



Washington State
Conservation Commission

MEETING PACKET

January 2020

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Washington State Conservation Commission

PRELIMINARY MEETING AGENDA Thursday, January 16, 2020

Due to the impending weather, the SCC has cancelled the business meeting location in La Connor, WA. Instead, the Commission will have a web/teleconference meeting and will focus on the high priority agenda items. All other topics are in the meeting packet and may be moved to the next meeting in March.

You must [register](#) to participate via web / teleconference.

TIME	TAB	ITEM	LEAD	ACTION/INFO
9:00 a.m. 5 min.		Call to Order (Chairman Longrie) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pledge of Allegiance Additions/corrections to agenda items 	All Chairman Longrie	
10 min.		Introductions	All (<i>moderated by SCC staff</i>)	
<i>PUBLIC COMMENT WILL BE ALLOWED PRIOR TO ACTION ITEMS. THREE (3) MINUTES PER PERSON. PLEASE WAIT FOR CHAIRMAN TO ANNOUNCE</i>				
9:10 a.m. 5 min.	1	Consent Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of the draft December 5, 2019 business meeting minutes (<i>pgs. 7-10</i>) 	Chairman Longrie	Action
9:15 a.m. 25 min.	3	District Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Accountability Performance Program (CAPP) guidelines for 2020 (<i>pg. 19-30</i>) Pacific Conservation District petition for inclusion (<i>pgs. 31-32</i>) 	Shana Joy Shana Joy	Action Action
<i>PUBLIC COMMENT WILL BE ALLOWED PRIOR TO ACTION ITEMS. THREE (3) MINUTES PER PERSON. PLEASE WAIT FOR CHAIRMAN TO ANNOUNCE</i>				
9:40 a.m. 35 min.	4	Policy/Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative Update (<i>pgs. 43-69</i>) Conservation easement subcommittee appointments (<i>pgs. 73-74</i>) 	Ron Shultz/ Alison Halpern Josh Giuntoli	Information Action
10:15a.m. 15 min	5	Commission Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCC agency updates Chairman comments 	Director Smith Chairman Longrie	Information Information
10:30 a.m.		Adjourn	Chairman Longrie	

The times listed above are estimated and may vary.

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TAB 1

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Washington State Conservation Commission Meeting
Tacoma, Washington
December 5, 2019

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/SCC) met in regular session on December 5, 2019, in Tacoma, Washington. Chairman Kropf called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Jim Kropf, Chairman
Dean Longrie, Vice-chairman, West Region
Harold Crose, Central Region
Larry Cochran, Eastern Region
Sarah Spaeth, Governor Appointed Member
Daryl Williams, Governor Appointed Member
Perry Beale, Department of Agriculture
David Giglio, Department of Ecology
Julie Sackett, Department of Natural Resources
Jeanette Dorner, WA Association of Conservation Districts

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT

Carol Smith, Executive Director
Lori Gonzalez, Executive Assistant
Shana Joy, District Regional Manager Coordinator
Laura Johnson, Communications Coordinator
Ron Shultz, Policy Director
Alison Halpern, Policy Assistant
Bill Eller, Elections and VSP staff

Sarah Groth, Fiscal Manager
Alicia McClendon, Administrative Assistant

PARTNERS AT THE TABLE

Nathan Pamplin, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife on behalf Michael Kuttel Jr.
Roylene Comes at Night, Natural Resource Conservation Service
Lucy Edmondson, Environmental Protection Agency

GUESTS ATTENDED

Ariel Rivers, NACD Pacific Region, Mary Collins, Palouse CD, Jennifer Boie, Palouse CD, Mark Craven, Snohomish CD, Monte Marti, Tom Salzer, WACD Exec, Mike Mumford Pend Oreille CD, George S., Pend Oreille CD, Jean, Christy Cox, Brian Schibel, Brandy Reed, King CD, Alan Chapman, Amy McKay, Whitman CD, Raymond Brown, Pine Creek. Remaining SCC staff: Jean Fike, Jon Culp, Courtney Woods, Melissa VanderLinden, Karla Heinitz, Stu Trefry, and Brian Cochrane.

CONSENT AGENDA

September 19, 2019 Draft Meeting Minutes

The September 19, 2019 draft meeting minutes were presented for approval.

Motion by Commissioner Longrie to approve the September 19, 2019 WSCC business meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carried.

Executive Director and Member Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel requests were submitted for the Executive Director and a commission representative to attend the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada in February, 2020, and a request to travel to the NACD Legislative Spring Fly-in in Washington D.C. in March 2020.

Motion by Commissioner Williams to approve out of state travel for the Executive Director and a commission member to attend the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Meeting, February 8-12, 2019 in Las Vegas, Nevada and the NACD Legislative Spring Fly-in, March 25, 2020 in Washington, D.C. Seconded by Commissioner Sackett. Motion carried.

POLICY/PROGRAMS

Conservation District Elections

Bill Eller, SCC Election Officer provided background information to new members about the Conservation District Elections and Appointments Committee (CDEAC) formation and tasked work. The committee consists of 12 members (3 CD supervisors, 7 CD staffers, and 2 SCC staffers) and was established in September 2018 to look into changes in any/all WACs and RCW relating to public disclosure related to ballot requests.

The CDEAC had met in person several times between January and July 2019. Within that time the committee has developed a new election flow chart, proposed WAC changes (76 sections amended or created), created a talking points document regarding proposed RCW changes, developed an Election Quality Assurance Plan to require training on elections and made changes to the Election Manual forms.

The SCC sent the recommended changes and recommendations to the conservation districts for a 45 day comment period per the procedure on policies. 13 separate comments were received from 10 CDs. Comments were from district managers, district staff, supervisors and one CD attorney. Thurston CD submitted their comments late, however we incorporated those as well. In all 14 were submitted. Bill provided documentation of comments received in the meeting packets.

Bill also provided a timeline and noted that these changes will not go into effect this coming election cycle. The WAC process takes quite a bit of time and could be ready for next year's election cycle.

Public Comment: Brandy Reed, King Conservation District (KCD) re: Elections and Appointments

Brandy addressed the board regarding the recommendation of 1-week for CD elections. She reported the King CD recently got their rates and charges approved. In agreement with the King County Metro they will do the CD's elections. King CD will pay for the costs through part of the rates and charges received.

Ms. Reed asked if the SCC proceeds to do 1-week, that the SCC become flexible with the procedure to allow King CD to conduct their elections, if not, KCD will be out of compliance with their internal agreement with King County.

Conservation District Elections in the Upcoming Legislative Session

Ron Shultz, Policy Director provided commissioners information and is seeking guidance on how staff should respond to possible conservation district election issues. Ron's memo provided background information on recent news stories regarding a dike district mismanaging funds which peaked a news story on the King Conservation District election issue of incorrect notice of election which caused confusion to voters. This led to more in-depth questioning of the conservation district election process.

Legislators who are aware of these issues intend to introduce legislation severely impacting conservation district elections and Conservation Commission oversight of elections and potentially oversight of the conservation district boards. Commission staff have met with legislators to discuss potential legislation.

Ron also shared information from a meeting he attended where legislators identified possible solutions in at least one bill that has the most impact for conservation districts and the Commission. [Handout](#).

Discussion.

Motion by Commissioner Dorner that the SCC acknowledges the importance of the questions related to conservation district election processes. The SCC is concerned with the current legislative proposals and recommends more discussion with our constituents to avoid unintended consequences. The SCC commits to engage in evaluating potential improvements to the election process. Seconded by Commissioner Longrie. Motion carried.

Presentation by Melissa VanderLinden on the SCC's Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS)

CPDS is used by all districts and helps prioritize projects for funding. It is a unique tool with many capabilities that benefit both the conservation districts and the Conservation Commission and also is used to help tell the story and the funding need to legislative staff, the Office of Financial Management, and outside funders. Commission staff are always available to assist CD's with training.

Elections and Washington Administrative Code (WACD) changes

Motion by Commissioner Williams to allow Commission staff to adopt the changes and initiate the processes for Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) changes proposed by the Conservation District Election and Appointment Committee to conservation district elections procedures and policies with the exception of the timeframe of the election. Seconded by Commissioner Longrie. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Williams to start the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) process to consider limiting the election timeframe. Seconded by Commissioner Longrie. Motion carried.

Franklin CD Elections

Franklin Conservation District (FCD) had issues with its first election held this year related to failure to give proper notice and failure to have the proper number of polling officers at its poll site. As a result, the Commission declined to certify and announce the FCD election at the May 2019 Commission meeting.

FCD was given permission by the Franklin County Superior Court to hold an election outside of the statutorily mandated January – March timeframe. FCD's new election was set for December 3, 2019. The candidate filing deadline was set for November 1, 2019. As of November 1, 2019, no other candidate filed for candidacy other than the incumbent, Mr. Mark Weiseler. Therefore, WAC 135-110-370, directs the FCD to cancel the election as Mr. Weiseler is automatically reelected.

Commission staff reviewed the operations of the FCD in holding its new election, and found no significant noncompliance with WAC Title 135-110 or the election procedures published for this cycle.

Motion by Commissioner Crose to certify and announce Mr. Mark Weiseler as the official winner of the 2019 Franklin Conservation District election. Seconded by Commissioner Beale. Motion carried.

DISTRICT OPERATIONS

Conservation Accountability and Performance- Pine Creek Conservation District

Shana Joy, SCC District Operations Manager and new regional manager for Pine Creek CD provided a CAPP follow-up to members and said she and the district are working really well together. Pine Creek provided a work plan as requested at the September 19 meeting. Shana has participated in their board meetings and they have identified an alternate date if inclement weather and will be posting them. Their SCC Master Contract and monthly

vouchering are all up to date. Raymond Brown provided also provided a letter in the meeting packets highlighting the districts progress and mentioned their Long Range plan is scheduled to be approved by that next Wednesday.

Commissioner Kropf asked if they had a back-up plan if there was an emergency in the office with only one staff. Mr. Brown responded they are working with the neighboring districts.

After discussion, Commissioners were satisfied with the progress and removed the financial restriction on the CD.

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to remove the restriction on Pine Creek CD's finances. Seconded Commissioner Crose. Motion carried.

Thurston Conservation District Mid-term Application

Thurston Conservation District had a mid-term appointment to fill. Doug Rushton applied for the position and Commission members followed the process for appointments and conducted an interview with Mr. Rushton.

Motion by Commissioner Williams to re-appoint Doug Rushton to the Thurston Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Longrie. Motion carried.

COMMISSION OPERATIONS

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) as a voting member

The Commission received a letter from Kelly Susewind, Director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requesting consideration by the Commission of adding WDFW to the Commission as a full voting member.

Commission staff recommends reaching out to conservation districts to gather their input consistent with the Commission's "Policy on Policies". The districts would be asked to consider the options in the memo provided and provide comment. The Commission would review comments at the January or March meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to allow staff to distribute the options to the conservation districts for comment per the agency's policy on policies regarding adding a WDFW representative and including options adding potential other members, including a tribal representative to the commission. Seconded by Commissioner Beale. Motion carried.

Commission Chair and Vice-Chair appointment

At the September 19, 2019 Commission meeting, a nomination committee was formed with Commissioners Beale, Spaeth and Kuttel to nominate who the next SCC Chairman and Vice-Chairman would be for the December 2019 meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Beale to elect Dean Longrie as Chairman and Harold Crose as Vice-chair to the WA State Conservation Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Spaeth. Motion carried.

Executive Session

At 2:43 p.m. Chairman Kropf called the meeting into Executive Session as allowed by [RCW 42.30.110 \(g\)](#), to review the performance of a public employee. Meeting is to reconvene at 3:00 p.m.

Meeting back to order at 3:00 p.m. Chairman adjourned.

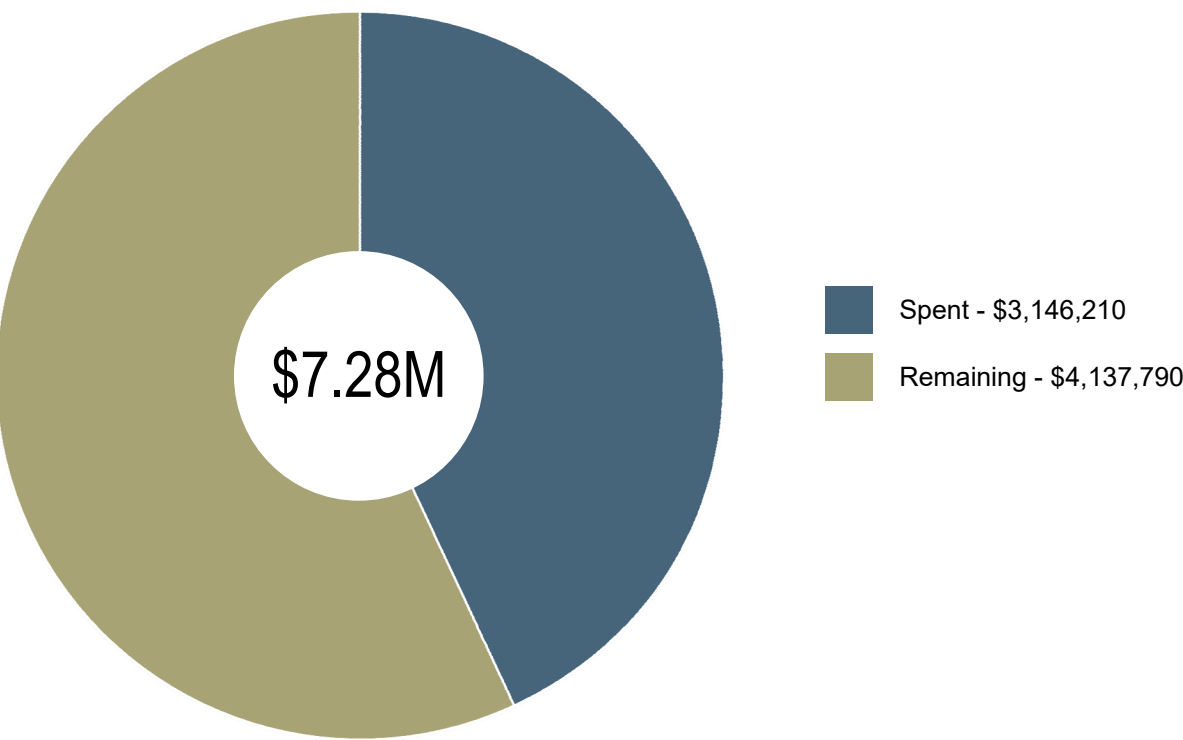
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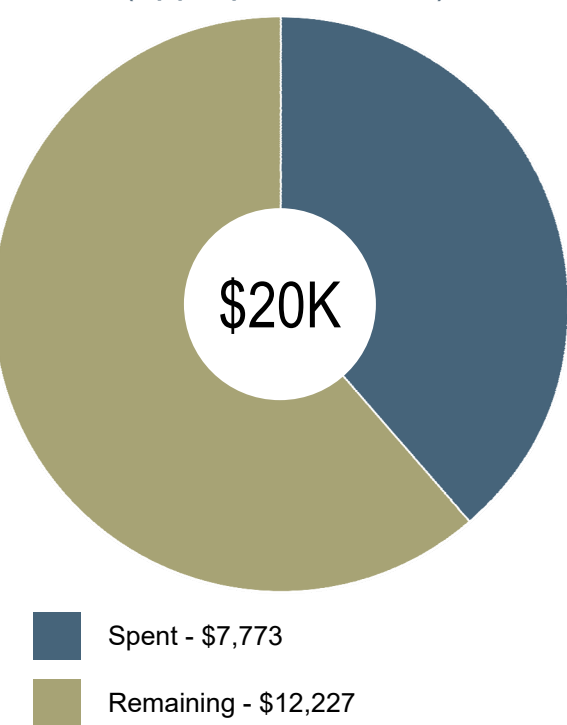
General Fund Operating Expenditures

