



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for May 18, 2023

Summer "Five Things" Schedule

WACD's [Five Things to Know newsletter](#) is on a summer publishing schedule, coming to you on the first and third Thursday of each month until September, when we will resume a weekly newsletter schedule. The Five Things newsletter is our primary vehicle to share information with members and partners, so if others in your workgroup are not subscribed, please encourage them to [subscribe today](#).

FIVE THINGS TO KNOW

1 – BUDGET: Historic Budget Signed by Governor

On Tuesday, [Governor Inslee signed the operating and capital budgets](#) for the 2023-2025 biennium.

***Salmon:** Final budgets include \$732 million to implement the state's salmon recovery strategy with a focus on protecting and restoring riparian areas along rivers and streams, as well as continued correction of fish passage barriers.*

We'll have more on the budget in our next edition of the Five Things. It is taking more time than usual to grasp the limitations and details of the various sources of funds. Usually, conservation program funding doesn't change, so we know going in, and coming out, most of the parameters associated with those programs.

This year was very different. This year, we faced some unknowns up to the very last day of the legislative session. Our usual trusted sources for this information also struggled to understand all of the details.

Meanwhile, State Conservation Commission staff have put together a [helpful explainer of the budget](#). This explainer is a few weeks old and I'm sure we'll hear final details from the Commission very soon.

2 – DONE: WACD and SCC Meetings

♦ **The WACD Board of Directors held a regular business meeting on Monday, May 15.** The Board's June meeting will be held in person at the [WACD Plant Materials Center](#) in Bow,

Washington.

♦ **The State Conservation Commission held a strategic planning session on Wednesday, May 17 and a regular meeting on Thursday, May 18.** Interestingly, Conservation Commission staff are developing a dashboard approach to tracking and reporting activities and accomplishments. Their dashboard will be based on [Smartsheet](#), a tool many conservation districts are familiar with.

3 – COMMITTEES: Upcoming Meetings

- The **Livestock Committee** will meet on May 24. One of the resources they are looking at is the 1989 memorandum of understanding between the Department of Ecology and conservation districts. Find that document under the Downloads tab on the [Livestock Committee page](#).
- The [Finance Committee](#) will also meet on May 24 to review WACD's draft budget and make recommendations on same to the WACD Board of Directors.

4 – INFO: NACD Committees Announced

NACD President Kim LaFleur has been working overtime to restructure NACD committees. Washington State has had active representatives on several NACD committees, resource policy groups, and task forces. That has changed with only two people representing Washington State on the Natural Resources Committee.

The motivation behind these changes revolve around two ideas. First is equity. Many states have been powerful actors in NACD committees, and one ripple effect of this is to reduce opportunities for other states and territories to contribute. Committees have been restructured with this in mind. Second is a desire to refresh committees and seek new ideas and ways of solving problems.

From NACD:

First, attached please find the [current roster for NACD Standing Committees and Subcommittees](#). In addition to the three new standing committees approved by the board, NACD President Kim LaFleur has established six subcommittees to take up specific topics and to report back to standing committees: Leadership Development, Outreach, Water & Climate, Invasive Species, Forestry and Public Lands. Careful consideration was given to board member feedback in making committee and subcommittee assignments as was regional distribution to ensure equity across regions. Subcommittees also benefit from recruitment of additional district official and district employee participation. Also note that staff co-leads have been assigned to work with their respective committee/subcommittee chairs, vice-chairs, members and advisors.

Second please also find attached a [guidance document](#) that has been developed to help aid as committees and subcommittees begin their work. This document may evolve over time as the new committee structure is implemented, so stay tuned for any updates.

These changes may appear to some as if Washington (and other states) are being cut out of participating in NACD's work. We believe these changes signal a need for Washington State representatives to alter how they work with NACD. Instead of leading from near the front, our people will need to become better at leading from behind, i.e., developing relationships with

committee members and remaining active in the work of committees.

You may also be interested in the [annual report just published by NACD](#).

