



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

## Five Things to Know for October 17, 2024

<https://wadistricts.org> ☼ <https://wadistricts.us> ☼ <https://wacdpmc.org>



Area meetings are underway! On Thursday, October 10th, Thurston CD hosted the Southwest Area Meeting. Attendees got to hear partner and district updates, pass resolutions, and SCC's Executive Director James Thomson handed out some well deserved awards.

### In this issue:

#### Five Things to Know:

1. WACD Conference Registration Information
2. Last Call for Award Nominations
3. Envirothon Auction Alert!

4. PMC Staff ~ Growing More Than Just Plants
5. Water Year Impact Survey ~ Participate Today
6. Bonus Item ~ Feedback requested on WACD Bylaws
7. Bonus Item ~ Virtual Office Hours

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Executive Corner**

### **Latest Posts on the Hub**

### **Thank you to Sponsors**

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## **Five Things to Know**

### **1. WACD Conference Registration Information**

#### **Registration Information**

It is time again for the WACD Annual Meeting, where Washington's conservation districts gather to meet, discuss the issues affecting the membership, and vote on the direction of your state association. This year's theme is "Common Sense Conservation," a nod to Conservation Districts' ability to implement local problem-solving, for local people, on local landscapes.

Registration for the Annual Conference on Monday and Tuesday and for the Business Meeting on Wednesday, whether you're planning to participate online or in-person, can all be done on one form - [just click here](#).

**SPECIAL NOTE - Invoices for conference registration will be sent at the end of the month, when our Financial Administrator returns from vacation.**

WACD is offering a single price for conference registration and meals at \$500 per person. The cost to attend virtually will be \$75 per person. If your district sends 3 or more supervisors to attend in person, your entire district can attend virtually for only \$75.

#### **Hotel Accommodations**

WACD is excited to be hosting our 2024 Annual Conference and Business Meeting at the Northern Quest Casino this year from Monday, December 2nd to Wednesday, December 4th. We've secured a group rate at the state per diem amount of \$126 for conference attendees.

To secure the discounted rate, you will have to call the Northern Quest Casino's Reservation Department at 1-877-871-6772 and reference either the "Washington Association Conservation Conference" group rate or mention the Group Discount ID 29908. You can only utilize the discount over the phone, it will not be possible to make hotel reservations with the group discount online.

Keep an eye on our [2024 Annual Conference webpage](#) for all our conference information.

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### **2. Last Call for Award Nominations**

This is our last call for award nominations! Award applications do not need to be lengthy, they can be short and sweet. The important thing is that we recognize those in our community who

are making a difference.

Award information can be found [here](#).

If you need some inspiration you can view past award recipients [here](#).

The deadline for nominations is **November 1st**.

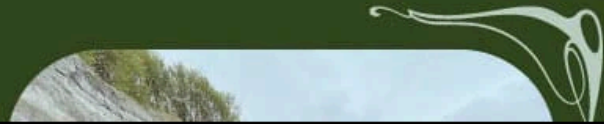
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### 3. Envirothon Auction Alert!

# HELP SUPPORT WASHINGTON STATE ENVIROTHON

## Soliciting Donations for WACD's Annual Meeting Auction

December 3rd 6-8PM  
Northern Quest Resort & Casino  
Spokane, WA



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## 4. PMC Staff ~ Growing More Than Just Plants

The WACD Plant Materials Center's Assistant Nursery Manager John Knox is growing knowledge in the greater conservation community by publishing another article in Forest Stewardship Notes. In this recent article John explores *Growing Bigleaf Maple at Home*. Here is an excerpt:

Bigleaf maple is an increasingly popular choice for forest owners who buy seedlings. It is an excellent species for restoration projects, as it provides wildlife habitat and soil building benefits. It also grows quickly and has a large, spreading canopy that can help shade out noxious weeds and fill canopy gaps. Other benefits include beautiful fall foliage, edible maple flowers, and, of course, bigleaf maple syrup!

You can find a link to the full article [here](#).

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## 5. Water Year Impact Survey ~ Participate Today

From our partners at NRCS: Each year, a Water Year 2024 Impacts Assessment is released which summarizes the water year conditions and sector impacts as a resource for future management of drought and other climate extremes. This assessment is a collaboration between The Office of the Washington State Climatologist, University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, Oregon Climate Service, Idaho Department of Water Resources, and NOAA's National Integrated Drought Information System.

On-the-ground observations and impacts felt by ranchers, farmers, irrigation districts, tribes, and others are essential to this assessment, and one of the ways to collect that information is through a [survey](#). Input is important to discussions about drought and water availability in Washington State and the Pacific Northwest.

The survey deadline is **November 27, 2024**.

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## 6. Bonus Item: Feedback on WACD Bylaws

As part of our governance process, WACD has the opportunity each year to review and update its Articles and Bylaws as part of the Annual Business Meeting. This year, WACD staff identified [four potential bylaw amendments](#) for consideration by the membership. We are seeking feedback, to present to the Board of Directors at their November 18th meeting. Here are the some of the suggested amendments:

- Separating the Legislative, Bylaws, and District Policies Committee into a Legislative Committee and a District Policies Committee to allow for specialization in the purview of WACD's committees.
  - Creating a "Ways & Means Committee" to assist the Board of Directors to determine how best to achieve all of the resolutions adopted by the membership.
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## 7. Bonus Item: Virtual Office Hours

WACD staff thought it would be fun to pick a theme for each office hour. The theme for our next meeting will be **Resolutions - Old and New**.

