



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for January 18, 2024

Find WACD: <https://wadistricts.org> | <https://wadistricts.us> | <https://wacdpmc.org>

Eagle Released!



If you are following the story of the injured eagle found by WACD Plant Materials Center staff at the nursery, the eagle received great care from a nearby rehab facility and was released this week at the PMC. Great job, one and all!

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1 – Legislative Day

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](#). The link will take you to the hotel website, where, at the top of the page, 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 will be hosting a legislative breakfast and briefing on the morning of the 25th, from 7 - 8:00 AM at the Holiday Inn Express. Staff is also preparing legislative materials for districts for potential use on Leg Day.

Schedule for the 7:00 to 8:00 AM breakfast:

- 7:15 – Welcome from WACD & Overview of WACD priorities
- 7:25 – Welcome from the Commission
- 7:40 – Briefing from WACD Lobbyist and Q&A

2 – Legislation moving

From [WACD's Bill Tracker](#), here are some bills we're tracking this week:

- **SB 5846** [Concerning beaver ecosystem management.](#)
- **HB 2235** [Improving publicly available data on Washington state's water quality to improve salmon recovery and the prioritization of salmon recovery projects.](#)
- **HB 2193** [Concerning the new environmental restoration accelerator for salmon recovery.](#)
- **SB 5939** [Protecting livestock from wolf predation.](#)
- **SB 6121** [Concerning biochar production from agricultural and forestry biomass.](#)

WACD's Director of Legislative and Member Services, Ryan Baye, covers these and more in his [Legislative Updates newsletter](#) ([click here to subscribe](#)). For a "front door" to advocacy topics,

[visit our Advocacy 2024 page.](#)

3 – Board meetings: Commission, WACD

The Washington State Conservation Commission is meeting today, January 18, in Olympia, Washington. We are holding off on publishing this edition of the **Five Things to Know** newsletter until that meeting concludes.

WACD's Board of Directors will hold a regular meeting by Zoom on Monday, January 22, with in-person attendance available at WACD's Olympia office. The draft agenda is available at <https://www.wadistricts.org/2024-01-22-board-meeting>. Meeting documents are being posted to a Box.com folder at <https://wacd1.box.com/s/tmr7tzhr7unlc0txid7mylokfu8pbfh>.

4 – Statewide CREP training in March

Jon Wyss, Washington State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency, tells us FSA will be hosting a statewide CREP training in Spokane in March. The event will start at 10:00 AM on March 19 and end at 1:00 PM on March 21. The training will be held at the Mirabeau Park Hotel near the FSA state office.

FSA is looking for at least one staff person from each of the conservation districts, the conservation commission, from WDFW, and the governors office to attend. They will be laying out the new procedures for CREP and how the program will work in the future. *"We all know this has been a challenge and we want to ensure CREP is successful in the future,"* said Jon.

5 – District Video Tour



This week we bring you a 2023 video by the Pend Oreille Conservation District. The eight-minute YouTube video is described by POCD as:

Snow Investigations are a fun way to involve our local youth community! They have opportunity to measure the water content in snow by digging snow pits! This is an awesome way to give kids hands on opportunity to partner with conservation methods. Thank you for watching this video- we are hopeful to bring to 49 Degrees North in 2023!

View it at <https://youtu.be/R9WUUh9Uhb1Y?si=hoc-W0kQCbrRCjja>

Bonus: Streamline hosts our public website

By now you are probably aware that WACD changed website hosts. We moved the Hub to a faster hosting service. The URL for the Hub is shorter now, too: <https://wadistricts.us>. See [what's new with the Hub](#).

Starting last fall and continuing through Christmas, we developed a replacement for the public-facing site at <https://wadistricts.org>. That site is now live and is generally complete, with just a few spots left to clean up.

We selected **Streamline** (<https://getstreamline.com>) to host the public-facing site. Their system is built to provide better access to people with visual, auditory, and motor skills challenges. WACD chose this approach to help bring the conservation district message to more people.

What special districts love most about Streamline



Accessibility

Streamline websites are ADA compliant and have a built-in ADA assistant to automatically resolve most issues.

[Learn More](#) 



Compliance

The built-in online compliance checklist presents all known legislation affecting your district in one dashboard.

[Learn More](#) 



Communication

Streamline's templates, email tools, and web forms make it easy for your district to be professional and transparent.

[Learn More](#) 



Online Payments

Streamline's built-in online payment collection system allows you to collect bills, sell products, and gather donations through your site.

[Learn More](#) 



Ease & Control

Streamline is designed with goof-proof templates, so anyone can confidently post an agenda or upload images without having to wait for a third party.

[Learn More](#) 



Training + Support

Free and unlimited training and support for all users. When you reach out for help, a real human will get back to you in less than an hour.

[Learn More](#) 

Along the way, we've learned that the time we spend managing the public-facing website has gone down dramatically. The folks at Streamline have been extremely helpful in getting the new site set up and making changes to it as we built it out.

Says Streamline on their website:

*Districts that choose Streamline as their web platform finally get to stop worrying about accessibility, compliance, and reputation risks. They get their time and control back. They get unlimited training and support. **Most importantly, they get to spend their time serving their communities... NOT wrestling with technology.***

Streamline is interested in serving Washington's conservation districts. In their efforts to make sure you are aware of their service and system, your district may get an email or phone call from one of their staff. WACD encourages conservation districts to consider this opportunity to reach more people in your community with your message of local, voluntary conservation.

