



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for February 29, 2024

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

In this issue:

1. **Seven Days Left: Legislative Update**
2. **Budget Highlights**
3. **It's a Conservation Plant Palooza!**
4. **Salmon Summit Virtual Opportunity**
5. **Plant Materials Questionnaire ~ Now Open**

Executive Corner

- **Fairness, Engagement, Accessibility, and Belonging**
 - **Regulation or Relationships?**
 - **We like to hear from you**
-

1 – Seven Days Left

We are reaching the final days in Olympia, with 11:59 PM on March 7th only seven days away. WACD staff is still going strong, focused on securing CTA in the final budget (see below). We're also keeping our eyes on twenty-five policy bills trying to make their way across the finish line for their potential impact to CDs and the communities they serve. So far only bill on [our bill tracker](#) has made its way to the Governor's Desk, [HB 2293](#) (Studying the effects of avian predation of salmon).

If you haven't already, please take a look at Brynn Brady's [general legislative review](#) detailing last week's events. She neatly covers the announced retirements and those seeking different political office in 2024, as well as the three citizen initiatives expected to receive a floor vote in

the Legislature this week and the main differences between the House and Senate budgets.

WACD's Director of Legislative and Member Services, Ryan Baye, covers more in his [Legislative Updates newsletter](#) ([click here to subscribe](#)). For a "front door" to advocacy topics, [visit our Advocacy 2024 page](#).

2 – Budget Highlights

After the Operating and Capital budget's release, WACD sent a letter to the [operating negotiating team](#) with WACD's perspective on the need for Conservation Technical Assistance Funding and funding new staff positions at the Commission.

For any of our membership who might wish to write their legislators about reconciliation priorities. Below are some items of note in the Commission's budget:

- There is \$3.5 million in CTA funding in the House Operating Budget. (and our lobbyist has spoken with Senate budget writers about matching the House's amount.)
 - SCC administrative support is funded at \$600,000 in the House's budget and \$200,000 in the Senate.
 - In the Senate budget, \$500,000 is granted to the Commission to pass-through to the conservation districts in Klickitat County for fire recovery efforts.
 - If anyone heard the rumor that \$25 million is being cut from Sustainable Farms and Fields, don't worry. A portion of the \$30 million allocated last year is being transferred from the operating budget to the capital budget.
-

3 – It's a Conservation Plant Palooza!

WACD's Plant Materials Center has harvested extra of several species of plants. Check out the [current availability](#) list to see items you might need! The cooler is on through the month of April. If you have questions please reach out to [Jacquie Gauthier](#), PMC Sales Manager.

Just a reminder, the PMC accept orders year around and it is never too early to order for next season. Please [contact the PMC](#) if you are interested in having them contract grow particular items. Thank you for your support!

4 – Salmon Summit Virtual Opportunity

[Benton Conservation District](#) is offering a virtual opportunity for schools across the state to participate in a live stream event showcasing [Pacific Northwest National Laboratory](#) staff tagging and releasing juvenile salmon raised at the Aquatic Research Laboratory into the Columbia River. Participants will be able to ask questions on salmon biology, education, careers in biology and engineering, and even what happens when tagged salmon are eaten.

The event will take place on **April 15 & April 16** from **10:00 am to 1:30 pm**.

Districts are encouraged to share this announcement with schools that may be interested in participating in this event. Interested schools can register for a 20 minute session [here](#). If you are not part of a school group but you are interested in observing as an **auditor** without a classroom, please reply "audit" when asked for the name of the school where you teach so that your registration does not displace a classroom.

5 – Plant Materials Questionnaire ~ Now Open

WACD's Plant Materials Task Force is hard at work looking at ways to increase the availability of native plants for Conservation Districts (CDs). An important step in the process is to determine current and future CD plant needs. A questionnaire was emailed to CD Managers/Executive Directors and Chairs **this week**. If your CD did not receive the link please reach out to Heather Wendt (hwendt@wadistricts.org). The Task Force would like one survey completed per District so please work with your staff to complete the survey. Thank you from WACD's Plant Materials Task Force!

