



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

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## Five Things to Know for December 7, 2023

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## 1 – Annual Conference Numbers & A Survey

### *The conference, by the numbers*

Here are some interesting numbers about the 2023 WACD Annual Conference:

- 39 conservation districts participated online or in person
- 66 individuals attended virtually
- 136 individuals attended in person
- 14 different partner entities attended (includes some sponsors)
- 26+ speakers
- 27 sponsors

### *We want and need your feedback*

To help us make improvements and ensure the WACD annual conference remains relevant and useful to you, we ask that you complete a survey about this year's conference. The **2023 WACD Annual Conference Survey** is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/N8LB6BQ>. We'll keep it open until the end of the month. Please take a few moments to give WACD the gift of your feedback.

## 2 – Conference Videos & Photos Available

### Videos

WACD staff have been processing video recordings this week and posting them online to WACD's Vimeo account. Find the videos at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/108306481>.

Staff are still working on the videos. Most are uploaded. Some captions need to be updated. The Wednesday business meeting is a big file and processing it is going slowly, but it should be online before the close of business tomorrow (Friday).

### Photos

WACD has posted some photos from the conference to a Flickr account. Find the pictures at <https://flickr.com/photos/199624543@N07/albums/72177720313045591>

More photos will be posted when we finish posting conference videos. If you captured some images during the conference, we'd like to include them in our photostream. Send them to Tom at [tsalzer@wadistricts.org](mailto:tsalzer@wadistricts.org).

### Sponsor videos available

WACD also invites you to view some sponsor videos at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/annual/2023meetings/conference/#sponsors>

Sponsors help WACD provide more service and content at the annual conference, and their support is deeply appreciated.

## 3 – Final Resolutions Are Now Available

WACD has processed all of the changes to resolutions that occurred during the WACD annual business meeting last week. Download "Resolutions adopted - 2023" from the WACD Resolutions page at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/wacd/resolutions/> or hit this link to download the file directly: <https://hub.wadistricts.org/download/resolutions-adopted-2023/?tmstv=1701900116>

## 4 – New WACD Officers Elected

WACD members elected three individuals last week:

- **Mark Craven** (Snohomish Conservation District) was elected to a two-year term as WACD Treasurer, replacing **Dave Fenn** (Lewis County Conservation District). Fenn had reached his term limit and could not run for Treasurer again.
- **Barbara Bailey** (Underwood Conservation District) was re-elected to a two-year term as WACD Secretary.
- **Doug Rushton** (Thurston Conservation District) was re-elected to a two-year term as WACD's National Director. This will be the final term for Rushton as he will reach his term limit in 2025.

## 5 – James Thompson Hired as SCC Executive Director

At the regular meeting of the Washington State Conservation Commission, the Commission voted to complete the hiring of James Thompson for the position of Executive Director. WACD welcomes James to this important role and we look forward to working with him.

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### Upcoming Events

#### 2024

- **January 8:** [Washington State Legislature short session begins](#)
  - **January 15:** [WACD Regular Board Meeting](#)
  - **January 18:** [State Conservation Commission meeting – Lacey, WA](#)
  - **February 10-14:** [NACD 78th annual meeting – San Diego, California](#)
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### Executive Corner

#### The WACD annual conference was great...and it wasn't

Looking at the numbers reported above, the picture that resolves in one's mind is of a great conference. My impression is it was one of the better conferences WACD has ever produced. One of the qualitative measures I look for is whether folks skedaddle after sessions and meals, or if they hang out and talk. This year, there was a lot of hanging about and talking. Conclusion: it must have been a good conference!

Thank you for what felt like a very good conference, indeed! Your survey responses will help us figure out what worked and what might be improved, and we'll use that information to help prepare your annual conference and business meeting in 2024.

We did miss some voices this year. One voice I kept listening for and not hearing was that of Ron Shultz. I felt his presence throughout the conference, but I also felt his conspicuous absence. We will be entering the 2024 legislative session without Ron working alongside WACD for the first time in a very long time. I miss him, and I think I'll be reminded of this as we dive into legislative and budget matters next month.

And Albert Roberts! Albert was an "always" attendee. He never missed a chance to participate, to listen, and to share his point of view. Losing Ron and Albert in one year was shocking. I still hear their voices, and so I haven't quite accepted that they have walked on before the rest of us.

The other voices we missed were those of the absent conservation districts. With 39 of 45 conservation districts participating, we had most of the ingredients for a great conference. Eighty-seven percent participation is not bad, but it could be better, and it should be better. We

need those absent voices to help with the discussion and deciding of important matters. It could have been an even better conference if we had every conservation district represented. Helping those missing six conservation districts come to the annual conference and business meeting in 2024 will be one of my priorities next year.

The speakers WACD found provided a strong, interesting slate of topics and expertise. We were extremely fortunate that our extra effort to find sponsors resulted in a record number of entities signing on to help support the conference for WACD members. Please do let them know you appreciate their help.

I am deeply grateful to have been a part of a very good conference so I'll close with some gratitude quotations. I hope at least one of them resonates with you.

*"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."* — John F. Kennedy

*"When eating fruit, remember the one who planted the tree."* — Vietnamese Proverb

*"Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things."* — Robert Brault

*"What separates privilege from entitlement is gratitude."* — Brené Brown

Always yours for conservation,

Tom Salzer, WACD Executive Director

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## Latest Posts on the Hub

- [Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group Executive Director Position](#)
- [Holiday Letter to Members and Partners](#)
- [Palouse CD Seeks Conservation Planner](#)
- [Conservation district hosting annual plant sale | Peninsula Daily News](#)
- [Buy a beer, plant a tree: local program sees first plantings | The Daily World](#)
- [James Thompson named executive director of SCC](#)

See the full list of Recent Posts at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/posts/>. We capture many articles of interest to our community in the [WACD Reading List](#).

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## Latest on the [Reading List](#)

- [Gray and Oregon Road fires were among the most destructive in Washington history | The Spokesman-Review](#)
  - [How researchers, farmers and brewers want to safeguard beer against climate change | AP News](#)
  - [USDA plant hardiness zone map update gardeners climate warming : NPR](#)
  - [Climate change is hastening the demise of Pacific Northwest forests - Columbia Insight](#)
  - [Farm bill, funding updates | WAWG](#)
  - [Addressing the Elephant in the Room | Psychology Today](#)
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