



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for January 16, 2025

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Five Things To Know

1. 2025 Legislative Updates

WACD published its first legislative newsletter for 2025 on January 13th. These newsletters expand on legislative priorities, break down budget language, track various proposals that relate to the world of voluntary conservation, and point out opportunities for districts to participate in the process.

During the legislative session, these weekly mailings will go into greater detail every Monday and are oriented for those who want to more closely observe the goings-on in Olympia. You can find the January 13th Newsletter [here](#).

If you would like future newsletters to be delivered directly to your inbox, please consider subscribing to the [WACD Legislative Updates](#) newsletter.

2. SCC FY 25-27 Budget Update

Departing Governor Jay Inslee released his draft FY 25-27 budget on December 17th. You can find budget details for the Conservation Commission [here](#). Last week Commission staff released detailed [budget tables and narratives](#) comparing last biennia's budget to this year's proposed Governor's budget and to SCC's requests.

If you have specific questions about the budget please reach out to [Sarah Groth](#), [Kate Delavan](#), or your [regional manager](#).

3. WACD Legislative Day Details

General Information

WACD Legislative Day will be **February 5th**. If your district would like WACD to make your appointments with legislators for you, please reach out to Ryan Baye at rbaye@wadistricts.org.

Schedule

- **7:00 AM to 8:00 AM** – Breakfast (at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Lacey)

- **7:15 AM** – Welcome from WACD & Overview of WACD priorities
- **7:25 AM** – Welcome from the Commission
- **7:40 AM** – Briefing from WACD Lobbyist and Q&A
- **8:00 AM** – Attendees depart for meetings with Legislators
- **8:30 AM to 5:00 PM** – Attendees have access to the Columbia Room in the Legislative Building ~ Come take a break between meetings!
- **11:00 AM to 1:00 PM** – Invite your legislators and their legislative aids to swing by the Columbia Room to pick up a Common-Sense Conservation Cupcake
- **Noon** – WACD will be providing boxed lunches to participants. If you plan on joining us for lunch please **RSVP** to [Ryan](#) by **January 29th**.

Virtual Tours/Tabling

Last but not least if your CD would like to set up a display in the Columbia Room to showcase your CD to legislators stopping by to pick up a cupcake please email [Heather](#) to reserve your spot!

Hotel Information

We have a hotel at the same venue as 2024: the **Holiday Inn Express & Suites** in Lacey. If you are planning to come to Olympia, there will be a breakfast at the hotel the morning of the 5th before everyone descends on the Capitol.

For a *per diem* rate hotel room at the Holiday Inn, here are some directions:

1. Click on [this link](#) for the hotel webpage.
2. Select the date you wish to stay (our per diem rate is for February 4).
3. Click "View Prices".
4. This should provide you with the option of 1 King bed or 2 Queen bed room at \$151 per night (excluding taxes), select your room type.
5. Complete Booking.

Outreach Materials

WACD will have copies of our CD's 101 and CTA outreach one-pagers available for districts to take to their meetings or you can access and print your own [here](#).



Those folks joining us on the hill on February 5th will receive a **45 Strong** lapel pin! This beautiful graphic was created by our great friends at [KR Creative Strategies!](#)

4. PMC Featured Plant ~ Western Hemlock

[PMC](#) harvest is underway, and we have an abundance of big, beautiful, beefy rooted **Western Hemlock** [available](#).

Did you know that **Western Hemlock** was designated Washington's state tree in 1947? It is an iconic member of the western Cascade Forest. According to the [USDA Plant Database](#), this tree species provides cover and habitat for many species of wildlife in addition to being an excellent riparian buffer species helping to reduce stream bank erosion. Western Hemlock boasts a rich ethnobotanical history, having been used by Indigenous peoples as a tanning agent, a source of dye, and for various medicinal purposes, among other applications.

To learn more about **Western Hemlock** or to place your order, contact [Jacquie Gauthier](#), PMC Sales Manager.



5. Additional Funding Opportunities

NOAA B-WET Environmental Education Grants

The fiscal year 2025 funding opportunity can be found on Grants.gov under funding opportunity number [NOAA-NOS-ONMS-2025-29638](#). The [FY25 Pacific Northwest B-WET](#) funding announcement focuses on the following priority areas:

1. Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs; and
2. Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience.

Deadline: March 7, 2025

Areas served: Oregon and Washington

Contact: Nicole Harris, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, 360-406-2084,
nicole.harris@noaa.gov

STAR Enrollment Support Grants

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is collaborating with the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) by offering financial support for conservation districts for enrollment of producers in WSDA's Saving Tomorrow's Agriculture Resources (STAR). This support is in the amount of up to \$3,000 per conservation district (based on actual cost reimbursement). This funding is for the current fiscal year, so spending must occur by June 30, 2025.

