



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for August 1, 2024

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WSCC July Meeting & Tour

We would like to thank Clark Conservation District again for hosting a wonderful tour on July 17th as part of the SCC's meeting. These tours present great opportunities for districts to showcase their people, projects, and programs.



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Five Things to Know

1 – Riparian Taskforce Final Recommendations

In July 2023, the Washington Governor's Office contracted with Plauché & Carr LLP to reconvene the Riparian Taskforce. The goal of the taskforce was develop policy and spending recommendations to improve riparian habitat to ensure salmon and steelhead recovery.

The 2023 efforts were funded pursuant to a budget proviso, which funded an independent facilitation process engaging tribes, local governments, agricultural producers, commercial and recreational fisher organizations, business organizations, salmon recovery organizations, forestry and agricultural organizations, and environmental organizations. The Washington State Conservation Commission participated on the Taskforce. The final recommendations can be found [here](#).

Tom Salzer, WACD Executive Director, made a public comment at the recent State Conservation Commission meeting that the presence of a recommendation to use eminent domain to acquire some lands for riparian restoration goes against the voluntary, cooperative nature of conservation district work. On that basis, he said WACD was unlikely to be able to support that part of the Riparian Taskforce recommendations.

2 – NRCS Seeking Feedback on ACEP-ALE

USDA-NRCS is seeking feedback from partners and landowners who have participated in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, Agricultural Land Easements. The deadline for responses is Friday, August 16.

The questionnaire takes about 15 minutes and is available by following this link: [ACEP-ALE Customer Satisfaction Survey](#). Answers will be kept confidential and will be used to help the

agency improve and streamline their program. Questions or concerns can be directed to Matt Oliver, National ACEP-ALE Program Manager Matt Oliver at matthew.oliver@usda.gov.

3 – EPA Seeks Nominations for the Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced a [solicitation for nominations](#) to serve on its Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee (FRRCC). Established in 2008, the FRRCC provides independent policy advice, information, and recommendations to the EPA Administrator on a range of environmental issues and policies that are of importance to agriculture and rural communities.

The FRRCC provides a venue for agricultural stakeholders to provide meaningful feedback to EPA regarding a range of policies and programs,” said Rod Snyder, Senior Agriculture Advisor to the Administrator. “The work of this committee is more important than ever as the FRRCC helps inform the priorities of EPA’s newly created Office of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

To be considered for an appointment to the FRRCC, nominations should be submitted to FRRCC@epa.gov by **September 5, 2024**, with the subject line “FRRCC Membership 2024.” Nominations should include a résumé or curriculum vitae and a statement of interest. Letters of support and recommendation will be accepted but are not mandatory.

4 – IT Help Desk Service is Now Available

Early this month, WACD's Executive Director signed a contract with Olympia Computer to provide help to conservation districts with their information technology questions. This service is structured much like the legal services fund, where a district will receive the first hour of assistance at no cost, and additional time will be payable to the vendor. You can receive assistance for items such as:

- Provide Support for all current software as needed
- Annual technology review
- Labor for software upgrades on workstations as needed
- Keep an accurate library of software and hardware components
- Perform monthly updates and system performance tuning on current devices
- Support all current printers and current networking equipment
- Update router with patches and firmware as needed

To access this service please reach out to Olympia Computer at 1-360-995-1010 or email them at helpdesk@olympia.computer

5 – Updated District Directory is Published

WACD's Lori McLaughlin has been working with conservation districts to update the District Directory. The Directory is now available.

To access it, please send an email to oly@wacd.org and ask for the URL for the directory. (We keep this location private to help minimize scraping of names and addresses by evil bots!)

Upcoming Events

2024

- **August 8:** [NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee Meeting](#)
 - **August 13:** [WACD Plant Materials Center Open House](#)
 - **September 16:** [WACD Board of Directors meeting](#)
 - **September 18 - 19:** [SCC Meeting & Tour](#)
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Executive Corner

It's hard to believe that today is August 1. Summer is half over. Where in the world did the time go? I know the entire WACD team has been very busy and I'm sure you've been very busy, too.

I'm on the Reunion Committee for my high school graduating class. I attended a big school with more than 500 people in my senior class. We are holding several events on August 2, 3, and 4 for our classmates and the 176 attendees are looking forward to catching up with each other.

Much of my work has been managing the database. It's been hard to keep track of everyone. Between the last two reunions five and 10 years ago and today, many people have retired. Quite a few of those folks had used their work email address as the contact point, and that means we have lost track of some people. Of 518 classmates, we've lost touch with 207 and 60 (that we can verify) have gone before us.

Throughout the process of contacting hundreds of people and updating information, one thing has been driven home time and time again: we are all going through something. Some of the stories I've heard are so heartbreaking that I felt I couldn't continue working on the reunion that day. Most of us don't talk about the health concerns or relationship issues that affect us, but trust me when I say everyone is dealing with something.

I am sure this is a general truth that extends to our conservation district community as well. If ever you needed a reason to extend some grace to those around you, remember that they are going through something that may be affecting them in ways you don't understand.

I didn't get this when I was in my 20s and 30s, but I get it now. The idea that everybody is going through something shows up in many ministries, but to me, it's just a human thing.

For the coming weekend with classmates, I'm trying to put "everybody's going through something" in the forefront of my mind. I'm hoping that will let me cope with the emotional interactions that I know are coming at the reunion events.

WACD staff remain very busy

Executive Office staff continue to visit conservation districts and attend meetings. Plant Materials Center staff are busy taking care of living plants: watering, weeding, and fertilizing. At the same time, our PMC folks are preparing for a great tour in the mid-month and getting equipment ready for fall and winter harvest.

Staff are preparing a summary report for WACD Officers and Directors that will include these topics:

- Districts visited in June and July
- Committee meetings held
- Other significant meetings attended
- New podcast published ([WACD Team Talk](#))
- Launched the IT Help Desk service
- Updated District Directory published
- Audit is underway
- SCC Contract amendment signed
- Waiting on another possible contract
- June financials are completed
- More than half of WACD's 45 members have already paid annual dues
- Annual conference sponsors being booked

Thank you for your support

Thank you to those conservation districts who are supporting WACD's work for and with districts by paying their annual dues. We know this is a big expense and we remain committed to providing great value to members. We look forward to another great year of serving you!

Closing thoughts

These nuggets come from [James Clear](#). In a piece about how to get better at saying no, he suggests:

Keep a list of things you say no to. Whenever you ignore a distraction or turn down an opportunity, add it to the list. As the list grows, you begin to feel a sense of accomplishment for your ability to say no and remain focused on what matters.

And on the subject of choice and opportunities, he offers these bits of wisdom:

When you're younger, it's easy to underestimate how fleeting the days can be. Each choice matters. Each day matters. When you're older, it's easy to underestimate how much opportunity you still have. Don't talk yourself out of it. It's never too late to start.

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

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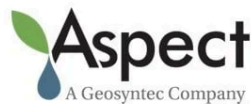
- [Keeping your property safe from fires: Spokane Conservation District offers tips](#)
- [WSU Educates Landowners to Help Protect from Wildfire Threats](#)
- [The tiny town of Marshall is grappling with the legal implications of a mysterious new lake](#)
- [Free Wildfire Home Assessment Tour Offered by King Conservation District](#)
- [Research & Monitoring Coordinator, Palouse Conservation District](#)
- [Resource Conservation Technician Position, Palouse Conservation District](#)

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1219 11th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501

(564) 669-7540

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