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Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for March 5, 2026

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



Call for Volunteers: 2026 Washington State Envirothon May 20-21 | Conconully, Washington

The Washington State Envirothon is looking for volunteers to help support this year's competition, hosted by Okanogan Conservation District and the Washington State Envirothon Committee, with support from WACD, SCC, and generous donors.

If you are interested in volunteering, please take a moment to complete the [volunteer interest form](#) by **May 1**. Lodging and meals are provided at no cost to volunteers. Please feel free to share this opportunity with coworkers, AmeriCorps members, partners, or anyone who may be interested in supporting the event.

Thank you for helping support the next generation of natural resource leaders!

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Five Things To Know

1. WACD Updates & Reminders

State Budget Reconciliation Letters ~ Submit by March 10th!

The two legislative bodies will start to reconcile the differences between their budgets, and this is where there is an opportunity for districts. WACD has developed a [template letter](#) to customize and share with your legislators by **March 10th** about the impacts of the proposed cuts or increases to the Riparian Grant Program, Sustainable Farms & Fields, and Forest Health funding would have to your local communities. WACD will also be working through our lobbyist to get the Senate's version in the final budget.

Resolutions

Yes, we mean WACD Resolutions. It's not too early to be thinking about the next legislative session and what topics and issues we want to engage on at the policy level as well as other ways to *improve the campsite*, as our good friend Larry Davis likes to say. The WACD Ways and Means Committee is currently working on recommendations to improve the resolution process. Look for an updated resolution template and guidance in the coming months.

Save the Date ~ 2026 District Legislative Engagement Workshops

This week a calendar invite hold went out to all CD Managers/Executive Directors to reserve the following dates:

- **April 29th** - Virtual Workshop
- **September 18th** - In-Person Workshop (*this is the Friday after the SCC meeting hosted by Underwood CD*). We will also try and secure remote access for those who cannot attend in person.

We **strongly encourage CD staff and supervisors to attend** so together we can tackle the challenges and opportunities important to your district this next legislative session.

2. Regenerative Pilot Program Webinar ~ Today!

Webinar - Thursday, March 5, 2026

[Join Here](#) today for a one-hour presentation on the USDA NRCS **Regenerative Pilot Program (RPP) and Technical Service Providers (TSPs)**, aimed at providing an overview on how technical professionals may assist with RPP as an NRCS-Certified TSP, helping farmers, ranchers and forest landowners help the land.

TEAMS Live Event
Thursday, March 5, 2026
11:00 AM – 12:15 PM PT

Event Description:

This one-hour overview (plus Q&A) will familiarize attendees with TSP roles through the NRCS RPP conservation planning process. NRCS staff will cover Conservation Planning Activities (CPAs) with discussion of whole farm assessments, Design and Implementation Activities (DIAs) and Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activities (CEMAs), highlighting CEMA 216 Soil Health Testing. The event will also cover the process to become a certified TSP, the initial TSP certification agreement and modifications to add RPP primary and supporting practices and activities.

3. SCC 27-29 Decision Packages Program Survey

To prepare for the next biennial budget development process, SCC is beginning to collect information that will help create the 2027-29 decision packages. Decision packages, also known as budget requests, are the formal process for an agency to communicate its budget needs to the Governor's Office and Legislature. SCC's decision packages are jointly developed with conservation districts to reflect the needs of our local conservation delivery system.

As we mentioned during the Funding Locally-Led Conservation: Preparing for the Next Biennial Budget meeting on Feb. 9, we have prepared a survey for each conservation district to fill out. This survey will help us evaluate the collective needs of conservation districts and SCC

programs.

[Fill out the survey here.](#)

This survey will help SCC learn more about individual program demands from all 45 conservation districts. The information collected from this survey will help us tell a better story to the legislature about the work that you are doing on the ground and your continued needs to maintain and/or expand that work.

The **priority deadline** for this survey is **March 6**, which will give us time to incorporate some initial findings into the decision package planning conversation scheduled for the March 19 commission meeting.

4. WADE Registration is Now Open

We are looking forward to seeing you at the Sleeping Lady Resort in Leavenworth for our annual WADE conference, **Monday, June 8 - Wednesday, June 10, 2026**. Read on for everything you need to know for WADE 2026!

[WADE Conference Schedule](#)

Check out all that WADE has in store for 2026.

