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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for January 29, 2026

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This short but spicy legislative session has us hanging on by our fingernails, much like the Tweedy's bitterroot (*Lewisiopsis tweedyi*) in this photo taken by Olivia Schilling, Foster Creek CD. Photo courtesy of SCC Flickr Account.

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Five Things To Know

1. Legislative Day Resources

WACD 2026 Legislative Day

WACD Legislative Day will be **February 10th**.

Find more information [here](#).

Legislative Day Briefing & Training

WACD is hosting a **virtual briefing and training** for engaging with legislators and communicating information from 12 - 1 on **Tuesday, February 3rd**. If you've never met with your legislators before, or want to brush up on those skills, [please consider attending](#). We will be going through the best ways to shine a light on your priorities, share the purpose and value of conservation districts, and be done in 15 minutes.

WACD Legislative Resources

You can learn more about other natural resource agencies and our first look at 2026 legislation by reading our [Legislative Newsletter](#), or attend our new [Legislative Check-In](#) every Monday at Noon for districts to interact face-to-face (virtually speaking). You can read about more ways to participate on the [Advocacy section](#) of the Hub.

2. In Celebration of Conservation Month!

Conservation district elections for 2026 are underway. The State Conservation Commission is offering each conservation district **\$110** to order **Conservation Month swag** to help promote your elections.

This year, for the first time, SCC is asking districts to **order directly through their storefront**. SCC will reimburse your district up to \$110 via an amendment to your implementation grant. Once you have placed your order, please email [Toyo Garber](#) and let her know how much you spent. All orders must be placed by **May 15, 2026**.

Don't forget the SCC [media kit](#) to help you promote your district's election.

3. CD and Producer Funding Opportunities

NRCS 2026 Flood Recovery Aid

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Washington state has technical and financial assistance available to help producers recover from flooding.

Agricultural, ranching, Tribal and forest operations in Benton, Chelan, Clallam, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, King, Kittitas, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, Wahkiakum, Whatcom, Yakima counties and all other Tribal nations within those listed counties have been significantly impacted by flooding this winter.

As producers move into recovery mode and assess damages, they should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#) to report losses and learn more about program options available to assist in their recovery from crop, forestland, or shellfish and livestock losses and damages.

Tilth Alliance Flood Relief Grant ~ Coming Soon

Tilth Alliance will offer Flood Relief Grants to farm businesses impacted by the December 2025 atmospheric rivers. Grants will be available to those in [disaster declared counties](#) assist with the immediate needs of recovery. These grant funds are available for, but not limited to, covering financial losses due to relocation, beginning cleanup efforts, and repairs to equipment and infrastructure. Grants will be accepted on a rolling basis starting at the end of January. Funding amounts will be dependent on need up to \$10,000. Contact the Tilth Alliance for more information: info@tilthalliance.org.

EPA Environmental Education Grants

EPA is offering grants to support environmental education projects that promote environmental awareness and stewardship and help provide people with the skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment. This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques. This grant competition closes on **March 3, 2026**. For more information visit: [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants | US EPA](#)

4. Conference Partner Offers Conservation District Engagement Opportunity

Forth attended our annual conference in Spokane this year to bring attention to electric farm equipment through the [E-Farms program](#).

Forth is looking for several **host locations in 2026** where they will **lend electric farm equipment** (for 3-6 weeks). Participating agencies gain direct experience by trying equipment on their working lands and then reporting about the experience through storytelling to their constituents. Available equipment may include electric tractors, utv's, atv's, commercial utility carts, F-150 Lightning, and even some power tools like chainsaws and pole saws.

Ideal sites include agencies and/or organizations such as conservation districts, Ag Extension properties, research farms, or non-profit farms. Participants are provided with a \$2,500

stipend.

Please direct any inquiries to: David Skakel, Senior Programs Specialist, Forth.
davids@forthmobility.org. (541)-806-4387



5. Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Committee ~ Now Accepting Applications

Environmental Protection Association (EPA) has announced that they are accepting applications for the **Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Committee (FRRCC)**. Applications are due by **March 2, 2026**.

About the FRRCC

The FRRCC is a federal advisory committee that provides independent, practical advice to EPA on environmental policies and programs that affect agriculture and rural communities. The EPA Administrator identifies specific topics for the committee's consideration.

Who should consider applying:

- Farmers, ranchers, and representatives of rural communities
- Allied industries (farm groups, rural suppliers, marketers, processors)

- Academia and researchers
- State, local, and tribal government representatives
- Nongovernmental organizations

For more information, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/faca/frcc>.

Upcoming Events

2026

- February 3: [Legislative Briefing and Training](#)
- February 9: SCC Meeting on Preparing for the Next Biennial Budget
- February 10: WACD Legislative Day
- February 19: [State Technical Advisory Committee Meeting](#)
- February 23: [WACD Board of Directors Meeting](#)

Inside WACD

HB 2499 - More Questions than Answers

Tuesday's committee hearing seemed to raise more questions for the State Government Committee members than it brought answers on HB 2499. That tends to happen when a [proposed substitute bill](#) is offered at the start of the committee hearing, and with public testimony limited to only one minute per person.

If you didn't watch Tuesday's bill hearing on HB 2499, we encouraged you to watch both the [legislator testimony](#) and the [public testimony](#). And be ready to help straighten out some of the information that was heard when you meet with your own legislators during Legislative Day.

As we release this week's newsletter, HB 2499 is scheduled for potential executive action on Tuesday February 3rd. We are working through our lobbyist to determine how WACD can continue to respond to the bill as we approach the policy deadline of Wednesday, February 4th.



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,



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Latest Posts on the Hub

- [San Juan Islands Conservation District offers free biochar kiln workshops](#)
- [Celebrating Conservation Month!](#)
- [Week 2 Legislative Update](#)
- [Cascadia CD Riverscape Restoration Program Manager](#)

- [Pine Creek CD Education & Community Outreach Specialist](#)
- [Okanogan CD Agriculture & Range Planner I](#)

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