(as of 1/3/2020)

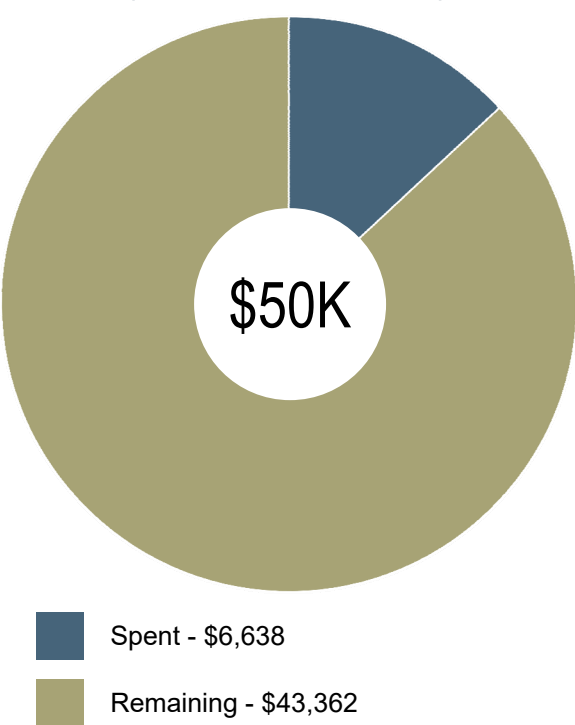
General Fund State (appropriation: 011)



BMP Funding Gap Analysis (appropriation: 091)



Food Policy Forum (appropriation: 051)



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Washington State
Conservation Commission

2019-21 Supplemental Operating and Capital Budgets

	Approved Operating <u>Budget</u>	Approved Capital <u>Budget</u>	<u>WSCC Request</u>	<u>Governor Proposal</u>
Fiscal Year 2020	7,411,000			16,000 ¹
Fiscal Year 2020 Orca	500,000			
Fiscal Year 2020 Food Policy	50,000			
Fiscal Year 2020 BMP Study	20,000			
 Fiscal Year 2021	 7,469,000			 16,000
Fiscal Year 2021 Orca	500,000			
Fiscal Year 2021 Food Policy	50,000			
Capital New Funding		19,800,000		
Capital Reappropriation		13,134,990		
 SubTotal	 16,000,000	 32,934,990		 32,000
 State Toxics	 1,000,000			
VSP	8,456,000			
 <u>Decision Package Requests:</u>				
Capital:				
Match for RCPP			2,248,152	2,249,000
CREP PIP - Reappropriation			350,000	350,000
 Operating:				
CREP TA and Riparian Buffer Program			750,000	
Food Policy Forum			242,000	
Community Resiliency – Wildfire			349,719	
• State Operating				25,000
• Federal Grant Authority				181,000
 TOTAL	 25,456,000	 32,934,990	 3,589,871	 2,837,000

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR BUDGET PROVISIO AND AGENCY DETAIL

¹ Includes small additions of new funding for pension benefits, audit services, and OFM central services.

Budget Provisos and Agency Detail:

Community Resiliency

Funding is provided for training to tribes and state and local governments on Firewise, fire adapted community principles, home ignition zone prevention measures and how to access resources after a wildfire occurs. Priority will be given to counties designated as high fire risks: Chelan, Yakima, Kittitas, Spokane, Grant, Douglas, Lincoln and Ferry. Training in other areas of the state will be offered as resources allow. (General Fund - Federal, General Fund - State)

TAB 3

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Washington State Conservation Commission

January 16, 2020

TO: Carol Smith, Executive Director and Conservation Commission Members
FROM: Shana Joy, District Operations & Regional Manager Coordinator
SUBJECT: 2020 Conservation Accountability & Performance Program (CAPP)

Summary: Recommendation to utilize the current CAPP system for use in calendar year 2020. The CAPP system was significantly revised in 2017 and has been successfully implemented in 2018 and 2019 following annual approval by the Commission.

Action Requested: Approval of current CAPP System for use in 2020

Staff Contact: Shana Joy, District Operations & Regional Manager Coordinator

Description:

The 2020 Conservation Accountability & Performance Program system is submitted to the Conservation Commission members for their approval at the January 2020 meeting. The proposed system for 2020 is the same as the 2018 and 2019 system developed from a year-long process of piloting in five districts and multiple meetings of the CAPP Work Group that occurred in 2017. The CAPP Development Work Group in 2017-18 included two Commission Members, Regional Managers, two District Supervisors, and six District Managers including the five 2017 pilot project district managers. The recommendation is approve the current CAPP system for use in 2020.

2020

Conservation Accountability & Performance Program

January 2020 Commission Meeting

Administrative Requirements and Performance Measures for the Responsible Operation of a Washington State Conservation District

Description

The Conservation Accountability and Performance Program (CAPP) is a combined mandatory and voluntary accountability and performance program for Washington Conservation Districts.

Authority

RCW 89.08.070 authorizes and directs the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) to assist and guide local conservation districts across the state in the implementation of natural resource conservation programs. To accomplish this, the Commission has established guidelines and controls to govern the conservation districts' use of state funds, property, and services.

Purpose & Background

The purpose is to improve the accountability and performance of each of the 45 conservation districts in the State of Washington. The basic philosophy is to always be looking for ways to improve programs and services, increase efficiency, and offer support to willing landowners and others.

Accountability Requirements

The accountability requirements checklist is comprised of statutorily required functions and activities that conservation districts must perform. Not meeting all legal accountability requirements may require the district board to meet with the Commission, the development of a performance improvement action plan, and follow-up assistance from Commission staff. Noncompliance may affect Commission funding eligibility.

Performance Standards

Standards are for districts' use to evaluate how well they are doing by assessing themselves against a specified list of voluntary performance standards. The Commission's goal is to help each district reach the highest possible level of performance. The focus is on interactive visits and learning experiences to help each participating district determine where it can improve its operation to get closer to where it wants to be as a highly functional organization. The Performance Standards checklist (2 through 8) is voluntary and for district internal use.

Commission Assistance

The Commission members and staff will assist and guide local conservation districts by:

- Providing transparent accountability requirements and performance standards;
 - Providing on-going feedback to improve district performance;
 - Providing assistance to enhance public confidence in conservation districts' abilities to provide effective and efficient delivery of programs and services;
 - Ensuring that assistance is available to help districts achieve annual and long-range goals in an effective, efficient, economic, and ethical manner;
 - Providing assistance for district oversight of responsible management and stewardship of public funds;
 - Providing assistance to ensure that conservation district elections are open to public, as well as conducted in a fair and impartial manner under the RCW and WAC.
 - Center for Technical Development (CTD) to help build technical capacity;
 - Assisting districts with engaging the public in identifying and measuring desired outcomes; and
 - Allocating resources to districts in accordance with demonstrated conservation needs and available funding.
-

Process Timeline:

January – March - The CAPP Accountability and Performance standards are sent to districts in the 1st quarter to be utilized in an optional self-evaluation early in the calendar year. The accountability section (Standard 1) of the checklist is required, and the performance section (Standards 2-8) is voluntary. Districts are encouraged to develop an action plan to follow-up on any capacity building activities that are identified.

April – June - An interim report of CAPP status will be prepared by staff for the May Commission meeting. Regional managers and other Commission staff, as needed, will continue work with districts on accountability and performance elements needing attention or improvement.

July - Annual CAPP report is prepared for the July Commission meeting. Commission members review the report and take action on recommendations from Commission staff. The Commission may, at their discretion, reduce or withhold funding to a district not in-compliance with all Standard 1 accountability requirements.

August – December - Commission regional managers, in consultation with applicable Commission staff, will continue working with districts to implement an action plan to address deficiencies under Standard 1 mandatory accountability requirements.

STANDARD 1

Compliance with Laws (required standard)

Conservation Districts fulfill their legal requirements as Political Subdivisions of the State of Washington and comply with all laws and the Washington Administrative Code.

Compliance with Laws and Requirements	Citation (link to RCW or WAC)	Yes	No
1. Annual report of accomplishments was submitted on time, in the prescribed format to the WSCC	RCW 89.08.070 (11)		
2. District Long Range Plan submitted on time & meeting RCW and Commission requirements	RCW 89.08.220 (7)		
3. District Annual Work Plan submitted on time & meeting RCW and Commission requirements	RCW 89.08.220 (7)		
4. The District has made a demonstrated effort to address their top resource needs identified in their Long Range Plan	RCW 89.08.220 (7)		
5. Upon request, District contracts and agreements have been submitted to the Commission	RCW 89.08.210		
6. Supervisor Elections & Appointments are conducted according to RCW and WAC requirements	RCW 89.08.190 & 89.08.200 WAC 135-110		
7. All State Auditor identified issues (during SAO audits) have been resolved to the extent possible	RCW 89.08.070 (12)		
8. Open Public Meetings Act is followed including executive sessions	RCW 42.30		
9. State Public Records Act is followed	RCW 42.56		
10. All Board Supervisors and Public Records Officers are current on the required Open Public Meetings and Public Records Act Training	RCW 42.30.210 & RCW 42.56.150		
11. Annual reporting to State Auditor's Office completed correctly and on time	RCW 89.08.210		
12. Keeping public informed of conservation district activities.	RCW 89.08.220 (13)		
13. State Ethics laws for public officials are being followed	RCW 42.20 & 42.23		
14. District in compliance with terms of Commission/District Master Agreement	RCW 89.08.070 (5)		
15. Demonstrated diligence in complying with state and federal statutes related to contracting, non-discrimination, labor laws, etc., through adoption of up-to-date policies and training.			

Standard 1 Ideas for Improvement

STANDARD 2

Natural Resource Conservation

Conservation Districts address natural resource concerns with landowners and land managers using incentive-based technical, financial, and educational assistance at the request of the landowner or manager.

Best Practices

A. Prioritizing Resource Concerns

Prioritizes which natural resource concerns to engage in based on community input and support, resource data, importance at state and regional levels, relevance, other groups working on the issue, magnitude of the issue, research conducted on issue, and appropriate role for the district.

B. Addressing Known Resource Concerns with Landowners

District actively provides contact and assistance to landowners (may not yet be a customer or cooperator) with known, high priority resource issues or in geographic areas of significant resource concern.

C. Services for Customers/Cooperators

District builds services and programs based on the needs of customers/cooperators for their conservation work along with the natural resource needs of the region. District actively engages customers/cooperators for their input on services and programs needed.

D. Quantifies Impact

District quantifies, in some method, its impact on the local natural resources by obtaining and/or maintaining quantifiable data on local impacts, maintains quantifiable cumulative impacts of district programs/work, and reports cumulative impacts to funders and other partners.

E. Technical Capacity

District has documented access to technical capacity to provide timely and efficient planning and implementation assistance for land owners to maintain conservation on the ground with reliable and consistent quality. For example, has certified technical employees, has access to at least one conservation planner, and participates in CTD data collection and certification programs.

F. Research & Technology Integrated

District integrates research and science into program development and implementation including connection with academic professionals; district offers to assist in advancing scientific research on emerging issues.

Standard 2 Ideas for Improvement

STANDARD 3

Board Governance & Policies

Conservation District Boards govern and conduct the affairs of the organization to provide conservation services and programs for land owners within their district.

Best Practices

A. Board Roles & Responsibilities

Individual board members are informed of and understand their role and their responsibilities as local government board members and as representatives of a division of local government of Washington State, including their legal and fiduciary duties.

B. Board Governance & Leadership

Board of supervisors actively governs the district by demonstrating leadership in conservation stewardship as well as instilling an ethic and culture of constant improvement. Board has a written policy / procedure for supervisors and associate supervisors. Board leads budget development, strategic planning & implementation. The Board leads and directs outreach efforts to engage the public who live in the district to serve on the Board and to build partnerships with the District on natural resource conservation efforts.

C. Supervisor Participation, Vacancy Filling, Quorum

District board holds board meetings attended by a quorum of supervisors who have chosen a chair, actively pursues filling vacant supervisor positions, promotes the development of future board supervisors through community engagement and outreach, and have meetings rescheduled or cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

D. Board Effectiveness and Development

District board collectively does a self-assessment of overall board effectiveness, membership, and actively seeks board and supervisor development activities. Works with the Commission to develop needed and/or new supervisor and board development activities.

E. Effective Board Meetings

Regularly held and effective board meetings with well thought out agendas, minutes, active participation by supervisors and public (if present). Regular meetings ideally are less than 3 hours except under special circumstances. Board meetings should be held at least monthly with time and location advertised in local media and other conspicuous public locations. Meeting materials are distributed several days in advance to contribute to an effective meeting. There is a time and opportunity for public input at each board meeting. Meetings are not cancelled, except in special/extreme circumstances due to a lack of quorum. Staff input is sought by the board as needed or directed by the board. Board meetings are conducted in

accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and with respect, tact, and professionalism to all who attend.

F. Legal Questions

District always utilizes proper legal counsel for legal questions and/or needs (Enduris, WSCC, MRSC, and/or an attorney). The District has a policy for when legal counsel is to be used, how it is to be used, and how the Board engages the services of legal counsel.

G. District Operations Policies

Current district operations policies are reviewed and updated annually. When operations policy issues arise, the district utilizes needed expertise to address those issues and craft policies as needed.

Standard 3 Ideas for Improvement

STANDARD 4

Fiscal Oversight

Conservation District Supervisors are ultimately responsible for the fiscal oversight for their conservation district and conducting the business affairs in a lawful, ethical and responsible manner.

