



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for June 20, 2024

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The WACD Board of Directors met in person for their June Board meeting on Monday of this week at the WACD Plant Materials Center in Bow, WA. The day started off with a tour of the nursery and was followed by an in-person meeting with a remote option. The meeting was productive with the FY 24-25 WACD Annual Plan of Work and Budget being approved. Thank you to the PMC staff for hosting and to all of those that attended!

This is the post-WADE and post-WACD meeting edition!

(Over the summer, the Five Things is published on the first and third Thursday of the month)

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Five Things to Know

1 — Extending Bareroot Planting Season into the Fall

In June's edition of [Forest Stewardship Notes](#), John Knox (WACD's Assistant Nursery Manager) has a featured article on the use of irrigated gravel beds to preserve bare root materials that remain unsold at the end of harvest. In the article John shares what species work well in the gravel beds along with tips and tricks to make this technology work for you.

According to John:

There is plenty to like about these gravel beds because they are low risk. I like that you can store a bunch of plants in a small area and the irrigation can be automated. I like that it can be reused and there is no cold storage needed. I like that there are few weeds. I like the affordability of these plants, and they are lightweight and easy to move. I like that it can be scaled to the size of the need, and I like that there are a variety of materials that can be used to make a gravel bed. Let your creativity work.

You can read the full article [here](#). If you have specific questions you can email John at pmcjknnox@gmx.com.



2 – Climate Resilience Strategy ~ Comment Period Open

A draft of the Statewide Climate Resilience Strategy was released for public comment. This work was mandated by HB1170, and developed in coordination with ten state agencies, including the State Conservation Commission (SCC). The document now is open for public comment.

You can view the draft document [here](#) along with upcoming informational webinars. Comments are due by **July 11th**.

3 – Shared Resources Workgroup White Paper ~ For Review

WACD's Shared Resources Workgroup has developed a [White Paper](#) on needs gathered from our conservation district community and preferred options for meeting those needs. Outcomes around topics pertaining to Human Resources and IT support are evolving daily.

Please take a minute to review the paper and let the Workgroup know your thoughts. Comments can be sent to Heather Wendt, WACD's Director of Development and Engagement, at hwendt@wadistricts.org.

4 – USDA Invests in Creating and Expanding Organic Markets

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced new programs, partnerships, grant awards and an additional \$10 million in funding to expand the markets for organic products and help producers transition to organic production.

“Offsetting the costs for organic transition helps more farmers realize higher margins sooner while giving consumers more access to high-demand organic products,” Secretary Vilsack said. “The partnerships and technical support we offer will ease the transition for producers, and the investments in grant projects we are announcing today will reduce the organic industry’s reliance on imports, lower cost barriers for businesses transitioning to organic, and address crucial infrastructure needs. Together, these resources ensure small and mid-sized producers can gain access to new, profitable markets and further our commitment to maximize American farmers’ share of the food dollar.”

You can read the full press release [here](#) and you can see information on the 6 Washington State grant awardees [here](#).

5 – Summer Nursery Tour ~ Register Now

Have you ever wanted to tour a premier bare root native plant nursery? Well, now is your chance. WACD's Plant Materials Center will be hosting a tour on Tuesday, **August 13th** from 9:30 am until noon.

Come learn about the history of the Plant Materials Center, plant production, services provided to Conservation Districts and enjoy a field walk to see the extensive variety of plants, pollinators and other wildlife.

[Register](#) by July 31st and enjoy lunch on us!

Questions? Please contact Jacquie @ 360-757-1094 or pmcsales@gmx.com



The ground was muddy on Monday, so PMC Director of Nursery Operations Jim Brown gave a PMC tour to WACD Board members via tractor.

6 – BONUS: PMC Update!

[A new update on the Plant Materials Center is available.](#) Financial results were down slightly but still the second best we've experienced. Spring seed planting is done. The PMC is hosting an open house in August. One of the three wells has worn out so a replacement pump and well liner have been installed. We are looking at replacing the controller with a variable frequency drive (VFD) to save water, reduce electrical startup demand, and provide operating flexibility.

Upcoming Events

2024

- **July 17-18:** [WSCC Commission Tour and Meeting in Vancouver \(hosted by Clark CD\)](#).
 - **September 16:** [WACD Board of Directors meeting](#)
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Executive Corner

Are You an Alligator?

In the June 6th edition of the Five Things newsletter, I wrote about the importance of communication and improving our listening skills. Today's edition comes after the conclusion of another fantastic WADE annual conference (Leavenworth, WA) and a great WACD board meeting (held at the PMC in Bow, WA).

In both events, I saw multiple examples of people choosing to listen carefully to others first. What a tremendous difference that makes in the conversation.

Being an amateur radio operator, I sometimes think in terms of transmit and receive. Quite often I see people who are so intent on broadcasting their point of view that they leave no room to receive information from others. They are stuck on transmit. When that happens, it is not a conversation. In my radio world we call these people alligators: big mouth, no ears.

I don't usually use the word *don't* but I will today: please don't be an alligator! Take your finger off the transmit button so you can actually hear what others are saying. When they are done speaking, pause for a moment (I like to just take a breath and hold it for a second) to give your brain time to process what you heard, and then respond. That kind of respectful, thoughtful back-and-forth makes for a great conversation.

Coming Together

The other thing demonstrated so clearly for me at the WADE conference and the WACD meeting was the power of coming together to work on issues we all care about. Note that I didn't say we all agree all the time! We don't, and that can be very healthy when there is respect for each other and when we give each other some grace for not always speaking as clearly as we may have intended.



Over and over in these two events, I observed people giving voice to strongly held beliefs. I also saw people pausing to listen to others. And then I often saw pairs of people, small groups, and even large groups coalesce around an amalgam of ideas and positions to create something that worked for that group. I used the word amalgam on purpose because it evokes an image of a medieval alchemist turning lead into gold. There is magic in coming together and collaborating.

(For those who might have gotten stuck on the idea of the alchemist vainly trying to transmute lead into gold, you'll be interested to know that it is indeed possible to do this. [You'll need a particle accelerator](#), though! What was once impossible is now, indeed, possible!)

The WACD Staff Team

Following the WACD Board meeting this week, WACD staff met together for a few hours at the [WACD Plant Materials Center](#). This presented a rare opportunity to get a group photo of some of our staff team.

WACD's staff are the folks on the front lines when it comes to growing conservation plants and providing services to members. It is a small group of people that get a tremendous amount of good work done, for and with conservation districts!

Pictured below, from left to right: Heather Wendt, Jacquie Gauthier, Lori McLaughlin, Jim Brown, John Knox, and Ryan Baye. Not pictured are Oscar Arias Garcia and Maria Rivera. Tom

Salzer took the photo.



We'd like to hear from you

As always, we look forward to your ideas and questions. Please reach out to us at oly@wacd.org. Emails sent to that address reach the entire Executive Office team!

Always yours for conservation,



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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- [Welcome to 15 new conservation district supervisors](#)
- [Celebrating our Outgoing 2024 Supervisors](#)
- [Ecology offers \\$1.7 million in drought planning and preparedness grants](#)
- [Whitman CD Conservation Technician Crew Lead](#)
- [Equity and Board Succession Plan Required for NACD TA Grantees](#)
- [PMC Update for June 20, 2024](#)

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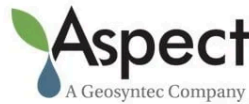
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