Deadline: January 31, 2025

Learn more [here](#).

Soil Testing Support

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is offering financial support for soil testing in the amount of up to \$1000 per conservation district (based on actual cost reimbursement). Actual awards amount may depend on interest level. This funding is for the current fiscal year, so spending must occur by June 30, 2025.

Deadline: January 31, 2025

Learn more [here](#).

Bringing Youth Outdoors Together and Environmental Steward Program

This National Park Service funding opportunity focuses on youth development, recreation, service, social and environmental responsibility, and healthy living that emphasizes the value and significance of natural and cultural resources in nearby parks and communities. The program provides young people--particularly youth from underserved communities in urban, rural, military, and native settings -- with outdoor experiences and excursions to their local national park.

Deadline: February 8, 2025

Learn more [here](#).

Upcoming Events

2025

- **January 27:** [WACD Board of Directors Meeting](#)

- **February 5:** [WACD Legislative Days](#)
 - **February 6:** [NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee Meeting](#)
 - **February 24:** [WACD Board of Directors Meeting](#)
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Executive Corner

Sessioning and messaging

It's time. The Legislature is in Olympia and diving into a very challenging legislative session.

We have a new governor who has different priorities than the governor of the last 12 years. We have a host of new legislators starting their first days on the job in Olympia. We have some new agency heads.

Many of these people don't know their local conservation districts, so they don't understand the vital connections between State Conservation Commission funding, local conservation district programs and services, and the communities and landscapes helped by our conservation community.

This is where each of us has a role. More than any year in recent memory, this year every member in our community should become known to their elected officials, agency heads, and the staff who support them. We have basic materials for you to use on the WACD Hub at <https://wadistricts.us/wacd/member-services/#advocacy2025>.

Just as important as the concepts and talking points in our outreach documents is the way you present them, and yourself. When you talk of your conservation district or WACD, you become the face of that entity. They will judge all of us by how you carry yourself. What's best? Just be yourself: honest, sincere, and committed. They will appreciate that. If you want some help, WACD staff stand ready to assist.

Remember: they may not know you or may not understand why you do what you do. Whether they are new to the job or seasoned veterans, these good folks are overwhelmed with all of the things that go with being an elected official or agency head. Be kind, have some empathy for their plight, and be sincere that you want, need, and appreciate their help.

'The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only object of good government.' - Thomas Jefferson

My suggestion is to reach out immediately to every legislator in your district. Make sure they get the appropriate informational materials from our Advocacy/Campaign 2025 resources.

Be positive when you talk with legislators and with the great people who make up our conservation district community.

What conservation districts do helps to protect the vital natural resources of Washington State: resources needed to support vibrant agricultural businesses and healthy communities.

Conservation district programs and services help build a stronger future for all Washingtonians and you are a key part of that work. The conservation delivery system in Washington State is a proven pathway to success. When you are positive and sincere, we stand a much better chance of manifesting the positive outcomes we all hope for.

Make no mistake, hope drives all of us. Hope for something better, hope for change, hope for our children and future: hope is what feeds our souls and drives us to keep going, even when the going looks tough.

'Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul – and sings the tunes without the words – and never stops at all.' – Emily Dickinson

We must, of course, acknowledge the difficult reality we face: it will be hard to hold onto the gains we've made in the past few years. Nevertheless, WACD will continue to advocate for more Conservation Technical Assistance funding. CTA is the engine that makes it possible to deliver conservation programs and services in communities all across Washington. CTA is important and we'll proudly live up to our commitment to support it, and conservation districts.

So: we have our work cut out for us. It's very early in the process, so be positive. Hold fast. Stay the course. Have hope. Work the time-honored process of becoming well known to your elected officials and agencies. This is your moment. Own it.

'Doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment.' - Oprah Winfrey

Add to your impact by participating in Legislative Day on February 5th when we can show legislators what **45 Strong** looks like!

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. Emails sent to that address reach the entire Executive Office team!

Always yours for conservation,



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Latest Posts on the Hub

- [General Legislative Update](#)
- [Thurston CD Restoration Projects Manager](#)

- [Thurston CD Habitat Programs Manager](#)
- [Underwood CD Monitoring Technician Position](#)
- [PMC Update for January 9, 2025](#)
- [Franklin CD Research and Monitoring Technician](#)

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