Best Practices

A. Leveraging Financial & Other Resources

District is leveraging, or can demonstrate it has tried to leverage all their funding with other resources from other districts and local, state, federal, non-governmental or private partners.

B. Financial Reporting & Vouchering

All financial reporting and vouchering to the WSCC and other funders is on time, complete, accurate, and complies with funders' financial policies and grants procedures.

C. Use of Allocated Funding

District has utilized WSCC and all allocated public funding in a timely manner, or has notified the funder at least three months before the end of the fiscal year that funding allocations for that fiscal year cannot be utilized, allowing for funding to potentially be used by another district.

D. Funding & Budgeting

District has adopted & followed a budget that maintains cash reserves to meet financial commitments.

E. Internal Financial Controls

District has excellent internal controls and policies that it follows to safeguard public funds. District has maintained clean internal and state audits for a minimum of two (2) audit cycles. District seeks out and utilizes good examples of effective internal controls and policies.

Standard 4 Ideas for Improvement

STANDARD 5

Human Resources

Conservation Districts have skilled personnel to carry out their programs, whether volunteers, paid staff and/or consultants/contractors and have a governing board of five Supervisors that actively govern the human resources policies of the district.

Best Practices

A. Delegated Authority

Any delegation of responsibilities (authority) to a district manager, or equivalent is clearly set out in writing, is consistent with board approval requirements of the WSCC, and commensurate with the experience of the board and manager, within the scope of the job description of the manager, and acknowledged by both the manager and board chair in writing.

B. Training

The District has an appropriate training policy and plan for all supervisors & staff. Staff and supervisors are actively participating in annual training opportunities (WACD, WADE, WSCC, Enduris, NRCS, etc.). The training policy includes actively pursuing opportunities for cross-training.

C. Performance Evaluations

Board members assure that performance evaluations are conducted for each staff member annually, and directly evaluate performance of the lead staff (manager, executive, director).

D. Personnel Policies & Procedures

Board members have developed and shared personnel policies and procedures with each employee.

Standard 5 Ideas for Improvement

STANDARD 6

Planning

Conservation Districts build their long range and annual plans to address high priority resource concerns using public and partner input.

Best Practices

A. Public & Stakeholders Input for Program & Plan Development

Input is sought from public and stakeholders in program development, during annual and long range plan development, public and stakeholder input is gathered, and solicited before annual work plan and long range plan are approved by the board. At a minimum, one open public meeting in the community shall be held to seek input from the public and stakeholders.

B. Annual Work Plan

Annual Work Plan addresses the specific natural resource concerns in a prioritized manner as approved by the board of supervisors. The district board actively pursues implementation of activities to meet the goals of the annual plan.

C. Regular Review and Use of Annual and Long Range Plans

Meeting agendas are built with reference to annual and long range plan priorities and actions. Board members and staff regularly review and refer to annual and long range plans.

Standard 6 Ideas for Improvement

STANDARD 7

Partnering

Conservation Districts partner with organizations and agencies in the delivery of conservation programs and projects.

Best Practices

A. Partnering with Public, Private, Tribal, and Nonprofit Partners

Demonstrated ability to work and coordinate with current and potential partners to identify and target areas for natural resource conservation and improvement, projects, opportunities for sharing funding, and workforce resources.

B. Partnering with Other Conservation Districts

Demonstrated ability to work and coordinate with other conservation districts to identify and target areas for natural resource conservation and improvement, projects, opportunities for sharing funding, and workforce resources.

C. Working Relationships with Elected Officials & Tribal Governments

District supervisors and staff have regular contact including meetings and tours, with elected officials and staff in cities, counties, state legislature, tribal government, and congress to provide information on conservation projects and services.

D. Participation in Affiliated Organizations

District supervisors and staff actively participate in affiliated organizations' events, committees, elected positions, and activities (e.g., WACD, WADE, WCS, and NACD), including payment of annual membership.

E. Working Relationships with Conservation Commission

District supervisors and staff provide open and constructive feedback to the WSCC, and actively bring up and work to resolve in a timely manner any issues.

Standard 7 Ideas for Improvement

STANDARD 8

Public Outreach & Education

Conservation Districts provide conservation information and education to a wide variety of audiences.

Best Practices

A. Public Outreach

District has a public outreach plan (in annual and-or Long Range Plan plan) including regularly publishing and distributing information regarding district activities, as demonstrated by: press releases, newsletters, social media presence, district tours of projects, and distribution of information to partners, diverse stakeholders, and funders.

B. Youth Education

District has a youth education program assisting school teachers and administrators, including classroom and field activities that have a clear connection with school programs, the education requirements of the school district, and its related natural resource educational impact.

C. District Physical Location

Has a physical location that provides regular, weekday office hours for public access, information, and services. Office hours are clearly posted at office location and on district website. District has signage visible from a public right of way adjacent to the district office.

D. Annual Report of Accomplishments

Annual report of accomplishments includes outstanding examples of conservation work completed, compared to what the district planned to do or needs to do.

Standard 8 Ideas for Improvement

District Capacity Building Ideas, Actions & Record of Exceptional Activities

STANDARD 2 - Natural Resource Conservation

STANDARD 3 - Board Governance & Policies

STANDARD 4 - Fiscal Oversight

STANDARD 5 - Human Resources

STANDARD 6 - Planning

STANDARD 7 - Partnering

STANDARD 8 - Public Outreach & Education



Washington State
Conservation Commission

January 16, 2020

TO: Carol Smith, Executive Director
Conservation Commission Members

FROM: Stu Trefry, Southwest WA Regional Manager
Shana Joy, Regional Manager Coordinator

SUBJECT: Petition for Inclusion of Territory into the Pacific Conservation District

Background summary:

The incorporated City of Raymond approved a petition to be annexed into the Pacific Conservation District. The District and City, pursuant to RCW 89.08 and established procedure, have submitted the attached *Petition for Inclusion of Additional Territory within the Pacific Conservation District*.

Action requested:

I formally request, on behalf of the Pacific Conservation District and the City of Raymond, that the Commission approve the petition for inclusion of the City of Raymond within the boundaries of the Pacific Conservation District.

Staff Contact:

Stu Trefry, Southwest WA Regional Manager Email: strefry@scc.wa.gov.

Shana Joy, Regional Manager Coordinator Email: sjoy@scc.wa.gov

Washington State Conservation Commission
Olympia, Washington 98504

PETITION FOR INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL TERRITORY
WITHIN THE
PACIFIC ~~COUNTY~~ CONSERVATION DISTRICT

RECEIVED

DEC 24 2019

TO: The Washington State Conservation Commission

WA Conservation Commission

Pursuant to the Conservation Districts Law (Chapter 89.08 RCW) the undersigning government authorities of the City of Raymond and the Pacific Conservation District, respectfully represent:

- First: That heretofore the Pacific County Conservation District was duly organized as a governmental subdivision of this state, and a public body corporate and politic.
- Second: That there is need, in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare, for the inclusion of the territory hereinafter described within the said Pacific County Conservation District.
- Third: That the territory proposed for inclusion within the said district includes substantially the following:
Incorporated City of Raymond

WHEREFORE, the undersigned petitioners respectfully request that the State Conservation Commission duly define the boundaries of the additional territory; and that the State Conservation Commission determine that such additional territory be so included and made a part of the Pacific County Conservation District.

Pacific ~~County~~ Conservation District

City of Raymond

Allan Langford
Chair

Tony Nordin
Mayor

Ben Lohde
Vice Chair

[Signature]
Council Member

[Signature]
Secretary

[Signature]
Council Member

Mike [Signature]
Treasurer

[Signature]
Council Member

[Signature]
Member

[Signature]
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

DATE: 10/7/19

5 Sam
24 PCMRC
Commission Meeting Packet

District Operations and Regional Manager Report to Commissioners, January 2020

Report prepared by Shana Joy, Regional Manager Coordinator. For additional information please contact Shana Joy or any Regional Manager.

Ongoing Service Areas

- Partnering and Relationships Assistance
 - Conservation Accountability & Performance Program (CAPP) Assistance
 - New Supervisor and Staff Orientations and Professional Development
 - Task Order Development
 - Open Government Training
 - Cultural Resources
 - Project Development & CPDS
 - Natural Resource Investments & Shellfish Programs
 - Implementation Monitoring
 - Long Range and Annual Planning Assistance
 - Cross-pollination of Information, Templates, and Examples
 - Conservation District Audits
 - Commission Meeting Planning, Logistics
 - Quick Notes Publication
-

Conservation District Service, Recent Topics

- **Elections** and Appointments
- Human Resources (law/rule updates, hiring, performance evaluations, compensation, issues)
- Building Leasing & Ownership
- Cost Share Agreements & Records Retention
- **Local Work Groups**
- Simcoe Land Acquisition Project
- **19-21 Supplemental Budget Requests Questions**
- Hazard Mitigation Grants
- Donations
- Mitigation Projects
- National Estuary Program Grants
- Rates and Charges
- IRS Form 1099
- WACD Annual Meeting Presentations

Issues Resolution in Progress

- Cost share agreements & vouchering issues
- Cash-flow challenges
- Relationships and partnering with other state agencies
- Inter-district relationships and partnering

Regional Manager Staffing

A recruitment process was recently completed and we are pleased to welcome a new Southwest Regional Manager to our team! Josh Guintoli will officially join the RM team on Monday, February 3rd. With a new regional manager in place, Stu Trefry will be focusing on Supervisor Development curriculum until his planned retirement at the end of June.

Conservation Accountability and Performance Program (CAPP)

Currently, all 45 conservation districts are meeting the minimum requirements in the Accountability - Standard 1 portion of CAPP. Performance monitoring is ongoing for the Pine Creek Conservation District; this district continues to work in good faith with their Regional Manager, Shana Joy, to implement the work plan presented at the December Commission meeting to address deficiencies. An updated long range plan has been adopted by the board and submitted to the Commission.

Partnerships & Partnering Assistance

The Regional Manager team participated in a Partnership Meeting on December 12th along with SCC and NRCS staff leadership. Topics discussed included: renewal of the contribution agreement between SCC and NRCS, staffing changes and challenges, task orders, Farm Bill program updates, the Soil Health Committee, ACEP, technical training, NACD Technical Assistance grant priorities, and RCPP.

Allisa Carlson met with Dept. of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) staff, taking on a leadership role, to explore ways to strengthen SCC's partnership with DVA's Veterans Conservation Corps and cultivate greater connections between conservation districts and the VCC program.

Most recently, the RM team has assisted with partnering with: WDFW, DNR, NRCS, Ecology, Farm Service Agency, Washington Association of Land Trusts, American Farmland Trust, and neighboring conservation districts.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Regional Managers assisted conservation districts developing new applications under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, connecting interested parties with the NRCS RCPP Coordinator, and working to assist districts with currently active RCPPs. Two letters of support were provided to Clark and Walla Walla County Conservation Districts for new RCPP applications. A letter of support was also provided to the Palouse Conservation District for their renewed RCPP.

Chehalis Basin

Stu Trefry continues to represent the Commission as an ex-officio member of the Chehalis Basin Board. A draft Chehalis Aquatic Species Restoration Plan was released for public review and a two-day symposium was held in early January for the public to hear about it and comment. In addition to their work assisting WDFW in the 5 early action reaches, the 4 basin conservation districts continue to be relied on for landowner interactions and potential sponsorship of future reach-scale work.

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WSCC Center for Technical Development (CTD) January 2020 Commission Meeting

For previous accomplishments and task completion, please review previous commission packet updates.
Explore more @ www.wactd.org

Certification

CTD Planner Certifications: The CTD Certification Program was recently updated and re-launched in September 2019. There are three certifications currently being offered: Dairy, Farm, and Riparian Planner. There are three levels for each of these certifications to support different levels of expertise in planning. All certification documents were updated with the new NRCS Planner Designation process and reposted in June 2019 with a new streamlined application process. Two special presentations were made in the Riparian and Farms & Fields tracks at the WADE 2019 conference on the CTD certifications and how to sign up. Guidelines for each certification, along with application forms, are available on the CTD website under “Certification”. CTD is actively advertising for new applications through their website and monthly newsletter. A deadline of March 6, 2020 has been set for the next round of application reviews.

Continuing Education: The CTD has updated and finalized the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) portion of the certification program. We worked closely with NRCS to match up requirements so that planners don’t need to duplicate efforts and created a variety of support materials to accompany the CEU program. These include a training plan template, training tracking database (using Caspio), coded training opportunity announcements, and support webinars. The CTD website has also been updated with a new look and page to support the CEU program. The CTD is working with a group to develop a more cohesive and formal mentor program to support both the Certification program and general training and job shadowing. Lastly, the CTD is looking for a web-based platform with tracking and interactive communication features to create a community sharing platform for planners in the certification process.

Training Plan Template: To support the Certification and continuing education process, the CTD created a Training Plan Template for CD staff to identify and plan for relevant training opportunities on a 1- and 3-year basis. This helps CD staff to plan ahead and ensure they are supported by their District. The training plan template, posted on the CTD website and advertised regularly in the CTD monthly newsletter, is a tool for CD staff and their managers to help create both short and long term goals for training. The template also serves to help technical staff track progress toward desired certifications and to track CEUs to maintain those certifications. The template was introduced at the 2019 WADE conference and is available on the CTD website.

Planner Resources: A new webpage in the CTD website, Planner Resources, has been created for each of the current certification disciplines to help planners identify relevant training, planning tools, and plan templates. This is in response to a high number of requests for access to statewide planning templates.

This also helps the CTD elevate consistent and coordinated planning throughout the State. Housed on the new page are links to statewide planning templates. New templates will be added as they are created and/or updated.

NRCS Planner Designations: The CTD is working with NRCS on identifying and supporting training in an effort to help District planners obtain desired levels of NRCS Planner Designation. There still remains confusion around the value and process of NRCS Designation and the CTD continues to post clarifying information on their website, answer email inquiries, give presentations (including at WADE 2019), and work with NRCS on a Q&A fact sheet.

NRCS National Certification: While the CTD has worked with the NRCS National Certification Committee in the past, NRCS has not convened this group in over a year. If the group is reinstated, the CTD will continue to participate in an effort to collaborate with partners on setting a process and action plan of how to effectively execute NRCS Planner Designations at the National level and promote discipline specific certifications modeled after those created by the CTD.

Plan Templates: The CTD has resurrected the plan template task to work on providing a statewide template for farm, dairy, and riparian planning. This is due to recent high demand and request for such resources.