Our next office hour will occur on:

**Wednesday, October 23rd, Noon until 1 pm**

Connection information is below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81129991422?pwd=duwNs4V5L3TFQa39SUQQUHMSnwVMHT.1>

Meeting ID: 811 2999 1422

Passcode: 549537

Phone Number: +1-253-205-0468

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## Upcoming Events

### 2024

- **October 16:** [NC Area Association meeting hosted by Cascadia CD.](#)
- **October 17:** [SE Area Association meeting hosted by Palouse CD.](#)
- **October 21:** [WACD Board of Directors meeting](#)
- **October 24:** [NW Area Meeting hosted by Jefferson County CD.](#)
- **October 30:** [SC Area Meeting hosted by Central Klickitat CD.](#)

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## Executive Corner

### TED talk on regenerative agriculture

I'm certain that regenerative ag is not everyone's cup of tea. I can see it on smaller operations, but it's hard to imagine doing it on thousands and thousands of acres, especially when the economics of a farm or ranch are centered on just a few commodities. If you can't imagine it on large farms, talk to Ty Meyer at the Spokane Conservation District. Ty is a tremendous voice for regenerative ag! Contact Ty at [Ty-Meyer@SpokaneCD.org](mailto:Ty-Meyer@SpokaneCD.org).

Nevertheless, the experience shared by Gabe Brown is educational. While many people talk about soil health, Gabe shows us what focusing on soil health has meant for his farm. I recommend his 15-minute TED talk, titled: [How Regenerative Agriculture Brings Life Back to the Land](#)

I would subtitle Gabe's TED talk with his closing words: **The Hope That is in Healthy Soil**. Even if you don't believe in regenerative agriculture, you'll find this 15-minute talk informative.

### On area meetings, ideas, and collaboration

October is one of the most exciting times of the year for WACD staff. We get to travel to all corners of Washington State and hear interesting ideas. Each idea starts with one person who is able to convince their Board of Supervisors to support it. Then that idea comes to area association meetings where it can be supported or improved upon by conservation districts in the region. If the idea gets support at that level, it moves on to the statewide level at the WACD annual business meeting.

You might think that the best ideas come from people who have been in the conservation district community for a good long while. Sometimes that's true. It is just as true that many great ideas come from our newer community members who see things through fresh eyes. Over the years, I've often heard people say they haven't been in the community very long so their idea may not be very good. If you bring your idea forward with a sincere, caring heart and your Board of Supervisors supports it, it is a good idea. It may not be good for everyone, but if your local board believes it has merit, it's a good idea. Don't discount your ideas! We all learn and benefit from ideas, even the ones that may benefit from some improvement.

The resolution process works best when you are willing to collaborate and compromise. There is often some squishiness around particular details that can be massaged into a more acceptable statement more people will be able to support. Be willing to bend on ideas, but never on values.

As long as I'm talking about values, let me stand on the edge of this cliff: our conservation values have no room for political division. Conservation districts must be able to work with elected officials from every party and affiliation. When your identity as a conservation district official or employee is tied to one political party or candidate, you reduce your ability to work effectively with people who may have different beliefs. Your support of particular political beliefs and activities should be kept completely separate from your conservation district work.

Conservation districts are not political bodies. Our power stands on being able to work with anyone and everyone on the health and availability of natural resources for all people, no matter their political leaning. Natural resources touch everyone and that's the bond we have in common. It's what keeps us working together even when our other beliefs try to pull us away from this. We are more effective when we focus on conserving natural resources as our core value.

As I reflect on what I just wrote, I realize I left something out. When I get terribly frustrated with partisanship and the seeming inability of political parties to work together for the common good, I take a step back and think about our conservation delivery system. Local people making local decisions. A system for moving big ideas up the chain. Collaborative, cooperative work with resource users. Able to cross boundaries between governments and agencies. A hub of solution-minded people. Conservation work that benefits everyone. And people like you, doing important work for your community.

When I pause to remember why conservation districts are so effective, it's like a balm against the political frustrations I feel from time to time. Conservation is about turning hope for a better future into reality. I am privileged to be a part of this community and hope that you feel much the same.

## **We'd like to hear from you**

As always, we'd like to receive your ideas and questions. Please contact us at [oly@wacd.org](mailto:oly@wacd.org). Emails sent to that address reach the entire Executive Office team!

Always yours for conservation,



## Latest Posts on the Hub

- [DNR Webster Forest Nursery Warehouse Lead](#)
- [Community meetings announced for countywide update to wildfire mitigation plan](#)
- [WDFW, DNR announce \\$8.5 million in funding for Puget Sound restoration and protection efforts](#)
- [Free fuels reduction program helps residents boost wildfire resilience](#)
- [Cascadia CD Finance and Operations Director](#)
- [Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Compliance for FSA and NRCS Programs Webinar](#)

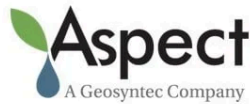
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