Upcoming Events

2024

- **March 1:** Legislature – Last day to adopt legislation proposed by the opposite chamber.
 - **March 7:** Legislature – Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution
 - **March 14:** [AFT training on Facilitating Peer to Peer Education With Women and Historically Underserved Producers](#)
 - **March 18:** [WACD Board of Directors meeting](#)
 - **March 19-21:** [Statewide CREP training](#) by FSA (Spokane)
 - **March 20-21:** [SCC tour, dinner, and meeting](#) (Shelton)
 - **April 15:** [WACD Board of Directors meeting](#)
 - **May 29-30:** WACD's Legislative Workshop (Ellensburg)
-

Other Resources

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

Executive Corner

Fairness, Engagement, Accessibility, and Belonging

I am honored to serve as a member of NACD's DEI Special Committee. The Committee is doing some heavy lifting right now, meeting weekly as we try to drill down to essential things like definitions, standards of conduct, accountability, and reactions and actions. These essentials will be proposed to the NACD Board of Directors who will consider adopting the recommendations. This work will result in practices that will guide how NACD chooses to operate as an organization. The work NACD is doing is focused on how they run their entity, not about how you operate yours.

Words matter. The "words can never hurt me" part of "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me" is simply not true. Words do matter. They can divide us. They can hurt and harm us. Some of our people carry invisible scars from the things said to them in the past, and those harms often manifest later in words and behaviors. The words we choose to use can be impactful in good ways and bad.

As a term, DEI has often been divisive (ironic when you consider that the goal of DEI work is to bring people together). It is a label that means different things to different people. When we don't share a common understanding of what something means, how can we have a productive conversation about what it is and whether it is meaningful or useful in our conservation work? If a label is hurtful and gets in the way of effective communications, perhaps we shouldn't use it. I suggest we shift to using other terms instead of DEI.

I like the word fairness. We can talk about whether our programs and processes are fair to other people and to us.

I like the word engagement. That gives us license to talk about who is present and how we can help others be present and involved.

I like the word accessibility. This word opens the door to conversation about what we can do to help all people participate in our meetings and events. Sometimes barriers are not visible or are unknown to us, but they are very real to the people living with them.

I like the word belonging. Working on helping people know they belong demonstrates respect for each person present. It is a welcoming word that can help people feel free to speak and contribute.

These words drive to the heart of what some people mean when they talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion. I think if we try using words that speak to deeper, more fundamental intentions, this will change not only how our conversations go, but also who chooses to participate in them.

We like to hear from you

As always, 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

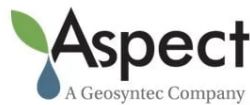
- [Organic Transition Initiative](#)
- [Training Title: Facilitating Peer to Peer Education with Women and Historically Underserved Producers](#)
- [Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation Executive Director Position](#)
- [Conservation Planner Service Contract to support the USDA NRCS in Field and Area Offices throughout Washington State](#)
- [February 19 – 23 General Legislative Review](#)
- [Mississippi's Gary Blair Selected as NACD President-Elect](#)

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
Fish and Wildlife



WILBUR-ELLIS



Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



Tapteal Native Plants

WACD encourages you to consider patronizing sponsors in appreciation of their important support: <https://wadistricts.us/annual/2023meetings/conference/#sponsors>

- [AgWest](#)
- [AGPRO](#)
- [Arrowleaf Consulting](#)
- [Aspect Consulting](#)
- [Banner Bank](#)
- [Country Financial](#)
- [BFI Native Seeds](#)
- Larry Davis (individual sponsor)
- [Edward Jones](#)
- [Enduris](#)
- [envu](#)
- [JTI](#)
- [KR Creative Strategies](#)
- [McGregor Company](#)
- [Monaghan Consulting](#)
- [Odessa Trading Co.](#)
- [Plants of the Wild](#)
- [Rainier Seeds](#)
- [RDO Equipment Co.](#)
- Tom Salzer (individual sponsor)
- [Springbrook Express](#)
- [Tapteal Native Plants](#)
- [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)
- [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife](#)
- [Washington State Conservation Commission](#)
- [Weyerhaeuser](#)
- [Wilbur-Ellis](#)

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!

SUBSCRIBE

Visit the Hub to stay informed!

<https://wadistricts.us>

We welcome your [feedback](#)

Subscribe | Unsubscribe | Manage your subscription | Contact WACD
1219 11th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501
(564) 669-7540