Training

Training has become the more recognized and prioritized activity of the CTD. Because of this, a higher priority and budget request was placed on finding a dedicated Training Coordinator for the CTD who would also liaison with NRCS. This process has been drafted and shared with NRCS. We are continuing to work on making this a reality.

NRCS Collaboration: The CTD has been working closely with NRCS and the EDC to coordinate training events and ensure better organization and placement of CD staff in NRCS trainings. Partners at NRCS have been working with the CTD and have expressed appreciation for the coordination and prioritization of CD staff into training events. Due to this coordination, the CTD has been able to document and demonstrate CD staff demand/need for specific training events and influence NRCS on course offerings and number of CD allocated seats. This has been extraordinarily beneficial to CD staff. To facilitate communication, the CTD holds a regular seat on the NRCS EDC and continues to work cooperatively with NRCS to develop and maintain a joint training calendar and Training Needs Inventory (TNI), which includes training requests by both NRCS and CD personnel, and facilitate joint delivery at training events.

WADE Conference: The CTD collaborated with WADE and NRCS in 2019 to provide a required NRCS training, *Soil Testing and Interpretation*, at the WADE 2019 conference. This was a new and novel endeavor and brings more value to those attending the WADE conference as well as attract new participants. Additionally, the Riparian, Farms and Fields, and Forestry tracks partnered with the CTD to offer CTD Certification specific content for attaining required CEUs at WADE. Because it was so popular, the WADE organization has requested that the CTD expand this format in 2020. A joint visioning meeting was held in late November 2019 to increase this partnership, and the CTD will again help curate content for technical tracks at the 2020 WADE conference.

Training Needs Inventory (TNI): The FY 2020 Training Needs Inventory (TNI) survey was sent out in late June 2019 to coincide with the release of the similar survey for NRCS staff. The FY20 TNI was specifically tailored to identify those NRCS training events CD staff need, and engage CD staff in the CTD and NRCS certification processes. The CTD has compiled responses and is currently working with NRCS staff to ensure the need is communicated to the appropriate NRCS staff for each course. This information also helps inform and guide CTD-sponsored trainings and Task Order requests.

Training Events: The CTD holds both CTD-sponsored, and NRCS partners training events.

The CTD successfully held and/or partnered with NRCS on the following core training events in FY19:

- ✓ Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) and Facilitation
- ✓ Cultural Resources Training Series, Part 2
- ✓ Riparian Planning Considerations
- ✓ Soil Health and Sustainability for Field Staff
- ✓ Basic Soils and Web Soil Survey
- ✓ Webinars
- ✓ Five unique sessions at the WADE 2019 Conference
- ✓ Conservation Planning, Part 2

The CTD continues to coordinate CD staff into NRCS training events, administer Task Orders for training events to be held in FY20, and work with NRCS to funnel CD staff into the certification program.

Conservation Planning: The CTD has also seen a long-standing training goal come to fruition; the *Conservation Planning, Part 2* course was successfully held in late September 2019, in coordination with NRCS. The CTD successfully advocated for this week-long foundational planning course tailored specifically for CD staff and partners and was the primary coordinator for the event. This year's class was almost entirely Conservation District staff, which allowed the CTD to customize the curriculum and provide a more tailored and relevant training event. While we found a couple of speed bumps in the advised course material, students provided awesome feedback to make it even better for 2020.

Training Calendar: We have updated the Training Calendar to highlight relevant training events and information. The calendar highlights Certification CEU opportunities, and events can be added by other CD's to share more resources in multiple disciplines. New and relevant training opportunities are continually added to keep the calendar up to date and publicized in the monthly CTD newsletter. Non-CTD sponsored events are also collected and sent out as a "Special Non-CTD Training Announcement".

New Employee Resources: A new page has been added to the CTD website for new employees. The goal is to have all new employee resources in one place so they can get going with training, training plans, certification, and orientation. The new page includes a portal to the CTD database.

Training Scholarships: The CTD provided \$5,000 in "competitive" training scholarships to District staff in FY19. This opportunity was developed as a way to support Districts and staff in advancing training needs and expertise where funds may not have been available otherwise. Due to a lack of funding provided for FY20-21, the CTD is not able to provide scholarships at this time, but it remains a priority item. If additional funding is provided, this will be a top item restored.

Communication and Outreach

Website: The CTD website (www.wactd.org) continues to serve as a source of information to CD staff and is updated regularly. The CTD has worked to keep the website updated; improving aesthetics, clarity, and navigation of the site while continually updating content and ensuring relevance of the site. New changes are also announced in the CTD newsletter.

Outreach: The CTD is currently working on a more cohesive marketing plan to increase recognition and relevance for CD staff. A draft outreach plan will be completed and reviewed by the CTD in FY20. A key part of the outreach plan will be increased communication with partners and non-District agencies. We would like to increase awareness of the CTD as a central provision of training and expertise and increase the collaboration with partners on events and resources.

Newsletter: The CTD monthly GovDelivery newsletter continues to gain new subscribers (currently we have more than 420 subscribers) and is also located on the CTD website for those not on GovDelivery.

Technical Expertise and Science Program

Expertise: Experts are continuously being identified as needed for engagement in programs, policy and training around the state (examples include: Ecology Voluntary Clean Water Guidance for Agriculture Advisory Group, DOE Drinking Water Standard review, Dairy Nutrient Advisory Committee, WDFW riparian habitat guidance, and more). The CTD database continues to prove effective in identifying and nominating expertise as appropriate.

Science: The Discovery Farms (DF) program is making great strides. The CTD is working around the State on special Discovery Farms program projects to advance the application of consistent science and monitoring efforts. There has been statewide buy-in to the DF program from partners and CDs continue to be involved in the national DF program through regular communications and annual meetings. Through this process, statewide QAPP and SOP's have been developed with guidelines specific to projects, but which can be used in the future as templates for any CD.

General guidelines and protocols for research/demonstration have been outlined for statewide research. The CTD is working with both the Puget Sound Caucus, as well as the WSCC the develop effectiveness monitoring protocols/projects and a comprehensive research program, respectively. The WSCC and CTD recognize this as an important area in the near future and is devoting time to ensure CDs have the information and training they need. Additionally, by high demand, an *Effectiveness Monitoring for Water Quality* training will be offered in the Spring of 2020.

Quality Assurance

The Technical Quality Assurance Plan (TQAP) policy proposal was accepted by Commission at their May 2019 meeting and has been sent out the Districts for their review and comments. The summary of District comments was reviewed and the policy passed at the September 2019 Commission meeting. We are working on next steps for this work. Larry Brewer, who retired at the end of October 2019, was the CTD liaison for this work. With his absence, we will work on reallocating this work so it continues.

CTD Coordination

Database: The database (run under Caspio) continues to provide assistance in locating staff expertise for engagement in workgroups, show metrics on expertise and certifications, and grow to a central database for all organizations to utilize. A self-service portal for employees is now available on the CTD website in beta-testing mode to gather additional feedback from users. This portal will allow CD staff to update their personnel profiles, track completed trainings, and more. These additions will ease data management and support other CTD initiatives.

Budget: Whatcom CD is administering the budget and reporting monthly to the CTD. Billing guidelines and procedures ensure that work expectations match billing vouchers and that budgets are quickly updated on a monthly basis. The CTD is exploring the use of Smart Sheet to assist with budget and task tracking.

Leadership: The CTD Leadership Team and partners (NRCS, WADE, WSCC) continue to meet monthly to ensure tasks are on track. The CTD held their annual visioning face-to-face meeting in late November 2019. The WADE Board once again participated for a day of collaborative brainstorming and coordination. The CTD also made updates to the CTD Charter; including a restructuring of the current Advisory Council to include all District managers and increased solicitation of CTD tasks and direction at spring planning meetings. The revisions have been forwarded to the Commission for review before posting to the website.

CTD Contact Information

For more information on the CTD activities, please contact:

CTD contact: Nichole Embertson, Chair

info@wactd.org

For more information, please visit: www.wactd.org

TAB 4



Washington State Conservation Commission

January 16, 2020

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, WSCC Executive Director

FROM: Ron Shultz, WSCC Policy Director
Alison Halpern, WSCC Policy Assistant

RE: Status of Issues in the Upcoming 2020 Legislative Session

Requested Action: None. Information only.

Background:

The 2020 Legislative session begins Monday, January 13. Because the session is a continuation of the previous session, bills introduced last session are still alive for the upcoming session. There are several bills from last session potentially still in play. There are also several issues that may be introduced in the upcoming session.

Discussion:

The 2020 Legislation session will be a short 60-day session. It begins January 13, 2020 and is estimated to end March 13, 2020. A final legislative session calendar has not been released as of January 6. This session is technically a continuation of the last session. Bills that were introduced last session are still alive for the upcoming session and bill that were moving last session will retain their last place in committee. In other words, bills don't have to start over. If they had passed committees and were awaiting a floor vote, they will still be in Rules Committee awaiting a floor vote.

Some bills from last session we're still watching:

HB 1187/SB 5567 – Revising hydraulic project eligibility standards for conservation district sponsored fish habitat enhancement projects. This bill would streamline the HPA process for CD projects. The bill was developed by a group at AgForestry. The House bill made it out of the House by a 96-0 margin, passed the Senate Agriculture Committee, but ran out of time to pass out of the Senate.

HB 1946/SB 5873 – Concerning community forests. Creates a community forestland account. State and local agencies (including the SCC and CDs) may apply for funds for the acquisition, development, and restoration projects relating to community forests. There are several CDs interested in local community forests. Last session the Senate bill passed the Senate, passed House Agriculture, but failed to advance further. The bill was returned to the Senate.

HB 1731/SB 6091 – Continuing the work of the Food Policy Forum. The House bill would permanently establish the Forum at the Commission. The Forum has been operating under a budget proviso for the past several years. The House bill passed the House Agriculture Committee but did not make it out of House Appropriations. The Senate bill was prefiled in December 2019 for introduction once the 2020 session gets underway.

HB 2095/5947 – Establishing the sustainable farm and fields (SFF) grant program. The 2019 version of this bill directed WSDA to develop a sustainable farms and fields grant program through rule making; Requires that certain activities be eligible for grants, including on-farm fossil fuel input efficiency measures, agroforestry, and carbon farming. The Senate bill passed the Senate 32-15. The Senate bill then passed the House Agriculture Committee but went no further and was sent back to Senate rules at the end of the 2019 session.

Stakeholder discussions on the (SFF) grant program proposal have been ongoing during the interim with additional changes to the bill being developed. The current version of the changes, drafted by Carbon WA, incorporates recommendations offered in the SCC/WSDA BMP gap analysis final report and input from stakeholders. It has undergone several revamps in early January with a final draft offered to sponsor Senator McCoy on January 6.

The bill recognizes the importance of working lands and opportunities to help farmers, ranchers, and aquaculturalists to reduce carbon emissions and store carbon through practices that improve soil health and through the planting of trees and other vegetation. The bill would create a cost-sharing grant program to incentivize landowners to engage in these practices.

The 2020 iteration of the bill now directs the SCC, in consultation with WSDA, WSU, and NRCS, to create the SFF grant program. These grants will be made available to conservation districts and other public entities through the commission for distribution of goods, services, and the acquisition of carbon dioxide equivalent impacts from landowners.

The bill also outlines the allotment of funds so that grants are equally available for CO2 emission reduction, carbon farming, and carbon planting. Through FY23, 10% of funds may be used to develop the grant program including the production of analytical tools, measurement estimation and verification methods, and public reporting methods.

Funding for technical assistance to support and implement the grant proposals will be included in the grant applications. The SCC has discretion to determine how the funds will be expended, including:

- (a) services to landowners, such as the development of site specific conservation plans to reduce up-stream and on-site carbon dioxide equivalent emissions and to implement carbon farming and carbon planting practices,
- (b) annual payments to enrolled participants for successfully delivered carbon storage,
- (c) upfront payments for contracted carbon storage,
- (d) down payments on equipment,
- (e) purchases of equipment,
- (f) purchase of seed, seedlings, animal feed, and amendments offsetting revenue losses or increased operating costs due to a transition to new management practices
- (g) other equipment purchases or financial assistance deemed by the commission to contribute to the goals of this act.

It's very likely the SFF bill will continue to be worked as the legislative session progresses.

There are other proposed bills of interest currently in draft form:

Conservation District Elections

Draft legislation has been developed to alter the election processes for conservation districts, diking and drainage districts, flood control districts, and irrigation districts.

For conservation districts and the Commission, the following statutory changes are made:

1. An election regarding the establishment of a new conservation district would be conducted consistent with the general election statutes.
2. The Commission would no longer provide the wording for ballots used in an election to establish a new conservation district. That would be established in statute.

3. The Commission would no longer determine who is a qualified district elector. That term would be set in statute as "...a natural person who is a registered voter under general state election laws and who resides in the proposed district."
4. Eliminates current statutory language giving the Commission the authority to establish who is an eligible voter. Adds new language that the cost of the district election is governed by general election laws.
5. Eliminates the Commission's authority to appoint two supervisors in each district.
6. District supervisor elections would be governed by general election laws and a primary election shall be held.
7. Provides for when elections for appointed supervisors would take place. Vacancies for any supervisor position would be filled by the remaining supervisors.

Soil Health Initiative

Developed by WSDA in collaboration with WSU and WSCC, the bill would establish the Washington Soil Health Initiative as a collaborative effort led by WSDA, WSU, and SCC to establish Washington as a national leader by helping our farmers manage soil health challenges well into the next century.

In the bill, the legislature recognizes soil management systems that build upon current scientific research and targeted use of conservation programs will enable farmers and ranchers to manage soil as a vital living ecosystem, thereby improving the profitability of agricultural systems and building resilience to a changing climate through more efficient use of water and nutrients by crops.

The bill would create and fund the Washington soil health initiative with the mission of promoting collaborative soil health research, education, demonstration projects, and technical assistance activities designed to identify, promote, and implement soil health stewardship practices that are grounded in sound science and can be voluntarily and economically implemented by farmers and ranchers across Washington's diverse agricultural communities, climates, and geographies.

The goals and objectives of the soil health initiative are to improve:

- a) Agricultural viability, by improving farm profitability; and by helping agricultural producers implement good soil health practices that build soil organic matter, reduce soil erosion, soil compaction and production costs, and improve nutrient management, soil tilth, moisture infiltration, moisture retention, drought resilience, disease suppression, and the beneficial activity of microbes, fungi, earthworms, and other organisms;

- b) Nutrition, by increasing health-promoting nutrients, micronutrients, and microbial processes of agricultural soils; and by improving nutrient uptake, thereby expanding access to nutritious food and improving human health; and
- c) Environmental function, by reducing soil erosion, runoff, and leaching of nutrients and pollutants, thereby improving water quality; and by promoting strategies to store carbon and build soil organic matter and other beneficial properties, thereby enhancing the environmental functions of agricultural soils.

