [WACD Hub](#).

### 5 – "It ain't over 'til it's over"

Those immortal words of Yogi Berra seemed appropriate during this first month of baseball. With the legislature adjourned, Governor Inslee now has his part to play in the legislative process. The state constitution gives him 20 days after adjournment to sign, completely veto, or partially veto bills. If the Governor does not sign a bill within the 20-day window, they become law without his signature. You can track his actions on the [Governor's official website](#).

---

## Recent Posts on the Hub

- [Election Study Proviso Language](#)
- [Legislative Review - Sine Die Report 2023](#)
- [Plant Materials Center Update April 20, 2023](#)
- [Conservation Commission tour & meeting](#)
- [Week 14 General Legislative Review](#)
- [Week 13 General Legislative Review](#)

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.

---

## We appreciate our great 2022-2023 sponsors

Many thanks to our generous sponsors for helping us support Washington State's conservation districts. WACD encourages you to consider patronizing these sponsors in thanks for their important support:: <https://hub.wadistricts.org/annual/2022meetings/conference/#sponsors>



- [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)
  - [Washington State Conservation Commission](#)
  - [Arrowleaf Consulting](#)
  - [envu](#)
  - [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife](#)
  - [The McGregor Company](#)
  - [Enduris](#)
  - [Pheasants Forever](#)
  - [Rainier Seeds](#)
  - [JTII](#)
  - [BFI Native Seeds](#)
  - [Northwest Farm Credit Services](#)
  - [Wilbur-Ellis](#)
  - [Plants of the Wild](#)
- 

## Pass it on!

Please pass this newsletter on to others in our conservation community so they can subscribe and be as informed as you are!

**SUBSCRIBE**

---

**Visit the Hub to stay informed!**

**<https://hub.wadistricts.org>**

**We welcome your [feedback](#)**

[Subscribe](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage your subscription](#) | [Contact WACD support](#) | [Send us feedback](#)  
1219 11th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501  
(360) 999-5151

