



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for December 21, 2023

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1 – Legislative Day Details!

We have secured the Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Lacey/Olympia with a group discount for folks planning to attend WACD Legislative Day on Thursday, January 25th. To reserve your room please follow this [link](#). Once the link is clicked it'll take you to the website, at the top click "book now" and enter the dates (January 24th - January 25th), click "search" and the next page will display the room rates and types. If you need to book a reservation outside of the dates, you can call the hotel directly (1-360-491-7985) to make or modify your booking.

WACD is also offering legislative scheduling assistance to districts that would prefer not to make their own arrangements, please contact ryan@wacd.org by Jan 5th.

2 – WACD Websites Are Changing

WACD has three websites: the [main, public-facing site](#), the [WACD Hub](#), and the [WACD PMC site](#). Our main site and the Hub are both moving to new hosting services.

Our main site is moving to Streamline

We are excited to share with you that the main site at <https://wadistricts.org> will look different around January 1st. We'll have much the same content as before but the look and feel of the site will be different. We are moving our main site to Streamline to make our content more accessible to website visitors who may have auditory, visual, or motor impairments.

The Hub is moving to a new host, too

The WACD Hub is similarly moving but to a different hosting service altogether. We need more reliability than we've been experiencing and believe the new host will deliver that for us. Also, running the two websites on different hosts gives us more resiliency in the event one host has a major problem.

The Hub will continue to be available at <https://hub.wadistricts.org> until January 1st, at which time it will become <https://wadistricts.us>. After the changeover, if you happen to hit the old URL, you'll be whisked to the new Hub location. You'll know it's the new Hub if the page has blues and greens instead of the sienna brown that stood out on the old Hub site.

As we get into the new year, you can expect to see seldom-used features of the Hub disappear as we work to make the content more focused and improve the responsiveness of the website. Currently, the Hub leans toward an "everything but the kitchen sink" approach, making it slow and cumbersome to use. We aim to fix that.

3 – Annual Conference Survey

It is not too late ~ we still 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.

4 – Legislative Services

Come January, WACD will start gearing up its legislative services for the 2024 session. The two most apparent products will be a WACD bill tracker accessible on our website and a weekly legislative newsletter. These newsletters every Monday will provide more detail than the weekly 5 Things and will contain information we believe pertinent to our member-districts: new bills introduced, opportunities to testify in committees, and weekly highlight by our lobbyist on legislative action outside WACD's purview. You can subscribe to that newsletter [here](#).

WACD can also provide more specific services to conservation districts, on top of the association's own advocacy for our membership. That may take many different forms depending on your individual needs. WACD can take on the hassle of scheduling legislative appointments, complete funding request forms, write draft legislation, or another need your district has when it comes to promoting voluntary conservation in Olympia.

5 – Washington Conservation Society Legacy Programs

Creating a Legacy

The WCS Creating a Legacy Program was developed to honor members of our community who are making or have had a significant and long-lasting impact or influence on strengthening conservation practice or partnerships at the local, state, regional levels in Washington State and/or at the national level. WCS honored its first three inductees at this year's WACD Annual Conference: Dean Longrie, Fred Colvin and Jerry Scheele. Learn more about the program and this year's recipients on the WCS website: <http://www.waconservationsociety.org/creating-a-legacy.html>.

Leaving a Legacy

The WCS annually publishes Leaving a Legacy, a memorial and celebratory book of conservationists who have passed away who made a notable impact on the natural resources in Washington State. Inductees include district supervisors and staff, and agency partners. The book includes photos and biographical information. The book is published electronically each fall and a [video](#) of inductees is played at the WACD Annual Conference each year. To learn more about the program and to access an electronic copy of the book visit the WCS website: <http://www.waconservationsociety.org/projects-and-programs.html>.

Bonus item!

Holiday Letter to Members and Partners

On Monday, December 11, WACD Executive Director Tom Salzer emailed a holiday letter to all conservation district supervisors and managers/executives in Washington State. Not all of those emails went through so [the letter is also available on the Hub](#) and at the bottom of that post is a [downloadable copy of the letter](#).