The collaborating agencies must jointly:

- a) Support and supplement current Washington soil health advisory committee membership to promote effective implementation of the soil health initiative.
- b) Assess programmatic needs and build the capacities of the collaborating agencies to fill gaps in scientific research, economic assessment, staffing, technical assistance, grants administration, project implementation, data management, and monitoring tools to improve the reach and effectiveness of the soil health initiative.
- c) Prioritize in-state sourcing of needed soil health initiative resources including, but not limited to, testing resources, seeds, compost materials, supplies, and equipment.
- d) Employ adaptive management to support the improvement and long-term viability of the soil health initiative, including modification of soil health metrics, priorities, and activities to maximize complementary net benefits for agricultural viability, nutrition, and environmental function.
- e) Submit a biennial Washington soil health initiative progress report to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature by October 1, 2020, and every even-numbered year thereafter.

The Commission has primary responsibility for the following:

- a) Developing, publishing, and distributing outreach and education materials to help conservation districts, cooperative extension, and local governments raise awareness of the importance of soil health to society and agriculture, including farmer case studies on soil health practices, experiences, and outcomes;
- b) Training and mobilizing technical service providers to encourage farmers, ranchers, and land managers to voluntarily implement desired soil health stewardship and enter into any maintenance or easement agreements needed to maintain soil health benefits obtained. The commission and the university must coordinate technical assistance, working with and through conservation districts and university extension, to avoid duplication of effort in carrying out soil health initiative technical assistance responsibilities;
- c) Training technical assistance providers, property owners, land managers, and others to voluntarily take ongoing soil health samples and measurements and submit results to the soil health monitoring database;
- d) Developing and implementing the Washington soil health initiative incentives grant program with funding from the Washington soil health initiative account and any additional soil health funding from federal or other sources, to further the goals and objectives of the soil health initiative. In collaboration with the

department and the university, the commission must develop equitable criteria for the awarding of grants to help producers improve soil health across the state's diverse agricultural systems; and

- e) Consulting and collaborating with the department and the university to support all soil health initiative goals, objectives, and components established in this chapter.

Forest Carbon Reforestation

A bill developed by forest interests would establish the forest carbon reforestation and afforestation account to be used for grants with landowners. The bill includes language recognizing the contributions of the state's forest products sector as part of the state's global climate response and sustainable forest management and states that forest products may be utilized to maintain and enhance carbon sequestration.

The Commission is to use money from the forest carbon reforestation and afforestation account for grants to any private landowner or organization that works with private landowners to advance the state's carbon sequestration goals. All grant awards must be the result of a competitive process, designed by the commission that seeks to leverage the carbon sequestration and storage benefits of the investment. Allowable grant projects are:

- a) Funding for reforestation of forestlands after a wildfire for which the landowner was not responsible;
- b) Funding for afforestation projects to return fallow land capable of supporting trees to a working forest; and
- c) Funding to plant sustainable forested buffers along otherwise non-forested fish bearing streams.

In addition to the grants, the Commission may also use funds in the forest carbon reforestation and afforestation account to conduct an opportunity analysis of land in Washington to determine how many acres of deforested land could be returned to working forests without having an effect on food production.

2020 Bills of Interest

As of January 3, 2020

NOTE: All bills from the 2019 legislative session are re-introduced for the 2020 session and retain their last version and highest location in the process from 2019.

The following list are bills introduced in the 2019 legislative session and prefiled bills.

NOTE: PH = Public Hearing ES = Executive Session (vote)

Bill	Sponsor (first name) Cosponsors	Bill Title (bold) – Subject/Description	Status	Relevance to WSCC Testify/Comment/Track
HOUSE BILLS				
HB 1167 5476	Walen, Blake, Chandler, Dent, Springer, Fitzgibbon, Jenkins, Goodman, Kloba	Concerning the protection of composting from nuisance lawsuits	Feb 6 Pass H RDAN Mar 21 Ref to H Rules	
HB 1187 5567	Dent, Blake, Chandler, Kretz, Schmick, Bergquist	Revising hydraulic project eligibility standards under RCW 77.55.181 for conservation district sponsored fish habitat enhancement projects.	Feb 14 Passed H 96- 0 Apr 2 Passed S Ag Apr 28 Ref to H Rules	High impact. Support.
HB 1228 5130	Chapman, Doglio, Appleton Req of OFM	Increasing transportation revenues to help fund state fish barrier removal. Secures funding for removal of state-owned fish barriers (e.g., culverts) by imposing a graduated real estate excise tax (REET) and moving up the effective date of some vehicle weight fees.	Apr 5 PH in H Transp	Medium impact

HB 1496 5576	Dolan, Harris, Shewmake, Thai, Doglio, Walen	Improving climate science education. Would replace "environment" with "environmental and sustainability standards" to list of subjects common schools required to provide instruction for. Establishes OPSI grant program for non-profit, community-based organizations to create plans to instruct teachers on how to better teach science standards, including climate. Pacific Education Institute sees potential here to seek funding to work with CDs statewide.	Jan 23 Ref to H Ed	Medium impact.
SHB 1544	Mead, Fitzgibbon, Kloba	Addressing the effective date of certain actions taken under the GMA	Feb 21 Sub pass HEnviro Mar 21 Ref to H Rules	
HB 1611 5626	Blake, Walsh, Springer, Kretz, Dye, Chapman	Ensuring the safe and productive cultivation of shellfish. Would require Ecology to permit use of imidacloprid in Willapa Bay in 2019 and issue NPDES permit in 2020. Would transfer regulatory authority pertaining to pesticide control of ghost shrimp in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor, including NPDES authority, to WSDA. This is an unprecedented transfer of power between agencies. Would appropriate \$500K to Ecology to conduct study on use of imidacloprid in Willapa Bay and \$1M to WSDA to study impacts of using imidacloprid and to develop IPM for ghost shrimp control.	Feb 19 PH in H Enviro	
ESHB 1622 5675	Blake, Kretz, Springer, Chandler, Chapman, Dent, Shewmake	Concerning drought preparedness and response. Directs ECY to issue drought advisories that may contain voluntary actions to alleviate drought impacts. Allows ECY to prioritize the approval of emergency withdrawal authorizations for domestic	Mar 12 Sub pass H 80-16 Apr 2 Pass S Ag Apr 9 Pass S Ways Apr 28 Ref to H	Medium impact.

		use over other uses. Allows ECY to enter into agreements with applicants receiving emergency withdrawal authorization to recover some or all costs so long as mitigation efforts taken to protect instream flows, fed. regulated flows, or senior water rights. Authorizes ECY to issue grants to public entities, including conservation districts, to develop projects to help users prepare for drought or mitigate impacts of water unavailability due to droughts.	Rules	
HB 1662 5696	Dent, Springer, Kretz, Blake, Dye, Tharinger, Chandler, Fitzgibbon, Peterson, Fey, Corry, Dufault, Young	Payments in lieu of property tax	Feb 13 Passed H RDAN Feb 14 Ref to HApprops	
HB 1731	Gregerson, Dye, Ramos, Dent, Blake, Jinkins, Peterson, Hudgins, Riccelli	Continuing the work of the Washington food policy forum	Feb 15 Passed H RDAN Feb 19 Ref to HApprops	High impact. Support and testify.
SHB 1733 5543	Gregerson, Dye, Dent, Blake, Tarleton	Retaining productive farmland Directs the SCC to develop a form and process for an agricultural land assessment to be completed by any state agency prior to acquisition of agricultural land and provide annual report to legislature. Amended version modifies WSDOT exemption language.	Feb 22 Sub pass H RDAN Feb 22 Ref to HApprops	High impact. Neutral. Testify, yes.
HB 1790 5739	Griffey, MacEwen, Barkis	Promoting affordable housing in unincorporated area of rural counties within urban growth areas See Senate Bill – Bill passed Senate but was not brought up in House. Sent back to Senate Rules.	Feb 14 PH in H Finance	
SHB 1875	Eslick, Dent	Concerning wildlife damage to agricultural crops. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expands the scope of crops eligible for compensation as a result of wildlife damage from commercial crops to agricultural crops in general. 	Feb 22 Sup pass H RDAN Feb 27 PH in H Approps	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases, from \$120,000 to \$240,000, the maximum amount that the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) may pay per fiscal year for damage caused to agricultural crops by wild deer or elk. Increases, from \$10,000 to \$20,000, the maximum compensation payable for each claim of damage to agricultural crops or other property caused by wild deer or elk. Adds a definition of property that is eligible for compensation, to include irrigation equipment, fencing, and managed pasture. Requires the WDFW to cover the cost of property damage assessments. 		
SHB 1946 5873	Chapman, Maycumber, Fitzgibbon, Steele, Ramos	Concerning community forests Creates community forestland account in the state treasury. State and local agencies (including SCC and CDs) may apply for funds for the acquisition, development, and restoration projects of community forest projects. See Senate Bill – Bill passed Senate but was not brought up in House. Sent back to Senate Rules.	Feb 20 Sub pass H RDAN Feb 22 Ref to HApprops	Medium impact.
HB 1964	Corry, Blake, Ybrra, Mosbrucker, Harris, McCaslin, Barkis, Gildon	Requiring written consent of a lessee before DNR may terminate a lease for reasons other than default	Feb 22 Pass H RDAN Feb 22 Ref to HApprops	
HB 1983	Maycumber, Kretz, Walsh	Concerning natural resource management activities	Feb 22 Pass H RDAN Feb 22 Ref to H Rules	
EHB 2009	Reeves, Lekanoff, and 24 others	Establishing a healthy environment for all by addressing environmental health disparities.	Apr 17 Pass H 88-10 Apr 19 Held by S	Medium impact.

			Apr 28 Ref to HRules	
SHB 2022	Chambers, Fey, Caldier, Walsh, Blake, McCaslin, Eslick, Young, Chapman, Senn, Van Werven	Providing funding options to local governments for addressing fish passage barrier removals. Would create a local partnership account in WDFW with the intent of having a city or county partnering with private entities to seek funds for culvert removal on county or city-owned roads. Seems redundant, given existing funding opportunities through SRFB and FFFPP.	Feb 22 Pass H RDAN Feb 26 Sub pass H Cap Feb 28 Ref to H Rules	Medium impact.
HB 2082	Walsh, Chandler, Shewmake	Enhancing ecosystem services through riparian- oriented agroforestry.	Feb 18 Ref to H Workforce Development	
HB 2087	Kraft, Chapman, Klippert, Blake, Dye, Hoff, Orcutt, Walsh, Eslick	Exempting land removed from open space or farm and agricultural land classification from interest and other penalties if the land is owned in whole or in part by a retired farmer.	Feb 26 PH HFinance	
HB 2095	Walsh, Shewmake, Dye, Springer, Shea, Peterson, Chapman, Fitzgibbon, Eslick, Corry	Establishing the sustainable farms and fields grant program	Feb 19 Ref to H RDAN	
HB 2136	Orcutt, Blake, Shewmake	Concerning the farm internship program.	Mar 5 Introduced	
HB 2218	Eslick, Leavitt, Chambers, Callan, Dent, Walsh, Corry, Jenkin, Van Werven	Increasing the cap on gross sales for cottage food operations. Increases the cap from the current \$25,000 to \$50,000	Dec 6, 2019 Prefiled	An issue for OFP and the Food Policy Forum. OFP has in the past support efforts to increase cottage food production as a way to increase income for farmers.
HB 2262	Leavitt, Riccelli, Gildon, Stonier, Doglio, Eslick, Peterson, Shewmake, Pollet,	Expanding access to nutritious food.	Dec 20, 2019 Prefiled	An issue for the Food Policy Forum.

	Callan, Frame, Hudgins, Kloba			

SENATE BILLS

SB 5008 1690	Palumbo, Fortunato	Concerning short subdivisions	Mar 12 S Pass 46-2 Apr 2 Pass H Local Apr 28 Ref to S Rules	
SB 5130 1288	Rolfes, Saldana Req of OFM	Increasing transportation revenues to help fund state fish barrier removal. Secures funding for removal of state-owned fish barriers (e.g., culverts) by imposing a graduated real estate excise tax (REET) and moving up the effective date of some vehicle weight fees.	Jan 22 Pass S Ways Feb 6 PH in S Transp	Medium impact.
SB 5187	Kuderer, Wellman, Cleveland, Saldana, Nguyen, WilsonC	Concerning school composting and recycling	Feb 22 Pass SEarlyLearn Mar 18 Ref to S Rules	
SB 5242	Short, WilsonL	Concerning the economic development of rural counties. Would allow any county currently in GMA or VSP to opt-out of GMA or VSP if they fit the definitions in the bill. According to those definitions (according to [OFM staffer] all the counties in the state except for King, Clark, Kitsap, Spokane, Benton, Whatcom and Pierce would be allowed to opt-out of GMA or VSP. Of those, only Spokane and Benton are in VSP. So, if SB 5242 becomes law, the VSP would consist of Spokane and Benton Counties (if all the other 25 counties in VSP opt-out of GMA and VSP. Has not been scheduled for executive session.	Jan 24 PH in S LGovt	High impact.
SSB 5259	Zeiger, Warnick, Van De Wege, Fortunato, Takko	Encouraging the success of agriculture on agricultural land. Would allow the remaining 12 counties the chance to opt into VSP program. Fiscal note estimates \$3.7M cost if all 12 joined VSP.	Jan 31 Sub pass S LGovt Feb 12 Ref S Ways	High impact. Neutral. Signed in. Testified in S Ways.
SSB 5277	Warnick, Takko, Wagoner, Hunt, King,	Ensuring the funding of agricultural fairs	Feb 25 Sub pass S	

1283	Van De Wege, Zeiger, Braun, Schoesler, Honeyford, Becker, Rivers, Short		Ways Mar 18 Ref to S Rules	
SB 5451	King	Concerning the definition of hydraulic project in relation to the hydraulic project approval permits. Limits hydraulic projects to work performed at or below the ordinary high water line only.	Feb 5 PH in S Ag Feb 7 Pas S Ag	Medium impact.
2SSB 5489	Saldana, Das, Nguyen, Hasegawa, Darneille, Palumbo, Randall, McCoy, Conway, Billig, Cleveland, Keiser, Kuderer, Rolfes, WilsonC, Frockt	Establishing a healthy environment for all by creating a definition of environmental justice, directing agencies to address environmental health disparities, and creating a task force.	Mar 8 2 nd Sub pass S 27-21 Mar 28 Pass H StGvt Apr 8 Pass HApprops Apr 28 Ref to S Rules	
SSB 5543 1733	Takko	Retaining productive farmland Directs the SCC to develop a form and process for an agricultural land assessment to be completed by any state agency prior to acquisition of agricultural land and provide annual report to legislature. SSB 5543 passed out of committee 21 Feb 2019, not posted online. Amended version modifies WSDOT exemption language. Directs SCC to use existing resources.	Feb 21 Sub pass S Ag Feb 22 Ref to S Ways	High impact.
SB 5567 1187	Honeyford, Takko, Short, Rolfes, Warnick	Revising hydraulic project eligibility standards under RCW 77.55.181 for conservation district sponsored fish habitat enhancement projects.	Feb 7 Pass S Ag Mar 18 Ref to S Rules	High impact. Support.
SB 5576 1496	WilsonC, Nguyen, Palumbo, Warnick, Frockt, Hunt, Kuderer, Saldana	Improving climate science education. Would replace "environment" with "environmental and sustainability standards" to list of subjects common schools required to provide instruction for. Establishes OPSI grant program for non-profit, community-based organizations to create plans to instruct teachers on how to better teach science standards, including climate. Pacific Education Institute sees potential here to seek funding to work with CDs statewide.	Feb 22 Pass S EarlyLearn Feb 23 Ref to S Ways	Medium impact.

