



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for November 20, 2025

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Enjoy this Frosty Morning photo by - Pauline Hagen, Stevens County Conservation District
Supervisor

Courtesy of the SCC Flickr Account

In This Issue

Five Things to Know

1. WACD Annual Conference & Business Meeting ~ Regular Registration Ends Tomorrow!
2. Elected West Region Commission Representative Candidates
3. Application Deadline Extended For NACD Technical Assistance Grants
4. Agricultural Conservation Easement Sponsorship Application Window is Now Open
5. Ecology Begins Rulemaking to Update Surface Water Quality Standards
6. Bonus Item ~ Upcoming Webinar on Cheatgrass Control

Five Things To Know

1. WACD's Annual Conference & Business Meeting ~ Regular Registration Ends Tomorrow!

Conference Registration

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](#).

WACD is offering a single price for conference registration and meals at \$550 per person. The cost to attend virtually will be \$150/per person. If your district sends 3 or more supervisors to attend in person, your entire district can attend virtually for only \$75.00.

As in years past, we are discounting registration for new supervisors and new district staff to encourage their attendance and meet the statewide community. The first 15 to register as first-time conference attendees pay 50% of the regular registration price. There will be a dedicated new supervisor and manager training session on Monday morning with a leadership consultant for new managers / executive directors and supervisors elected or appointed in 2023, 2024, or 2025. **Regular registration ends tomorrow!**

For more information visit the Conference Page on the HUB [here](#).

2. Elected West Region Commission Representative Candidates

The **State Conservation Commission** (SCC) will hold an election for the **West Regional Representative** position during the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) Annual Meeting the week of December 1, 2025, in Spokane, Washington. The election will be conducted electronically.

Candidates

SCC received three candidate interest forms by the November 15 deadline. Listed alphabetically by first name, the candidates are:

- [Bill Blake from Arlington, Washington](#)
- [Brad Bortner from Cathlamet, Washington](#)
- [Mark Craven from Everett, Washington](#)

Candidate interest forms are linked above for your review.

Election Timeline

- **Voting opens:** Monday, December 1 -Voting will begin after the scheduled Commissioner Candidate Forum for Western Area Representative.
- **Voting closes:** Wednesday, December 3 (48-hour voting window)
- **Results announced:** By 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3 via email

How to Vote

Electronic ballots will be distributed through Election Runner to the email addresses of all conservation district board members verified by SCC prior to the election.

- Each voter will receive a unique identifier via email and must use an electronic device to cast their vote.

Nominations

Nominations from the floor will be accepted during the candidate introductions on Monday evening.

Voter Eligibility

- All current conservation district supervisors are eligible to vote and may cast one vote each.
- Voting is not conducted by district.
- Associate supervisors are not eligible to vote.
- Voters do not need to be physically present in Spokane to participate.

For questions, please contact:

Lori Gonzalez, Executive Assistant

Washington State Conservation Commission

PO Box 47721, Olympia, WA 98504 / lgonzalez@scc.wa.gov

3. Application Deadline Extended For NACD Technical Assistance Grants

Last month, NACD, in partnership with NRCS, issued a [request for proposals](#) for **Technical Assistance (TA) Grants**. The grant funding will support technical positions in high-need areas, strengthening conservation delivery across the U.S. and territories.

To ensure conservation districts have adequate time to coordinate with their NRCS partners, NACD is extending the TA Grant Program application deadline to **January 8, 2026**. With the federal government reopened and NRCS staff returning to regular operations, this extension will help support thoughtful planning and complete submissions.

All other eligibility and submission requirements remain the same. Learn more and submit your application [here](#).

4. Agricultural Conservation Easement Sponsorship Application Window is Now Open

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is currently accepting applications for the **2026 Agricultural Conservation Easement Sponsorship (ACES) program**. ACES provides a pathway for conservation districts to access grants made available by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) to permanently protect farmland in their district.

The application window is open until **February 2**.

Application and Program Details can be found [here](#).

5. Ecology Begins Rulemaking to Update Surface Water Quality Standards

Ecology is considering changes to the surface water quality standards in [Chapter 173-201A WAC](#) to help address **freshwater nutrient pollution** and the **toxic algae blooms** that can result from this type of pollution. Washington's surface water quality standards establish clean water requirements to protect rivers, lakes, streams, and marine water.

Beginning of the Process

ECY is beginning the development phase of each rulemaking, meaning they have not yet drafted proposed rule revisions. ECY plans to propose rule language for comment for the harmful algal blooms rulemaking in Fall 2026, and for the nutrient criteria for lakes and reservoirs rulemaking in Fall 2027.

Learn more about these rulemakings

- Read the [harmful algal blooms CR-101 form](#)
- Read the [nutrient criteria for lakes and reservoirs CR-101 form](#)
- Browse the [harmful algal blooms](#) and [nutrient criteria for lakes and reservoirs](#) rulemaking webpages
- Join our [email list](#) to receive news and information about this rulemaking, and other topics
- Read our [blog](#) about these rulemakings
- Learn about the [Environmental Justice Assessments](#) we are conducting for both rulemakings.

For more information contact:

Marla Koberstein
Rule Coordinator
marla.koberstein@ecy.wa.gov
360-789-3610

6. Upcoming Webinar on Cheatgrass Control

On **December 9th, 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM, PST** there will be a webinar on new invasive annual grass research updates. This webinar is designed for land management practitioners, to learn from University experts who have new peer reviewed publications addressing these topics.

Register for the webinar [here](#).

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Research Updates: Cheatgrass Control Promotes Mule Deer and Sage Grouse Habitat, Biodiversity, and Carbon Sequestration (Session 3):



December 9th (10:00 - 11:15 AM MDT)

[Click Here to Register:](#)

Overview: Invasive winter annual grasses such as cheatgrass, medusahead, and ventenata continue to negatively impact western rangeland at a landscape scale. Impacts include reduction in species diversity, degradation of critical wildlife and pollinator habitat, a drastic increase in fine fuels associated with wildfire, and depletion of ecosystem carbon. Land managers have the opportunity to learn from new cutting edge science, about the many ecosystem benefits resulting from invasive annual grass management. Tune into Session 3 of this land management practitioners webinar series, to learn from University experts who have new peer reviewed publications addressing these topics.



Upcoming Events

2025

- December 1 - 3: [WACD Conference and Business Meeting](#)
- December 4: [State Conservation Commission Meeting](#)

Inside WACD

Tis the Season!

WACD staff are busy preparing for the conference, so much so there is no spare time to write a column this week. So instead, I will tease an upcoming column by Ryan Baye, who recently took a trip to Scotland. Ryan will share his adventure with you all soon including his encounter with one particular Highland Cow, Ginger Snap, who is pictured below. This photo served as inspiration for one of our sponsor passport giveaways. I am pleased to introduce you to Ginger Snap II (aka the plushy version).

Warm regards,

Heather L. Wentt



We'd like to hear from you

People make Washington's conservation delivery system work. Whether it is people you work with, people you serve, or the statewide community of conservation districts, success is built on working with people. Success is built on 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,

Tom Salzer
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Latest Posts on the Hub

- [Grays Harbor CD Marine Resiliency Technician](#)
- [Grays Harbor CD Riparian Restoration Crew Member](#)
- [Native plants thrive in Eastern Washington's dry climate \(Benton CD\)](#)

- [King CD Farm Conservation Planner](#)
- [King CD Snohomish Basin Partnership Coordinator Position](#)
- [Washaway Beach shore restoration moves forward](#)

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