



SW AREA ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

Hosted by: Wahkiakum Conservation District

At

Johnson Park Community Center

30 Rosburg School Rd

Rosburg, WA 98643

Thursday October 16, 2025

AGENDA

TIME	AGENDA ITEM								
8:00-8:30	Registration								
9:00	Welcome and Self-Introductions Wahkiakum Host CD Chair, <i>Joe Florek</i>								
9:10	Conservation Leadership Forum – includes brief summaries from: Washington State Conservation Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Chair and Executive Director</i> Washington Association of Conservation Districts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>President, Area Director and Executive Director</i> Washington Conservation Society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President, Larry Davis Natural Resources Conservation Services – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>State Conservationist</i> National Association of Conservation Districts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WACD National Director Washington Association of District Employee (WADE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-President, Sarah Morehead 								
9:45	Question and Answer Interactive Panel Session for Audience and WSCC, WACD, and NRCS Leadership								
10:15	Break								
10:30	Resolutions								
12:30	Lunch (provided)								
1:00	Area Awards: <i>as selected by the Conservation Commission</i>								
1:15	District Issues and Presentations (10-11 minutes ea.) <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Clark</td><td>5. Pacific</td></tr> <tr> <td>2. Cowlitz</td><td>6. Thurston</td></tr> <tr> <td>3. Grays Harbor</td><td>7. Wahkiakum</td></tr> <tr> <td>4. Lewis</td><td></td></tr> </table>	1. Clark	5. Pacific	2. Cowlitz	6. Thurston	3. Grays Harbor	7. Wahkiakum	4. Lewis	
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2:45	Area Business - Wahkiakum Host CD Chair- <i>Joe Florek</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approve Minutes and Treasurer's Report ▪ Amendment of Area Articles and By-Laws (as needed) ▪ Election of Area Director: <i>Heather Smith</i> ▪ Announce WACD Annual meeting: <i>December 1 – 3, Airway Heights</i> ▪ Announce Year 2026 SW Host District: <i>Clark CD</i> 								
3:30	Adjourn								
	<i>Thank you for attending!</i>								

Southwest Area Association Annual Meeting

October 10, 2024

Host – Thurston CD

Heritage Distillery – Tumwater, WA and via Zoom

Attendees

- Clark CD - Dean Longrie, Leah Perkel, and Zorah Oppenheimer.
- Grays Harbor CD - Heather Smith, Lisa Zaborac, Anthony Waldrop, and David Marcell.
- Lewis CD - Bob Amrine and Ryan Ellis.
- Pacific CD - Mike Nordin.
- Thurston CD - David Iyall, Doug Rushton, Marianne Tompkins, TJ Johnson, Betsie DeWreede, Sarah Moorehead, Kianna Sinner, and Sophia Barashkoff.
- Wahkiakum CD – Tom Langston and Joe Florek.
- Port of Olympia - Jasmine Vasavada
- USDA-NRCS - Roylene Comes at Night, Nathan Gallahan, Nick Vira, and Dave Rose.
- State Conservation Commission - Amy Martin, Toyo Garber, Paige DeChambeau, James Thompson, Sarah Groth, and Kate Delevan,
- Washington Association of Conservation Districts - Ryan Baye, Tom Salzer, Amy McKay, Mike Mumford, and Heather Wendt.

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 by Thurston CD Chair TJ Johnson.

Conservation Partnership Presentation

Tom Salzer discussed the recent growth of district projects and programs, and the association's new services to the membership. Heather Wendt presented on a new WACD partnership with NRCS to help the State Technical Advisory Committee and help rebuild the Earth Team volunteer program, as well as an outreach campaign for districts to new legislators around district programs and CTA. Ryan Baye spoke to the 2024 WACD Annual Conference, the 2025 legislative session, and the possibility of a joint conference with Oregon's association of districts in the future. Lisa Zaborac ended with the importance of getting involved.