SB 5580	Rolfes, Palumbo, Frockt, Dhingra, Keiser, Kuderer, Sladana Req of Governor	Implementing recommendations of the southern resident killer whale task force related to increasing habitat and forage fish abundance. Authorizes the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to offer technical assistance to correct violations, issue notices of correction, notices of violation, stop work orders, or notices to comply for violations of hydraulic project approvals; Changes the civil penalty for violations of the hydraulic code from \$100 per day per violation to \$10,000 per violation; Removes the requirement that DFW issue permits with or without conditions for single-family residential bulkheads and rock walls.	Feb 5 PH in S Ag	Medium impact.
SB 5583	WilsonC, Van De Wege, Holy, Walsh, Darneille, Zeiger, Saldana, Cleveland, Nguyen, Hawkins, Billig, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Kuderer	Increasing access to fruits and vegetables for individuals with limited incomes.	Feb 12 Pass H HumanServ Feb 14 Ref to S Ways	
SB 5626 1611	Takko, Warnick, Hobbs, Honeyford, Van De Wege	Ensuring the safe and productive cultivation of shellfish. Would require Ecology to permit use of imidacloprid in Willapa Bay in 2019 and issue NPDES permit in 2020. Would transfer regulatory authority pertaining to pesticide control of ghost shrimp in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor, including NPDES authority, to WSDA. This is an unprecedented transfer of power between agencies. Would appropriate \$500K to Ecology to conduct study on use of imidacloprid in Willapa Bay and \$1M to WSDA to study impacts of using imidacloprid and to develop IPM for ghost shrimp control.	Feb 21 Pass S Ag Feb 22 Ref to S Ways	
SSB 5693	Saldana, Keiser, Hasegawa, Das	Creating transparency in agricultural supply chains.	Feb 21 Sub pass S Labor Mar 18 Ref to S Rules	
SSB 5696 1662	Warnick, Takko	Concerning payments in lieu of real property taxes	Feb 21 Pass S Ag Mar 1 Sub pass S Ways	

			Mar 18 Ref to S Rules	
SB 5787	Walsh, Hunt, Saldana	Concerning hours of availability for inspection and copying of public records. Would make it easier for cities, towns, and special purpose districts, e.g. conservation districts, with weekly office hours of operation 30 hours or less comply with Public Records Act.	Mar 7 Pass S 45-0 Apr 3 Pass H StGovt Apr 28 Ref to S Rules	Medium impact.
2SSB 5873 1946	Hawkins, Van De Wege	Concerning community forests Substitute bill replaces Community Forest Grant Program and Community Forestland Account with a pilot community forest program. It would include highest-ranking prioritized community forest projects contained in 2018 Capital Proviso Report. Community forests would be acquired through voluntary transaction and sponsor must provide 15% match. Program could be good funding resource for SCC and CDs, but they are not included in list of eligible sponsors; moreover, application process could be opened up to all community forests, not just ones assessed in 2018 report. If bill passes senate, work to amend language in the House.	Feb 21 Sub pass SAg Mar 1 2 nd sub pass SWays Mar 6 Pass S 41-5 Apr 3 Pass H RDAN Apr 28 Ref to S Rules	Medium impact.
2SSB 5947 2095	McCoy, Schoesler, Palumbo, King, Salomon, Warnick	Establishing the sustainable farms and fields grant program. [NOTE: description of 2019 bill] Requires WSDA to develop sustainable farms and fields grant program through rule making; Requires that certain activities be eligible for grants, including on-farm fossil fuel input efficiency measures, agroforestry, and carbon farming. SCC would play consulting role, along with WSU, NRCS, and DNR to prioritize projects that result in reduction of atmospheric CO2. WSDA will submit a report no later than 15Nov2019 with details on how minimum and maximum appropriations would be implemented over a 4-year period. Does not specifically mention role of conservation districts in passed amended version. Proviso being considered that would direct the SCC and WSDA to assess funding needs.	Feb 21 Sub pass SAg Mar 1 2 nd sub pass SWays Mar 6 Pass S 32-15 Apr 3 Pass H RDAN Apr 28 Ref to S Rules	Medium impact.

SSB 5996	Van De Wege, Rolfes, Frockt, Billig, Keiser, Lias, Hunt, Randall	<p>Funding fire prevention and suppression activities.</p> <p>Bill would increase the existing tax on insurer premiums to fund a fire prevention and suppression account; could provide potential funding source for CDs. SCC is working with DNR and other state agencies to document need for these funds towards CDs for Firewise and fire prevention and resiliency programs.</p>	<p>Apr 18 Sub pass S Ways</p> <p>Apr 28 Ref to S Rules</p>	Medium impact. Neutral.
SB 6036	Honeyford, Van De Wege, Warnick, Muzzall, Short	Providing opportunities for drought mitigation using trust water rights.	Dec 3, 2019 Prefiled	
SB 6091	Warnick, Saldana	Continuing the work of the Washington food policy forum.	Dec 18, 2019 Prefiled	
SB 6121	Takko	Designating the Pacific razor clam as the new state clam.	Dec 30, 2019 Prefiled	

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Washington State Conservation Commission

January 16, 2020

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, WSCC Executive Director

FROM: Alison Halpern, WSCC Policy Assistant
Ron Shultz, WSCC Policy Director

RE: Lower Skagit Tributaries Temperature Implementation Strategy

Requested Action: Information only.

Background:

In mid-2018, the Swinomish Tribe sent a letter to Ecology expressing concerns regarding continued water quality temperature problems in the Lower Skagit tributaries. In March 2019, the Puget Sound Partnership adopted a resolution which, in part, urged Ecology to develop and implement a non-point plan for temperature issues in the Lower Skagit. Shortly thereafter, Ecology convened a multi-entity process to develop such a plan. Conservation Commission staff participated in these discussions, which are ongoing. Ecology recently completed a draft plan.

The Draft Plan:

The strategy identifies key elements and activities under four categories:

- Outreach and Education
- Restoration Efforts
- Data and Research
- Strategic Planning and Policy

From the draft strategy: "The Strategy also focuses on improving solutions in our delivery of voluntary landowner incentives. Voluntary restoration is the primary implementation method designated by the Strategy. Increased integration and renewed commitment from conservation partners, governmental entities, and stakeholders to work together to address water quality impairments was a key element identified during the group meetings."

The draft strategy also states: “Discussion focused on the need for increased organizational capacity, development of long term funding, formation of “new tools or programs”, and a review of existing program policies to encourage movement towards increased flexibility in implementation practices. While active restoration is already taking place in portions of the TMDL area, additional elements such as local incentive programs, complementary state programs to enhance federal programs, and greater program flexibility would expand voluntary participation.”

The draft report also lists several sub-goals within each of the four key strategic areas. The sub-goals of interest include:

- Outreach and Education
 - Raise awareness of implementation strategy and watershed needs
 - Establish community based social marketing approach through a regional integrated outreach strategy.
 - Perform targeted outreach to landowners
 - Ensure equal protection, meaningful involvement and equitable resource delivery
- Restoration Efforts
 - Reach Scale Planning:
 - To further refine restoration efforts for on each of the sub-watersheds is a priority effort.
 - Projects and priorities should provide durable solutions developed at a sub-watershed scale, and incorporate existing planning efforts and stakeholder priorities.
 - Existing Programs and Efforts:
 - Developing and maintaining a list of active grants or programs will help ensure coordination and reduce redundancy.
 - Maintenance and ongoing support for newly established and existing riparian vegetation:
 - While CREP currently offers funding for maintenance, several grant funded restoration projects cannot offer long term maintenance due to the length or limits within the grant.
 - With the potential of significant public reluctance to implement buffers, proactive planning and maintenance must be involved to ensure that restoration efforts are both ascetically pleasing and functional.

- Easement, acquisitions, and incentive programs:
 - While efforts to improve riparian habitat through restorations and plantings have been ongoing through the TMDL area, significant restoration potential remains.
 - In several areas, easements and property acquisitions have been used successfully by conservation partners.
- Promote LID standards for all homes and properties in the TMDL/County area where not already required
- Data and Research
 - Research Agenda and Data gap Identification:
 - To best address the complex topic, a research agenda should be identified to compile available data, evaluate data gaps, and develop methods to document status and trends within the Lower Skagit Tributaries.
 - Instream restoration evaluation:
 - Efforts to provide habitat and thermal refuge during the growth and development of the buffers is essential for the survival of the fish during periods of elevated temperatures.
 - These areas of cool water must be identified, and may be able to be protected or enhanced through careful instream practices.
 - Riparian vegetation and restoration effort datasets:
 - Implementation tracking and water quality data is critical to future adaptive management and effectiveness monitoring.
 - The ability to evaluate and quantify riparian conditions is essential to multiple partners and programs to develop restoration and protection goals and strategies.
 - Developing a shared geospatial database to provide an accounting of implementation activity, restoration priority, and water quality information was discussed several times.

- Effectiveness Monitoring/Adaptive management:
 - In the case of TMDLs, Ecology uses adaptive management to assess whether the actions identified as necessary to solve the identified pollution problems are the correct ones and whether they are working.
 - As we implement these actions, the system will respond, and it will also change.
 - Adaptive management allows us to fine-tune our actions to make them more effective, and to try new strategies if we have evidence that a new approach could help us to achieve compliance.
- Coordinate with Instream flow efforts:
 - Streamflow is a significant factor in the heat budget of rivers and streams. Reduced creek flow due to human uses and influences can have a significant impact on stream temperatures.
 - Ecology staff will coordinate with ongoing legislative effort and research regarding water rights and use in the TMDL area.
 - Ecology will work with conservation partners to promote irrigation efficiency grants and programs.
- Strategic Planning and Policy
 - Funding Planning:
 - Ecology will work with willing partners to evaluate Habitat SIAT funding for reach scale planning on watersheds based on sequencing and local priority.
 - Planning should include the development of detailed cost estimate for future implementation efforts.
 - Ecology will work with conservation partners to investigate and pursue implementation funding to increase near term implementation funding where watershed plans exist.
 - Policy, Ordinance, and Regulatory Recommendations:
 - Funding discussions were not limited to organizational capacity, but also program limitations and flexibility.
 - Program payments are often designed to compensate property owners for the use of the property based on soil rental rates. Per the 2018 farm bill, soil rental rates have been reduced in an effort to reduce the impacts of USDA program rental rates to local farmland rental markets. Similarly, the rates at which contractors and other laborers working on the installation of CREP buffers have remained steady since the introduction of CREP.
 - Local conservation partners have stated that the rates needs to be adjusted if they want to be competitive in the current market.
 - Ecology will work with project partners and regional leadership to provide comments related to existing programs effectiveness and limitations.

- Ecology will continue to compile and evaluate information on buffer width, flexibility, and implementation challenges and Incorporate information and successes from other regional efforts.
- Clarify Regulatory Approach:
 - In Washington State, the two key, but separate, laws receiving examination to accomplish restoration through regulation are RCW 36.70A, the Growth Management Act (GMA), and RCW 90.48, the Water Pollution Control Act.
 - Both laws demonstrate the Washington State Legislature's goals for environmental protection.
 - Ecology will continue to use the full range of authorities provided in RCW 90.48 to achieve clean water.
 - In addition to the coordinated efforts with Skagit County and others noted in this Strategy, we will also be evaluating other land uses that are “causing, or have the potential to cause” pollution. Where problems are observed, Ecology will either refer property owners to a local conservation organization or work directly with the landowner on solutions.

NEXT STEPS:

The draft strategy is still under consideration by the group and will be discussed in January 2020.

SCC staff will continue to participate in these meetings and discussions, support the Skagit Conservation District engagement in these discussions, and support Ecology's ongoing efforts to develop an effective implementation strategy to address temperature concerns in the Lower Skagit tributaries.