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](#)
 - **January 25:** [WACD Legislative Day](#)
 - **February 10-14:** [NACD 78th annual meeting – San Diego, California](#)
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Executive Corner

Reading list

The [WACD Reading List](#) is something we maintain to help members be aware of the many things going on in our broader conservation universe. It does take some time to curate the articles we find and share so if you use the Reading List, please let us know at oly@wacd.org.

There are often interesting articles in the Reading List. For example, here are several that were recently captured in the Reading List:

- <https://washingtonstatestandard.com/2023/12/19/analysis-of-northwest-other-salmon-hatcheries-finds-nearly-all-hurt-wild-salmon-populations/>
- <https://www.columbian.com/news/2023/dec/19/state-agency-the-conservation-fund-buy-20000-acres-of-logging-lands-in-southwest-washington/>
- <https://www.theolympian.com/news/local/article283210253.html>
- <https://www.hcn.org/issues/55.12/endangered-species-act-does-voluntary-conservation-work>
- <https://www.waitsburgtimes.com/story/2023/12/07/specials/palouse-outdoors-local-conservation-organizations-have-a-field-day-with-dixie-elementary-school/20551.html>
- <https://ecology.wa.gov/about-us/who-we-are/news/2023/nov-30-drought-planning-and-preparedness-grants>

I'll bet at least one of those stories is interesting to you!

Razor clams and Ron

My Dad was born in Tacoma and raised in Hoquiam. Woods and waters were his playground, and he shared some of his joy in being outdoors with his children. Growing up, the annual trip to go [razor clamming](#) was something he looked forward to, even if his young offspring may not have enjoyed the experience quite as much as he did.

(This observation brings to mind a late-in-life comment Mom made to me about Dad. In her last year with us, she told me her life had been tremendously enriched through her marriage. She said she would not have traveled the world, gone camping and boating, or experienced clamming and ballet and opera and plays, if it had not been for Dad. She was deeply thankful for her life with him.)

Today I'm remembering my father and remember Ron Shultz. They didn't know each other, but in the odd way that our lives sometimes intersect, they were connected. Ron also loved to go razor clamming. It was a family thing for him and he would talk about the upcoming clamming season for weeks before it arrived.

I find that I cherish this strange junction of two entirely separate lives. Even though they never met each other, these two people were connected in time and space by their love of being at the ocean and experiencing the annual ritual of digging deep in the cold grit for golden prizes. Being unique characters in their own right, I think they would have enjoyed each other, had they ever met.

I am thankful for these odd coincidences in life. You never know what kind of connection you might have with someone until you get to know them and let them get to know you. We are fortunate in our community that we all share some common points of view regarding voluntary conservation. That's a powerful connection.

At the same time, sometimes it is a bit too convenient to hide behind the "we all believe in the same ideals" perspective and think that we are all actually the same. Au contraire. We are diverse in many ways, even if not in all ways. The longer I walk this path, the more I look forward to discovering new ways I am connected with the families and life experiences of others. I love encountering points of intersection and I love how we are different. When I have a discovery like this, it brings me great joy. I feel enriched in that moment.

In our community filled with all kinds of people and ideas, it is a wonderful thing to appreciate each person and recognize that knowing them makes my life better. If you ever feel like you might be a misfit in our community, please recognize that we are all misfits in some way. That means you actually belong with us! To paraphrase Galatea, an android in the movie *Bicentennial Man*: *You're unique, I'm unique, we're the same!*

On behalf of your WACD board members and WACD staff, I wish you a happy, healthy holiday season. I hope you get to enjoy the people and things you know and love, and maybe you'll get to have some moments of surprise when something or someone new intersects your life.

We'll catch up again in the next Five Things newsletter coming to you on Thursday, January 4, 2024.

Always yours for conservation,

Tom Salzer, Executive Director

Latest Posts on the Hub

- [PMC Update for December 14, 2023](#)
- [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](#)

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

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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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!

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