



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Five Things to Know for October 26, 2023

In this issue:

1. Sponsor Spotlight: Enduris
 2. WACD Annual Conference Information
 3. Area Association Meetings Done, What's Next
 4. When to Hold Future WACD Conferences?
 5. WACD Award Nominations Due Friday!
 6. BONUS: What is Your Preference for Holding Legislative Day?
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1 – Sponsor Spotlight

Meet one of our 2023 Leader Level Annual Meeting Sponsors: **Enduris**.

Enduris is a member-owned, local government risk pool of over 500 special purpose districts in the state of Washington offering comprehensive property and liability coverage along with value-added risk solutions. Enduris serves members who serve their communities!

Learn more at www.enduris.us.

We invite you to look at the array of sponsors for the 2023 WACD Annual Conference at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/annual/2023meetings/conference/#sponsors>. More sponsors are needed! Sponsors help us provide a better conference. Please [contact WACD](#) if you have ideas

for sponsors. Note: individuals can also be a sponsor at any level!

2 – WACD Annual Conference Information

Register and Make Hotel Reservations Now!

We are only a month away from our Annual Conference! **You can register [here](#).** Reserve your lodging accommodations using one of the methods below.

The Annual Conference and Business Meeting will also have a virtual participation component so that those unable to travel to Wenatchee can still participate. **Please register for virtual participation [here](#).**

You can make hotel reservations at the Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel. Rooms are available at the government per diem rate of \$107/night - November 26 - 29, 2023). **THE CUT-OFF DATE FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS IS NOVEMBER 8TH.**

You can reserve a room in three ways:

1. Call the hotel directly at [509-662-1234](tel:509-662-1234) and indicate you are booking with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts.
2. Call the hotel's toll-free line at [800-716-6199](tel:800-716-6199) and ask for the Washington Association of Conservation Districts conference to book the room.
3. Reserve online at [Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel](#).

We look forward to seeing you in Wenatchee!

Your Associate Supervisors can vote at the annual meeting

WACD bylaws limit each member district in good standing to five voters. If your district is not sending all of your board supervisors to the annual business meeting, you can send associate supervisors to cast votes on behalf of your conservation district. What WACD needs is a letter from your Chair (or other officer), preferably on district letterhead, stating that the board of supervisors has approved the named associated supervisors to vote on behalf of your district at the 2023 WACD annual conference and business meeting. Send that to us at oly@wacd.org before the start of the conference, or hand it to WACD staff at the meeting.

Send us your project videos

Seeing the many successful conservation district projects at the area meetings gave us inspiration. We would love to share with the membership at the WACD annual conference any project videos districts have either developed on their own or in partnership with another entity. If you have a video from the last couple years you're proud of, please send it to rbye@wadistricts.org.

3 – Area Association Meetings Done, What's Next?

By the time this edition of the Five Things goes to press, all six area associations will have held their annual meeting. As this is being written, we've seen at least 30 resolutions brought forward. Find them at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/annual/2023meetings/areas/#resolutions>.

WACD will assign resolutions to one of our policy committees for review and recommendations. The committees will meet virtually in November, and after hearing from the sponsor district and any input from the membership will vote on recommending DO PASS or DO NOT PASS to the resolutions, and offer any amendments. Then, all the resolutions adopted by area associations will be presented at the WACD Annual Business Meeting, along with the recommendation of the relevant committee. Look for committee meeting times to be announced next week.

4 – When to Hold Future WACD Conferences?

Second request for feedback! We published this survey last week and have received only nine responses. That's not a large enough population size to give us meaningful guidance. Please take a few moments to respond!

At their November 20 regular meeting, the [WACD Board of Directors](#) will consider whether to change the days and timing of the 2024 and 2025 WACD Annual Conference and Business Meeting.

The survey form contains an explanation and asks three questions. No email addresses are collected. Find the short survey at <https://forms.gle/zHyGunbsgS7zzte5A>

Here are the opening paragraphs from the survey:

An idea has been brought forward to change when the WACD Annual Conference and Business Meeting event is held. Currently, the conference and business meeting are the first Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday after Thanksgiving. This is the schedule already set for the 2023 WACD conference and business meeting. This survey asks if you want to change this schedule and timing for the 2024 and 2025 WACD conference and business meeting.

There are two scenarios presented in this survey:

- *The first is changing the event days from Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday following Thanksgiving to later that same week on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.*
- *The second scenario is shifting the event to the week before Thanksgiving.*

If the conference changed days, then the session for new supervisors and special workshops would be held on Thursday. Conference sessions currently held on Tuesday would instead be held on Friday. The business meeting would be held on Saturday.

This question was raised because we have many supervisors who work. Putting the business meeting on a Saturday might make it easier for them to participate in discussing and deciding the direction of WACD.

5 – Award Nominations are due this Friday!

Awards nominations are due October 27th. Each year, WACD seeks to recognize the best and brightest in our community. We are looking for nominations in eleven different categories, ranging from Associate Supervisors to local co-operators. Applications should take no more than a few minutes of your time. The [2023 nomination forms](#) are now available on the WACD

Hub.

BONUS – Preference for January Legislative Day?

Ryan Baye (Director of Legislative and Member Services) has selected the week of January 22-26, 2024 as the time window for the WACD Legislative Day. If you have a preference for a certain day during that week, [please let Ryan know](#).

Support Washington State Envirothon



Support Washington State Envirothon

at WACD's 2023 Annual Meeting Auction

November 28th, 6:00 PM-8:00 PM

All proceeds will support the WA State Envirothon team on their road to Nationals.