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Washington State Conservation Commission

January 16, 2020

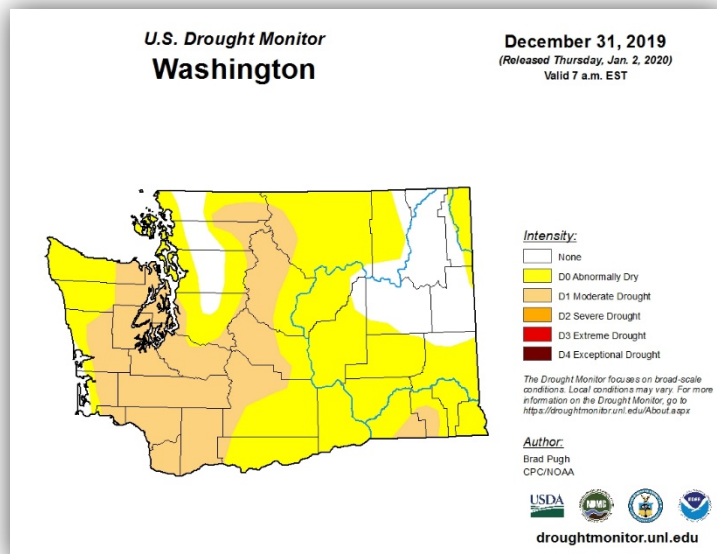
TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, Executive Director

FROM: Jon Culp, WSCC Program Manager

SUBJECT: Water Resource Conditions Update

Requested Action: None, information only

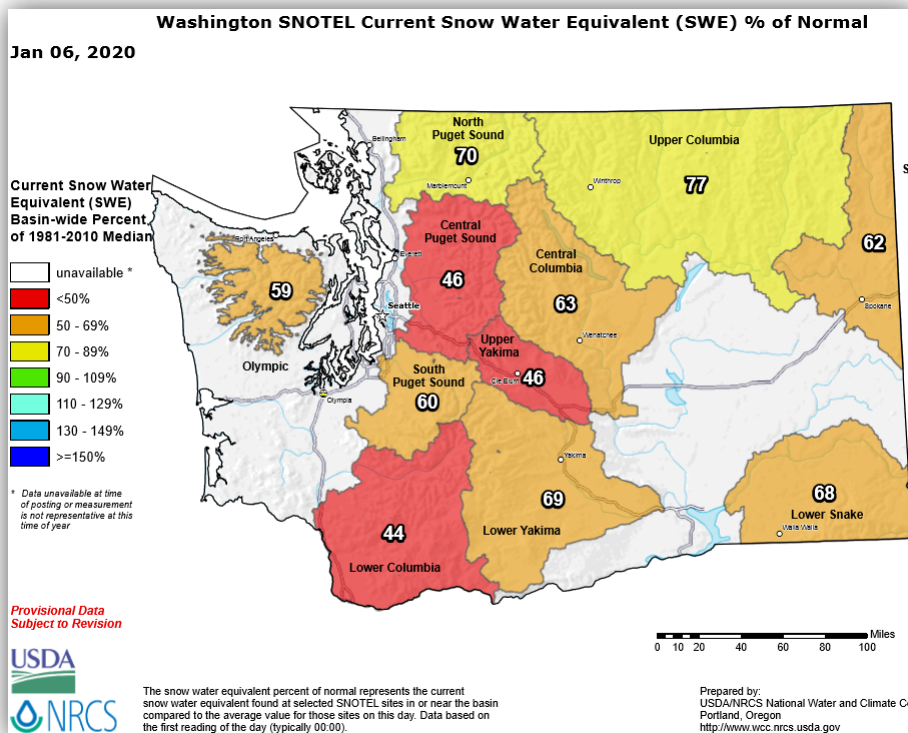
Discussion: After a somewhat cooler and wetter summer, the 2019 drought fizzled out somewhat with intermittent precipitation throughout the growing season. Most areas around the state were getting close to seasonal normal water supplies near the end of the growing season. However, one of the driest Novembers on record along with the third slowest start in snow accumulations since the 1990s has large areas of the state well behind where we should be. Statewide, if we were to get normal precipitation during the rest of the winter with normal temperatures, we could see 70-80 percent of normal by April 1st.



The U.S. Drought Monitor map for Washington has gotten increasingly darker since the beginning of November when only the San Juans were yellow (abnormally dry).

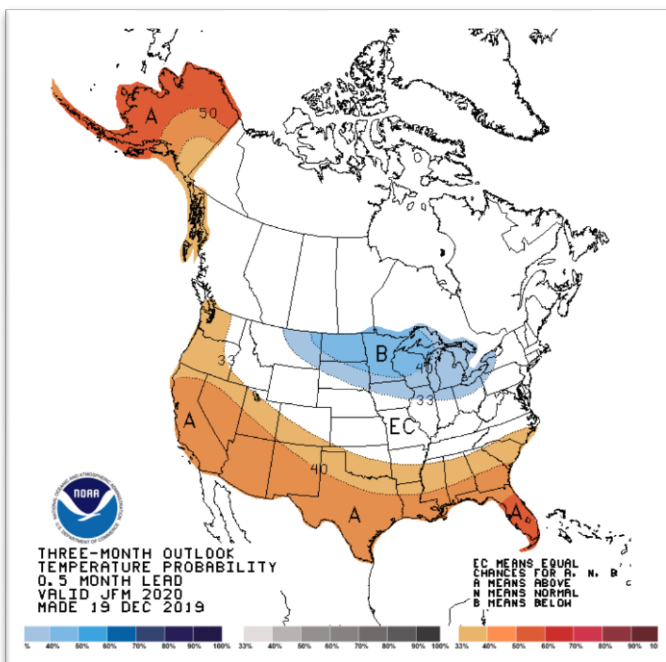
The NRCS WA Snotel system is showing the low snow water equivalent in the normally

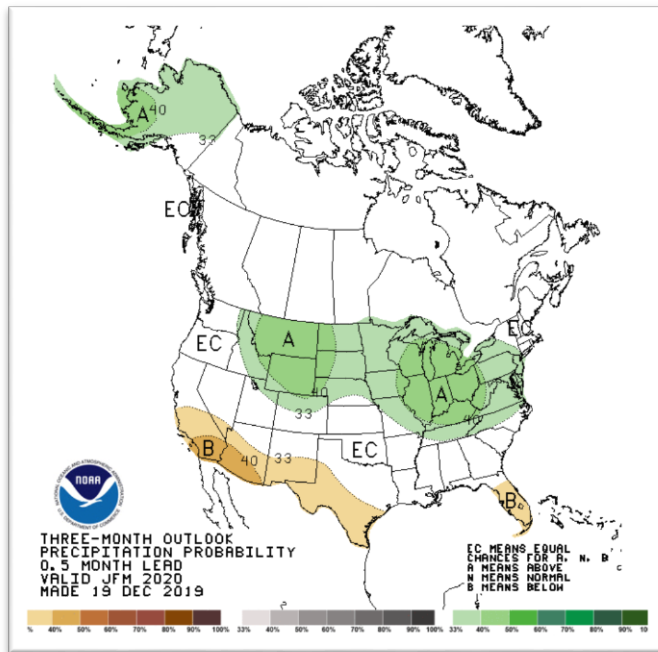
snow dominated areas around the state. With the worst areas to date being the Lower Cascades, Central Puget Sound, and the Upper Yakima basin.



The National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center is showing the January

through March outlook as slightly higher than average chances of warmer than normal temperatures, as shown on the map to your left. This is likely due to the warmer than normal surface water temperatures in the northern Pacific Ocean.

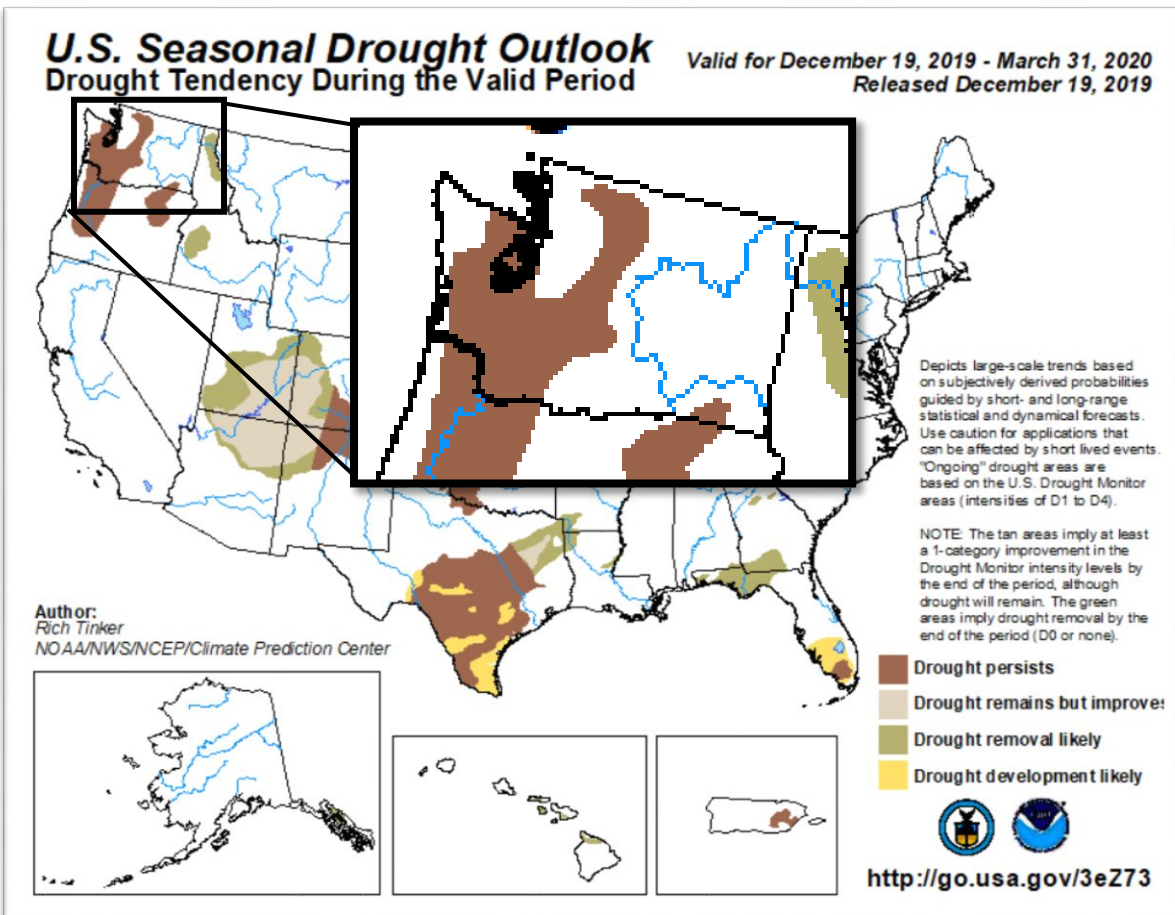




As for precipitation, the Climate Prediction Center is showing equal chances for normal precipitation over the next three months.

Finally, the U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook map, below, shows continued drought conditions west of and in the Cascades.

Staff is cautiously optimistic, but will continue to monitor as winter progresses.



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Washington State Conservation Commission

January 16, 2020

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, Executive Director

FROM: Bill Eller, WSCC Election Officer

SUBJECT: Election and Appointment update and proposed changes

Summary

Staff provides the following update on two motions Conservation Commissioners made in December 2019 related to proposed conservation district (CD) elections and appointments and the changes.

Staff recommendation

No action. Information only.

Background – December 5, 2019 Motions

At its December 5, 2019 meeting, the Conservation Commission passed two motions that will affect future conservation district election and appointment process, policy and procedure.

Motion: *Motion by Commissioner Williams to allow Commission staff to adopt the changes and initiate the processes for Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) changes proposed by the Conservation District Election and Appointment Committee to conservation district elections procedures and policies with the exception of the timeframe of the election. Seconded by Commissioner Longrie. Motion carried.*

Motion: *Motion by Commissioner Williams to start the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) process to consider limiting the election timeframe. Seconded by Commissioner Longrie. Motion carried.*

Action to Date: Commission staff have begun the process to seek legislation to effect the change necessary to obtain [an exemption to the Public Record Act](#) (RCW Chapter 42.56.230) to prevent from disclosure absentee ballot requestor's email addresses and phone numbers.

Commission staff have also begun the Washington Administrative Code adoption process to give effect to the [over 70 different proposed changes to the conservation district election and appointment WAC Chapter 135-110](#). Staff anticipates that the final WAC adoption process will be complete six months from its start. As part of the WAC adoption process, Commission staff will continue to explore options to limit the election timeframe from its current 90 day window (January-March) to something less.

[An Election Quality Assurance Plan and policy](#) was adopted by the Commission on December 5, 2019, and Commission staff will continue to coordinate with the regional managers and CTD to ensure training for CD personnel charged with running CD elections.

Upon adoption of the final WAC changes, a wholesale review and revision of the *Elections and Appointment Manual* to align it with the changes would need to be undertaken by Commission staff. The intent would be to change the focus of the *Manual* to just provide best practices for conducting CD elections while retaining the checklists and sample notices and policies in the *Manual*.

Commission staff hope that these changes would be completed in time to take effect for the next election and appointment cycle - 2020-2021.



Washington State Conservation Commission

January 16, 2020

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, Executive Director

FROM: Josh Giuntoli, Office of Farmland Preservation

SUBJECT: Conservation Easement Sub-Committee Appointments

Action Requested

Appoint a conservation district supervisor or manager from an interested district, one from east of cascades and one from west of cascades selected by the Commission at a regular business meeting to participate in the Conservation Easement Sub-Committee.

SCC staff put out a request to supervisors and district managers requesting those with interest in being considered for Commissioner appointment submit their name and brief description of interest. Requests were to be submitted by January 6.

The following submitted:

West of Cascades

Linda Lyshall, PhD - Executive Director - Snohomish Conservation District

I am interested in being on the Ag Easement Sub-Committee. This is a continued and increasing area of focus for Snohomish County. My work with the Sustainable Lands Strategy will likely dovetail well with the work this sub-committee will undertake.

East of Cascades

Loren Meagher, District Manager – Central and Eastern Conservation District

I would like to be considered for participation on the easement committee. I have experienced working with SCC on four different easements and a forestland acquisition. Through these projects I've learned a lot about conservation easements including landowner perspective, technical and legal aspects of implementation and the opinion/position of several of our local elected officials as well as state representatives and state senators.

Background

The State Conservation Commission (SCC) through policy #19-02 established a Conservation Easement Sub-Committee (Sub-Committee) to guide and inform SCC activities related to management of easements.

The Sub-Committee is to include the Executive Director or designee of WSCC; the Executive Director or designee of the Washington Association of Land Trusts; the Executive Director or designee of the Washington Association of Conservation Districts; the Pacific Northwest Director or designee of the American Farmland Trust; and a conservation district supervisor or manager from an interested district, one from east of cascades and one from west of cascades selected by the Commission at a regular business meeting.

The Sub-Committee is to meet annually or as necessary to review agency policy for monitoring conservation easements as well as hear reports on agency held and SCC third party easements. In addition, the Sub-Committee will assist in reviewing applications based on ranking developed by SCC staff with input from the Sub-Committee and provide a referral to SCC on whether to proceed or not proceed should funds become available. The Sub-Committee may recommend whether SCC be primary holder of easement or hold an interest as third party beneficiary.

The Sub-Committee will also work with SCC staff to provide Cooperating Partners and WSCC staff with information related to current best practices related to stewardship and monitoring of agricultural conservation easements.

TAB 5

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WACD - WSCC - Named Resolutions

Resolution Number	Topic
2019-03	Loss of Crop Protection Products
2019-04	Identifying on-farm renewable energy development/use & soil health practice adoption as high priority goals
2019-07	Community Forest Bill
2019-08	Improving Association & District Governance Processes
2019-11	Improve Hydraulic Permit Approval Statue
2019-12	Support CD funding for implementing Community Resiliency Programs
2019-13	Addressing State Policy on Water Quantity and Availability
2019-14	WSCC Criteria for Allegations Against Supervisors
2019-15	Sustainable funding for State Conservation Commission
2019-19	Local Work Group Emphasis in WA Conservation
2019-22	CD Eligibility for RCO Grants
2019-23	Conservation District Status as Government
2019-24	Community Project Funding

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Resolution 2019-03 Loss of Crop Protection Products

SPONSOR CD: Palouse CD

AREA: ☐ NW ☐ SW ☐ NC ☐ SC ☐ NE ☒ SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☒ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☒ NACD
- ☒ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER Farm Bureau, Wheat Growers, Etc.