5 – LEGISLATURE: Special Session Called, Legislation Signed

Governor Inslee called the Legislature back in a [special session](#) that started on Tuesday, May 16: *"The session will focus on passing a new drug possession law."* Crosscut offers some [background on the special session](#). Later that same day, [Governor Inslee signed a compromise reached by the Legislature](#).

Upcoming

2023

- **July 19-20:** [State Conservation Commission tour and meeting — Wenatchee, WA](#)
- **August 23-25:** [NACD Pacific and Southwest Region meeting — South Lake Tahoe, CA](#)
- **September 18:** [WACD Board of Directors meeting](#) — online
- **September 20-21:** [State Conservation Commission tour and meeting — Clarkston, WA](#)
- **November 27-29:** WACD Annual Conference and Business Meeting — Wenatchee, WA
- **November 30:** [State Conservation Commission meeting — Wenatchee, WA](#)

2024

- **February 10-14:** [NACD 78th annual meeting — San Diego, California](#)
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Recent Posts on the Hub

- [The NACD 2022 Annual Report Has Arrived!](#)
- [PEI is Hiring Regional Associate Directors](#)
- [WFFA: Carbon Markets and Management Incentives for Small Family Forest Owners](#)
- [Senior Program Manager, Columbia Plateau](#)
- [Jefferson County CD Seeks Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant](#)
- [NACD SW/Pacific Region Meeting in South Lake Tahoe](#)

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.

Executive Corner

Funding for conservation programs in Washington's operating and capitol budgets has reached unprecedented levels. We have never before seen funding like this.

With big jumps in funding come big expectations and challenges. Across our conservation community, all of us are going to be pressed to scale up to handle the additional workload associated with increased funding. The takeaway here is that doing things the same old way may not work like it has before in every aspect of your conservation work.

It's time to consider how we can become more effective and efficient. We can expect more data to be collected. How will you capture it, process it, save it, and share it? We can expect more technical staff on the ground. Where will you find them? How will you bring them into your organizational culture and acquaint them with your policies and procedures? We can expect more attention to be paid to every person and organization in our widespread community. How will you represent your organization? Can you use this attention to build an even stronger coalition of support for your work?

We are all facing change. Change is scary, even when it is positive change. Change can unsettle us, interrupt our rhythm, and cause us to second guess ourselves. But here's the thing: our people are the most experienced and proficient at developing and delivering voluntary conservation services in Washington State. Each and every one of us is a leader in the voluntary conservation movement. If we can face the pressure to change with open hearts and minds, we won't become diverted by fear and doubt. Instead, we'll explore new ways of working and eventually, we'll look back on this time and be amazed at how much we have improved.

You've heard references before to the cup being half full or half empty. The reality for our community is the cup is overflowing with challenges and opportunities. It's going to be very easy to feel overwhelmed. Remember that you are not alone and that the entire community wants you to be successful, just as you want your colleagues to be successful.

Nobody understands your work like your peers. If you are a conservation district board supervisor and feeling uncertain or unsettled, reach out to other supervisors. WACD can help connect you with peers who can help mentor you through this time. If you are a conservation district employee, reach out to other employees that do work like you do. WADE is there to help you grow and improve. Our partners face the same challenges so please be understanding as they, too, grapple with change.

I want you to recognize that it isn't our organizations or our standards or our operating practices that make us leaders in conservation, it is our people. It is you, and the people around you. It's easy to lose sight of how critically important people are in the conservation delivery system as we talk about big programs, big pots of money, and big efforts. At the end of the day, it all comes to rest on the shoulders of people, individually and collectively.

As you face a future filled with change, and as you perhaps feel challenged and overwhelmed, please remember that you, and those you work with, are the most important pieces in this equation. We talk about programs and goals and accountability and more, but really, this all comes home to you and those you work with. We will succeed when we support each other

and support the entities that represent and support you.

Always yours for conservation,

Tom Salzer, Executive Director
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