James Thompson introduced himself and new SCC employees. He shared handouts around various Commission programs and provided updates on Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). He answered questions about the Commission's forest health and irrigation efficiency funding requests.

Doug Rushton presented on the National Association of Conservation Districts: the value in paying dues, updates to the Farm Bill and available NACD grants, and what happens to resolutions at the national level after being adopted at the state level.

Roylene Comes at Night provided information on the programs, activities, and staff of USDA-NRCS during the year. David Rose presented Western Washington specific metrics

on contracts, best management practices, and funding done by NRCS. Roylene and David answered questions about the impacted in the delayed Farm Bill as well as the likelihood of NRCS staff being hired for Pacific County.

Recess from 10:40 – 10:55

Resolutions

Zorah Oppenheimer presented a resolution from Clark CD on “Updating and Modernizing Administrative Requirements for WSCC Grant Programs”. Dean Longrie, Clark CD, moved to adopt the resolution as Southwest Area Resolution #1. Second by Ryan Ellis, Lewis CD. There was a friendly amendment added to the resolution identifying July 1, 2025 as a targeted start date for the resolution. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Zorah Oppenheimer presented a resolution from Clark CD on “WACD Developing and Implementing a Board Supervisor Training Program”. Leah Perkel, Clark CD, moved to adopt the resolution as Southwest Area Resolution #2. Second by Dean Longrie. There were questions about the type of training to be created and some of the potential subjects for the program. Motion carried on a voice vote.

District Presentations

Zorah Oppenheimer shared that Clark CD had grown to 11 permanent staff and completely filled their office. She covered the district’s Poop Smart Clark program and it’s focus on fecal matter identification to identify water quality issues and remedy failing private septic systems.

David Marcell presented on behalf of Grays Harbor CD. He said that GHCD had grown to 21 FTE’s with \$9.7 million in grant funding to 64 local cooperators. He noted their 137 person waiting list for district assistance and ended up the district’s partnership with a local brewery to create a River Roots Ale as a watershed restoration fundraiser. Anthony Waldrop also presented on GHCD’s Satsop River restoration project covering two miles of riparian areas.

Bob Amrine announced the hire of a new education/outreach person and that three Lewis CD employees had been with the district since 2000. Bob is also retiring in February of 2025.

Mike Nordin discussed Pacific CD’s social media work and their district newsletter. He also complimented WACD on their increased outreach to districts during the past year.

Sarah Moorehead detailed Thurston CD’s proposed Conservation and Education Center. She provided information on Thurston’s projects and programs during the year and the demand for their equipment rental program.

Joe Florek presented on Wahkiakum CD's recent attempt to do long range planning out over several decades and the future of natural resources in the county.

Lunch recess from 12:00 – 1 PM

Jake Fey presented on behalf of the NW Agricultural Business Center and the increase in grain production in southwestern Washington.

Area Awards

Alexander Birk (Pacific) was granted a SW Area Special Recognition Award.

Bob Amrine (Lewis) was granted a SW Area Special Recognition Award.

Brad Boertner (Wahkiakum) was granted a SW Area Special Recognition Award.

Grays Harbor CD was awarded the Southwest Area District of the Year.

Area Business Meeting

Dean Longrie moved to approve the 2023 SW area. Second by Ryan Ellis. Motion carried.

Doug Rushton moved to elect Bruce McDonald as Southwest Area Director. Second by Ryan Ellis. Bruce McDonald was elected Southwest Area Director.

Dean Longrie moved to elect Leah Perkel as Southwest Area Director. Second by Ryan Ellis. Lisa Zaborac moved to elect Heather Smith as Southwest Area Director. Second by Ryan Ellis. Leah Perkel and Heather Smith gave campaign speeches. A voice vote was inconclusive, and a rising vote resulted in a 4 - 4 tie. Chair TJ Johnson broke the tie in favor of Heather Smith.

Meeting adjourned at 1:50 PM.