Upcoming Events

2024

- **January 18:** [State Conservation Commission meeting – Lacey, WA](#) (today!)
 - **January 22:** [WACD Board of Directors Meeting](#)
 - **January 25:** [WACD Legislative Day](#)
 - **February 5:** [Sustainable Farms and Fields: Funding Q&A Webinar](#)
 - **February 8:** [SoilCon: Diversified Organic \(Puyallup\)](#)
 - **February 10-14:** [NACD 78th annual meeting – San Diego, California](#)
 - **February 13:** [SoilCon: Irrigated Perennials \(Prosser\)](#)
 - **February 15:** [SoilCon: NW Washington Annuals \(Mount Vernon\)](#)
 - **February 20:** [SoilCon: Dryland \(Davenport\)](#)
 - **March 19-21:** Statewide CREP training by FSA (Spokane)
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Resources

Check out these resources:

- Correspondence in the [January 2024 Box.com folder](#)
 - Bookmarks in the [WACD Reading List](#)
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Executive Corner

Time speeds up this time of year

It always surprises me how the clock seems to move faster once January arrives. Even before the Legislature convenes, there are conversations and meetings happening about legislation

and budgets. WACD's work goes from a steady jog to wind sprints, with more conversations regarding legislation, both from within our community and without. Time becomes a much more precious commodity.

While the WACD Executive Office staff is laser focused on legislation at this time, the WACD Plant Materials Center team is in harvest mode. They have had to contend with adverse weather (translation: frozen ground!) that has interrupted harvest for the past week. Fortunately, they hit harvest hard in December so we shouldn't be adversely impacted by this temporary interruption. Another refrigerated truck is arriving at the nursery to help store the harvested plants until they are shipped. **Reminder: there are still plenty of plants available for purchase. If you need plants, please contact the PMC folks and see what they can do for you.**

If we are occasionally slow to respond, or a little shorter in our response than usual, please know it's not you. We're only human and we're all feeling the stress of our rapid-fire work days. This doesn't mean we don't want to hear from you: au contraire. This is the time of year when we definitely need to hear from you! We need to hear your thoughts on legislation important to you, and we need to hear your thoughts on plants needed for projects.

NACD annual meeting: we need your contact information

If you are attending the NACD annual meeting in San Diego, please send your name, email address, and cell phone number to Doug Rushton at doug.rushton@thurstoncd.com. NACD events move swiftly and there may be times when we need to gather the Washington contingent with little advance notice. If we can't get hold of you in San Diego, that might even mean missing out on a dinner together!

Bill hearings and conservation district positions

A gentle reminder to conservation district folks to be sure of your district's policy before submitting a position on legislation. If you don't have direct and clear authorization to represent the conservation district, you probably shouldn't sign in as if you are representing your district. I'm not trying to chill involvement in legislation — just the opposite is true! — but everyone involved in legislative work is so rushed they don't have time to wonder if you really do represent your district. Please do get involved but also be clear about your authority to represent your conservation district.

As an aside, WACD staff appreciate hearing that you, or someone from your district, has a n interest or position on a piece of legislation. That helps our work immensely. Please do keep in touch.

Last, but not least: safety

Now that we're experiencing "interesting" weather, I want to make a gentle but important point about safety. Consider how your conservation district would be affected if you were injured and couldn't work. Consider how this might affect your family. Add safety to your winter routine! You can:

- Take a few extra moments to make sure road conditions are conducive to safe travel.
- Invest a minute or two in scraping the windshield.

- Wear boots or shoes that provide better traction in slippery conditions.
- Talk with your team about operating safely in less-than-great conditions.

At one place I worked, the topography was so rugged and the district so large that we sent teams of two people into the most distant areas. We also had a check-out board so we knew where they would be working, and a check-in time. If they didn't get back to the office or check-in by the check-in time, we went looking for them. We also had emergency kits in each vehicle with sleeping bags, hand warmers, emergency food and water, flashlights and batteries, flares, and more. This may sound like overkill but in extreme temperatures, getting stuck or sliding off the road out of cell phone range can be life-threatening.

We look forward to your ideas and questions. Please reach out to us at oly@wacd.org. This is a group address for Heather, Ryan, and Tom, so your message will probably get through!

Always yours for conservation,



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Latest Posts on the Hub

- [Jan 8 - 12 General Legislative Review](#)
- [Clackamas SWCD is Accepting Applications for a Conservation Specialist – Wildlife Habitat.](#)
- [PMC Update for January 11, 2024](#)
- [Testimony on SB 5921: Tribal Representation on the State Conservation Commission](#)
- [Cascadia CD is Hiring Bilingual Education & Outreach Specialist](#)
- [Cascadia CD is Hiring a Resource Specialist 1 Position](#)

See the full list of Recent Posts at <https://wadistricts.us/posts/>. The Jobs list is available at <https://wadistricts.us/jobs/>. A wide range of content is available in the [WACD Reading List](#).

Thank you to the 2023 WACD Annual Meeting Sponsors



Washington Department of
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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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1219 11th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501
(564) 669-7540

