



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

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## 5 Things to Know for May 4, 2023

### Summer Schedule Starts Now

As we did last year, we are moving our publication schedule to the first and third Thursday of the month, starting now and continuing through August. This month, we'll publish the Five Things on May 4 and May 18. Weekly editions of the Five Things will resume on Thursday, September 7. Special editions may be published from time to time if needed.

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## THE FIVE THINGS TO KNOW

### 1 – BUDGET: Waiting on Historic Conservation Funding

Now that the Legislature has approved the various budgets, we must wait and see what the Governor keeps. His 20-day deadline is fast approaching. That means we won't have to wait very long to hear the final outcome of months and months of work by the Conservation Commission, conservation districts, and WACD. *(Thank you to Conservation Commission staff for putting together a [helpful explainer of the budget](#).)*

While it may feel like this dish is fully cooked — and indeed, it's been baking in the oven long enough that we all want it to be done! — it's not done quite yet. There were so many nuances during this session that it is difficult for most of us to immediately understand the budgets, the sources of funds, restrictions on different fund sources, and much more. While we wait, and while the budgets are being analyzed, this is a great time to imagine the possibilities these funds may present to your conservation district.

It is also a good time to take a moment to remember the many partners who worked with our conservation community to create good ideas and grow strong proposals. Our community benefited greatly from their support and this will translate to more programs and services for people and natural resources all across Washington State. WACD appreciates the great teamwork and help in moving multiple priorities forward in a particularly challenging session.

### 2 – UPCOMING: WACD and SCC Meetings

♦ **The WACD Board of Directors will hold a regular business meeting on Monday, May 15 starting at 6:00 pm.** Meeting information will be posted on WACD's Board meeting page at <https://wadistricts.org/board-of-directors>. The Board's June meeting will be held in person at the [WACD Plant Materials Center](#) in Bow, Washington.

♦ **The State Conservation Commission will have a planning session and a regular meeting the same week.** Find the pertinent information on the Commission's meeting page at <https://www.scc.wa.gov/commission-meetings>. The host district for this meeting is the [Benton Conservation District](#).

### 3 – UPDATE: DEI Work at the Conservation Commission

A brief plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion at the State Conservation Commission is [summarized in a one-page roadmap](#). The SCC-Conservation Districts roundtable this morning included a presentation by the consultants who are helping the Conservation Commission to understand and address DEI in the agency. This work is being done to comply with [Governor Inslee's Executive Order 22-02](#) titled **Achieving Equity in Washington State Government**.

According to the roadmap, this information will be presented to the Conservation Commission at their May meeting.

#### 4 – INFO: Election Study in Budget Proviso

WACD's Director of Legislative and Member Services, Ryan Baye, [posted the actual proviso language](#) concerning a study of conservation district elections. The very last item in the proviso language specifies the deadlines for reports: *"A preliminary report which contains any available information to date must be completed by December 1, 2023. A final report must be completed by June 30, 2024, and submitted in accordance with RCW 43.01.036 to the standing committees of the house of representatives and the senate with jurisdiction over elections and conservation district issues."*

#### 5 – LEGISLATURE, Part Two: Special Session Called

Governor Inslee will [call the Legislature back](#) to Olympia to address drug laws. This special session is [expected to start on May 16](#).

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#### 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.

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#### Executive Corner

Cool nights, some warm days, and even some warm rain: summer is almost upon us and fieldwork has already started for many projects. In recognition of the amount of activity going on by conservation district board members and staff, some conservation districts hold fewer meetings in the summer.

WACD will be doing the same thing. At the Board level, the June meeting of the Board of Directors will be the last regular meeting until September. WACD staff will cut back on the frequency of the Five Things to Know newsletter, from May through August.

What does WACD staff do in the summer? You might think the answer is: not much! However, summer for WACD is just as busy as our more visible work in the fall and winter. This summer, WACD staff will be focusing on several activities:

- **Coordinating committees, work groups, and task forces.** This year, we have several committees than ever. Learn more about these groups on the WACD Hub at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/wacd/committees/>.
- **Focusing on actions required by resolutions.** During the legislative session, WACD staff do not have much time to devote to implementing resolutions recently adopted by members. Summer is when we can invest more focused time and energy on resolutions.
- **Developing legislative strategies for the 2024 session.** WACD staff have already been meeting with some partners and with our contract lobbyist on how to approach the next legislative session.

- **Assisting conservation districts as they prepare to host area association meetings.** With six unique areas covering the state and a new host district every year, this work is often a big lift for us. In 2024, it seems a bit more of a lift because we will be working with some new conservation district staff.
- **Planning WACD's annual conference and business meeting.** This has been difficult work the last over the last three years because of COVID-related issues. WACD's annual conference will again be in Wenatchee at the end of November. This summer, WACD staff will also be working on potential locations for the 2025 and 2026 conferences.

Much of WACD's service work seems to occur behind the scenes during the summer months. As a member-focused organization that provides representation, advocacy, and service, WACD's work continues year-round.

Always yours for conservation,

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

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