NEW this year, look for identifiers in each description describing the target audience's experience level (General Audience, Entry, Intermediate, Expert) to help you understand what level of material will be covered. You can choose to go to any level! We are trying this out for the first time this year, and we value your feedback on how this feature works for you.

[Registration Form](#)

Register! Let us know what days you plan to attend, what meals you need, and if you'll stay onsite. **Discounted rates apply until April 1, all registrations are due by May 1.**

Payment is not due at time of registration, so each individual can register separately and a district can send one payment for all.

[Scholarship Application](#)

Need support to cover registration costs? Apply for a WADE Scholarship!

Applications are due by no later than 4pm, **March 20, 2026**.

[WADE Website](#)

Find all of these links and more on the WADE website.

WADE



Conservation from the Ground Up

5. NRCS Practice Standards ~ For Your Review and Comment

NRCS is conducting internal reviews for 2 Conservation Practices and is inviting partner comments on the draft documents. This is a review of a draft document prior to posting practices on the Federal Register. The intent is to help streamline changes and gather potential

comments. All comments received may not be incorporated into the practice standard. The Federal Register is still the official response for the public. Partners are encouraged to review all Conservation Practice Standards on the Federal Register as they are posted.

All comments are to be sent to [Lynelle Knehans](#), State Conservation Engineer and [Bobby Evans](#), State Resource Conservationist by **March 23, 2026**.

Practices For Review and Comment:

- 607 NHCP CPS Surface Drain Field Ditch
- 634 NHCP CPS Waste Transfer

You can access the draft standards [here](#).

6. Bonus Item ~ New WACD Directory is Now Available

WACD maintains a directory of conservation districts and partners to facilitate interactions with and within our conservation community. We also make available specific contact lists of board chairs and managers. Conservation Districts and partners can [contact us](#) for a link to the latest version. If you have Directory updates please send them to [Lori McLaughlin](#).

Upcoming Events

2026

- March 12: Last scheduled day of the 2026 Legislative Session
- March 16: [WACD Board Meeting](#)
- March 18-19: [SCC Meeting & Tour](#) in San Juan County
- March 25: [NACD Spring Fly-In](#)
- April 20: [WACD Board Meeting](#)
- April 29: WACD Spring Legislative Engagement Workshop (virtual)

Inside WACD

Share the better story

This year's Annual Meeting of the National Association of Conservation Districts was held in mid-February in San Antonio. A strong contingent from Washington State showed up to learn, network, and share ideas with conservation districts from across the nation.

One theme that resonated with me throughout the conference came from keynote speaker Chet Garner—creator, host, and executive producer of *The Daytripper*. Through engaging storytelling about his love for Texas, its people, and its places, Chet shared a powerful message: **“Tell the better story.”**

If we want to engage people, we should tell stories that are optimistic rather than pessimistic. Words matter. In a world often filled with divisiveness, what we say can shape not only how others see the world—but how we see it ourselves.

I carried Chet’s words with me into every session I attended, and I’d like to share a few highlights.

First, the great state of Kentucky shared their **10-minute supervisor trainings**. This is a topic we’ve long grappled with at the state level: how do we best support supervisors and give them the tools to succeed? Kentucky’s Commission developed short training memos—designed to take **10 minutes or less**—complete with discussion questions that boards can review during their monthly meetings.

It’s a simple but powerful idea. Surely we can all find **10 minutes somewhere on our agendas for board improvement**.

Next, we move to the great state of Oklahoma. Their partnership between Natural Resources Conservation Service, the state commission, and the association formed the **Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society**. They are not only protecting and documenting their past—they are actively using history and storytelling to educate the public and legislators about the importance of conservation districts.

It reminds me of one of my favorite quotes from Maya Angelou:

“If you don’t know where you’ve come from, you don’t know where you’re going”

So I’ll leave you with this question:

What story are you telling yourself right now?

Your words—and your thoughts—matter. In a world that often leans toward negativity, I challenge you to choose the positive story.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather L. Wendt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



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 Zaher
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Latest Posts on the Hub

- [Okanogan CD Agricultural Lead Position](#)
- [Week 7 Legislative Update](#)
- [Ray Ledgerwood Awarded NACD's Rich Duesterhaus Lifetime Achievement Award](#)

- [Week 6 Legislative Update](#)
- [Local plant sale promotes habitat restoration one garden at a time](#)
- [Week 5 Legislative Update](#)

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