For more details or to make a donation please contact Chloe Steffes at chloe.steffes@kingcd.org

Upcoming Events

2023

- **November 20:** [WACD Regular Board Meeting](#)
- **November 27-29:** [WACD Annual Conference and Business Meeting](#) — Wenatchee, WA
- **November 30:** [State Conservation Commission meeting – Wenatchee, WA](#)

2024

- **January 8:** [Washington State Legislature short session begins](#)
 - **January 15:** [WACD Regular Board Meeting](#)
 - **January 18:** [State Conservation Commission meeting – Lacey, WA](#)
 - **February 10-14:** [NACD 78th annual meeting – San Diego, California](#)
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Executive Corner

Are we in the business of hope? Why yes, yes we are!

As I was chatting with Austin Shero at the South Central Area Association meeting in Prosser, we touched on the topic of hope. Austin told me every farmer, rancher, and forest owner are closet optimists. That was such a thoughtful observation I've paused to think about it for the past two days.

Most of us know that earning a livelihood in agriculture can be quite a gamble. Will it rain enough? Will it rain too much? What pests and invasive weeds will I have to control this year? And now, with more extreme climatic conditions: will we be impacted by wildfire?

The very chancy nature of farming was brought home to me when I learned why my grandparents left their homestead in Montana before my mother was born. After proving up the homestead, they walked away from it after three total crop failures in a row. It proved to be too much for them to bear, and so they moved to Helix in Oregon, and to Prosser, Pasco, and Dixie in Washington. Grandpa became a butcher and grocery store owner (a much more predictable way to live than farming!) while they raised a family of seven kids.

They had loved a future they could envision and they had hope that if they worked hard and made good decisions, they could make it happen. Ultimately, they had to leave their land behind when they couldn't make it work. (Below, I'm including a photo from July of the Bruce homestead located north of Glasgow, Montana. After more than a century, the sod house has melted back into the land.)

And this just in: sometimes it does "just work": [Washington farmer tops wheat yield contest with 212 bushels:](#)

"I don't know what I did right, and I don't know what I did wrong yet," Gross told the Capital Press. "You put the seed out, give it a good chance, make sure it has the water it needs and hopefully it will produce."

Our farm, ranch, and forest operators all believe they'll do better in the next season. I think they have to have this deeply embedded belief that it will be better next time!

The flip side of eternal optimism is disappointment when that hoped for future doesn't pan out. Perhaps this is why [farmers have among the highest suicide rate of all professions](#). [Washington State Representative J.T. Wilcox is quoted](#) in a follow-up to that article:

"I've told people that the stress in politics is like a vacation compared to some of the years I spent in our family business. In the four generations we've operated, each generation has come within weeks of losing the farm. Few understand the weight of generations and history on people who are faced with economic forces totally out of their control."

I admire our ag producers. They take on mother nature, big business, changing demographics, invasives, and just about every other variable you can think of. They do it because they believe in providing food and fiber for their communities and for our country. It takes courage and an immense amount of belief that things will be better the next time around the sun.

As I've pondered Austin's insight about hope, I think he touched on how our conservation district people are able to reach landowners and resource users. Their conversations are about what landowners want for their land and other resources. Discussions often revolve around desired future conditions, and in every such conversation I've been party to, hope figures strongly in what people want to see happen.

"Where there is no vision, there is no hope." - [George Washington Carver](#)

Thank you to Austin for sparking this train of thought for me. It helps me appreciate our producers even more. It helps me realize that part of our conservation work involves helping people see a better vision of their operation. While we think of ourselves as conservationists, we are also people who inspire others to have more hope.

Over the past couple of weeks I've seen many conservation district supervisors at area association meetings, giving their time and talent to the conservation ethos we support so strongly. Every month, they work to create better a better future for their communities through the work of conservation districts. Conservation district supervisors continue to be fundamental to the success of conservation districts.

Please join me in thanking a farmer, rancher, or forest owner today. They don't do what they do because it's the only thing they know, they do it because of the deep love they have for natural resources and the abiding hope that if they do their best, it will turn out better next time.

[National Farmer's Day was October 12th](#), but for us, every day is farmer's day.

Here are three quotations to close this piece...

I have seen it since I was a child: the magic, the stardust we are, in the lives of the people I come from. - Patrisse Khan-Cullors

We do not need magic to transform the world. We carry all of the power we need inside ourselves already: we have the power to imagine better. - J.K. Rowling

Great people do things before they are ready. They do things before they know they can do it. Doing what you're afraid of, getting out of your comfort zone, taking risks -- that's what life is. - Amy Poehler

Always yours for conservation,

Tom Salzer, WACD Executive Director

The Bruce homestead in northeast Montana



Latest Posts on the Hub

- [Conservation district hosting annual plant sale | Peninsula Daily News](#)
- [Buy a beer, plant a tree: local program sees first plantings | The Daily World](#)
- [James Thompson named executive director of SCC](#)
- [Asotin County CD is seeking a Resource Technician](#)
- [Whidbey Island CD is seeking a Stewardship Forester](#)
- [Clark Conservation District annual native plant sale coming soon - The Reflector](#)

See the full list of Recent Posts at <https://hub.wadistricts.org/posts/>. We capture many articles of interest to our community in the [WACD Reading List](#).

We appreciate our great 2022-2023 sponsors

Many thanks to our generous sponsors for helping us support Washington State's conservation districts. WACD encourages you to consider patronizing these sponsors in thanks for their important support: <https://hub.wadistricts.org/annual/2022meetings/conference/#sponsors>



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