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

There is a push to outlaw some of our crop protection products, number one being Roundup and now Paraquat and others by litigation. Roundup was introduced to farmers about 1976 and was the final key to reduced tillage and no-till. It is used as an aid to tillage or to a lot of us an aid to no tillage. EPA has determined it to be safe when used according to label directions and over those 43 years soil health has improved, erosion is almost been eliminated, and other benefits.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

NACD supports retaining crop protection products until suitable replacements are found coupled with education on the benefits of these products.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☐ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☒ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☒ NO
- ☐ YES (briefly explain):

Resolution 2019-04 Identifying on-farm renewable energy development/use & soil health practice adoption as high priority goals

SPONSOR CD: Whatcom and Spokane Conservation Districts

AREA: ☒ NW ☐ SW ☐ NC ☐ SC ☒ NE ☐ SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT: To successfully conserve renewable natural resources as is our statutory directive under RCW 89.08.220, there must be good stewards of the land with a profitable business model that sustains them into the future. A multi-pronged solution is needed that will help farmers improve their bottom-line by reducing their costs, increase their productivity, or both.

The on-farm development and use of renewable resources such as wind, solar, biogas, biofuels can help the farmer's bottom line by reducing reliance upon costly fossil fuels. Productivity has been shown to improve as the level of organic matter (carbon-based) increases in the soil. There are also valuable environmental benefits to be gained from farmers producing and using renewable energy and building soil health. These could become valuable in a future environmental services marketplace so long as the practices remain voluntary.

WACD does not presently have a clear position regarding on-farm energy development and use or for the sequestration of carbon through improved soil health. It must have one as it must be at the table advancing voluntary, incentive-based solutions including the provision of technical and financial support for the development and use on-farm renewable energy source and improving soil health.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts supports increased adoption of soil health systems as well as the development and use of renewable energy sources by farmers and other landowners within the State of Washington. The WACD Board, Executive Director and Lobbyist shall participate in discussions likely to lead to legislation or WSCC funding packages to ensure that conservation districts are integral to the delivery of technical and financial assistance, on a voluntary basis, implement soil health practices; and develop and use on-farm renewable energy sources.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☒ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☐ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☒ **NO**
- ☐ **YES** (briefly explain):

Resolution 2019-07 Community Forest Bill

SPONSOR CD: Central Klickitat CD

AREA: ☐NW ☐SW ☐NC ☒SC ☐NE ☐SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

During the 2019 legislative session CKCD learned of Community Forest Bill to fund acquisitions of forest lands for local ownership and management in support of rural communities, natural resource conservation and habitat conservation. CKCD spoke with several legislators and drafted language to help ensure community forest projects would be managed with a working lands ethic, that CD's would be eligible and that an open funding announcement process would provide broad opportunity to solicit projects with the most benefit and likelihood for success.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

WACD supports the Community Forest bill to include conservation district eligibility and working lands philosophy, its passage, and implementation by the WA Legislature that will foster equity and inclusion in community forest funding opportunities. The resulting program shall be developed to foster local leadership and management in rural communities.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☒ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☐ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☐ NO
- ☒ YES (briefly explain): This could improve project funding availability to CD's.

Resolution 2019-08 Improving Association & District Governance Processes

SPONSOR CD: Whatcom, King, and Spokane CDs

AREA: ☒ NW ☐ SW ☐ NC ☐ SC ☒ NE ☐ SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☒ Policy
- ☐ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

A “system” of board governance is a requirement for an effective, well-functioning organization. However, WACD and many districts do not possess a full complement of policies that are necessary to comprise a coherent system. Both could benefit in terms of effectiveness, consistency and reputation by adopting an integrated set of governance policies and procedures. By selecting a system from among the various models of governance that would be appropriate for its structure and then actively working to implement it, WACD could exhibit great leadership. Many CDs would similarly like to improve their systems of governance.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

The WACD Board shall identify an effective model of governance and work to implement it completely. Further, WACD shall advocate to the WSCC that it supports all districts interested in improving district governance and additionally provide continuing education to supervisors and managers in its implementation to attain and maintain a high level of competency and performance.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☐ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☒ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☐ NO
- ☒ YES (briefly explain): WACD may have to expend funds to hire a consultant.

Resolution 2019-11 Improve Hydraulic Permit Approval Statue

SPONSOR CD: King, Mason, and Okanogan Conservation Districts

AREA: ☒NW ☐SW ☒NC ☐SC ☐NE ☐SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☒ OTHER STAGE AGENCY Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) program, issues permits statewide for private, and public entities to ensure their projects do not harm aquatic habitat. Established in 1943, it's one of the state's oldest regulatory permits and one of its most underfunded.

In 1988, RCW 77.55.181 was drafted to streamline the HPA permitting process for fish habitat enhancement projects. This RCW specifically addresses the permit review and approval process for fish habitat enhancement projects. Section (1)(c)(v) of the code refers to a process where conservation district sponsored projects can be reviewed and approved if they comply with, "design standards established by the conservation commission" through "interagency agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service". Neither the design standards or interagency agreement have ever been completed.

In 2018, a Washington AgForestry Class 40 Public Policy Group took up this issue. They worked collaboratively with WDFW, Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC), and conservation districts to identify a solution. The solution that was ultimately developed was to ask the legislature to amend RCW 77.55.181 to make the rapid HPA permitting approval similar to other entities in the statute such as WDFW or Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group sponsored projects.

The AgForestry Public Policy group worked with Representatives Dent, Blake, Chandler, Kretz, Schmick, and Bergquist to get HB 1187 introduced in January 2019. Ultimately the bill passed the

House unanimously but didn't pass the Senate on the final day of the legislative session due to a lack of time.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

Resolved, WACD shall work WDFW, WSCC, conservation districts, and legislators to support the passage of this bill as a top priority of the Association.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☐ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☒ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☒ **NO**
- ☐ **YES** (briefly explain):

Resolution 2019-12 Support CD funding for implementing Community Resiliency Programs

SPONSOR CD: Okanogan and Skagit Conservation Districts

AREA: ☒NW ☐SW ☒NC ☐SC ☐NE ☐SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☒ OTHER STAGE AGENCY Department of Natural Resources, Governor, WA Leg
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Washington State has experienced increasing impacts from wildfires in recent years. As communities grow, population increases, and more people develop lands that are near or in wildfire prone areas, impacts to residents, businesses, and entire communities becomes more severe.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) published their “Washington State Wildland Fire Protection 10-Year Strategic Plan” this year. The plan has four broad goals that call for action including, but not limited to, increasing preparedness and landscape resilience, improving community awareness, building upon post-fire recovery efforts, and ensuring fire response is appropriate and timely. The plan acknowledges that to be effective DNR must engage partners, communities, and individuals to recognize needs and implement change. Many of the goals are tasks that Districts are already working on or prepared to do so, if funding and other resources become available.

Districts are uniquely situated to be a valuable resource for DNR and our communities throughout Washington State. Unfortunately, Districts have not received adequate funding to put staff to work in their communities and partnering with others to implement on-the-ground changes.

= RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

WACD shall work with the Governor and the Washington State Legislature to support funding to conservation districts for implementing community resiliency programs, fire fuels reduction, forest health, and fire recovery work that is carried out in partnership with the Washington Department of Natural Resources and other partners.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☐ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☒ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☒ **NO**
- ☐ **YES** (briefly explain):

Resolution 2019-13 Addressing State Policy on Water Quantity and Availability

SPONSOR CD: Cowlitz Conservation District

AREA: ☐ NW ☒ SW ☐ NC ☐ SC ☐ NE ☐ SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☒ Policy
- ☐ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT: Water is extremely important for Washington agriculture both on the eastside and the westside. In order to have farms of all sizes remain competitive; it is absolutely key to have water available for intensive agriculture especially as farms are sometimes being divided into smaller parcels. The Legislative fix in the 2018 session (RCW 19.27.097) to the Hirst Supreme Court decision still contains uncertainty as to D.O.E. outcomes in many W.R.I.A.'s including #26 / Cowlitz were not addressed at all.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE: WACD and WSCC to designate a person to track the implementation of this R.C.W. and communicate to all 45 Washington State Conservation Districts the status in each W.R.I.A. to the Conservation District or multiple Conservation Districts in that watershed. This needs a coordinated approach to this statewide issue, which can be different by watershed.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☐ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☒ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☒ **NO**
- ☐ **YES** (briefly explain):

Resolution 2019-14 WSCC Criteria for Allegations Against Supervisors

SPONSOR CD: Thurston Conservation District

AREA: ☐NW ☒SW ☐NC ☐SC ☐NE ☐SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY (check any option that applies):

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

WSCC needs a clear process and criteria for evaluating and responding to allegations against supervisors.

The WSCC is charged with investigating and possibly removing supervisors of conservation districts. However, the WSCC does not have published rules or procedures for conducting such investigations. As a result, recent investigations have been confusing and have appeared ad hoc. Because of this, the Thurston County Superior Court has ruled that the post-investigation hearing process used by WSCC in such investigations was not the proper process. The WSCC should provide published rules and procedures governing how such investigations and following hearings are conducted. These published rules and procedures should provide for a clear and understandable process both in investigation and in any hearing following the investigation so that WSCC staff, supervisors under investigation, and the conservation districts served by such supervisors can have a clear understanding of the process and so that the process can be conducted as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

WACD shall work with WSCC to draft a policy for consideration by the WSCC establishing criteria and process to timely address allegations brought to WSCC about supervisors, both spurious and non-spurious, in order to address them quickly and equitably.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☐ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☒ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☐ **NO**
- ☒ **YES** (briefly explain): Likely budget implication for WACD and WSCC staff to develop draft WSCC policy. Budget implication not likely to implement policy once established.

Resolution 2019-15 Sustainable funding for State Conservation Commission

SPONSOR CD: Thurston Conservation District

AREA: ☐ NW ☒ SW ☐ NC ☐ SC ☐ NE ☐ SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☐ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☒ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY (check any option that applies):

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Every legislative session the WSCC struggles to obtain funding, despite being a long-standing agency with a mission that receives bipartisan support. The amount to support WSCC functions is “budget dust”. In addition, needs for CD actions continue to mount, including Orca recovery and elections.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

WACD shall work with WSCC and the Long-term Sustainable Funding Committee to recommend a sustainable funding option for the Conservation Commission and the Legislature to support CD services, such as revenue from a dedicated fee or direct authority for Rates and Charges.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☐ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☐ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☐ NO
- ☒ YES (briefly explain): Study will require staff time and resources

Resolution 2019-19 Local Work Group Emphasis in WA Conservation

SPONSOR CD: Central Klickitat Conservation District

AREA: ☐NW ☐SW ☐NC ☒SC ☐NE ☐SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☒ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT: Since the inception of Conservation Districts nationwide, a founding mantra has been 'locally led' conservation. When NRCS took more of a leadership role in federally funded conservation initiatives, the 'locally led' aspect was supported by reliance on local input to program priorities via the 'Local Work Group (LWG)' concept. Historically, LWG's, usually led by Conservation Districts, have worked in Washington State to ensure NRCS programs fit the local needs and opportunities for participation and are rolled out in a fair manner. Regressively, in the recent past USDA/NRCS from the national level is eroding the use and initiative of the LWGs and thus locally led conservation. LWG/locally led seems to be less and less of a focus for USDA.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE: WACD supports working with NRCS and local leadership on local workgroups in implementing conservation programs.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☐ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☒ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☒ **NO**
- ☐ **YES** (briefly explain):

Resolution 2019-22 CD Eligibility for RCO Grants

SPONSOR CD: Eastern Klickitat Conservation District

AREA: ☐NW ☐SW ☐NC ☒SC ☐NE ☐SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY (check any option that applies):

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☒ OTHER STAGE AGENCY Recreation and Conservation Office
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

CD's are ineligible for some categories of grants that other local governments are eligible for and grant match requirements are unattainable for CD's due to the scale of some projects. This results in unrealized conservation opportunities and limited to no local input on some types of conservation projects including forestland conservation and farmland preservation.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

WACD shall work with RCO and legislators to implement policy revisions to allow CDs to compete more fully in RCO grant categories.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☒ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☐ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☐ NO
- ☒ YES (briefly explain): This could improve project funding availability to CD's.

Resolution 2019-23 Conservation District Status as Government Entities

SPONSOR CD: Eastern Klickitat Conservation District

AREA: ☐NW ☐SW ☐NC ☒SC ☐NE ☐SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY (check any option that applies):

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

CD's are not clearly defined as government entities in several RCW's and WAC's that define taxing status.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

WACD shall work to clarify in RCW and WAC that CDs are recognized as tax exempt local units of Washington state government.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☒ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☐ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☐ No
- ☒ **YES** (briefly explain): This would impact budgets of conservation districts with land holdings.

Resolution 2019-24 Community Project Funding

SPONSOR CD: Underwood Conservation District

AREA: ☐NW ☐SW ☐NC ☒SC ☐NE ☐SE

RESOLUTION TYPE:

- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Position Statement
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Study

RESOLUTION ACTION AGENCY (check any option that applies):

- ☒ WACD
- ☒ WSCC
- ☐ OTHER STAGE AGENCY _____
- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ NACD
- ☐ NON-STATE/FEDERAL PARTNER _____

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT:

There are significant unmet natural resource needs and challenges at a community level in our District and around the state. A critical limiting factor in addressing community-scale resource issues is the current cost-share model and CPDS system, in that it limits work to a single landowner.

RESOLUTION LANGUAGE:

WACD supports SCC Commission to help create a modified NRI or capital funding stream that allows Districts to act as the contractual recipient and spend funds for specific projects involving multiple landowners in a single area with a common purpose.

TYPE OF TEXT OF RESOLUTION (check all boxes that apply):

- ☐ Technical (changes address grammar, punctuation, sentence flow and makes **NO** substantive change(s) to the existing policy.
- ☒ Substantive change to existing policy. If in doubt, check the box.
- ☐ New policy.

IS THERE A BUDGET IMPLICATION TO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?

- ☐ NO
- ☒ YES (briefly explain): SCC would need to designate a funding stream, such as NRI or other capital funds, to fund community-scale projects.

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TAB 6

An WACD informational item (not really an NACD item)

I. **2020 WACD Leadership** Elected/Re-elected at our 2019 Annual Meeting

Jeanette Dorner, President (Pierce CD) - JeanetteD@pierced.org

Javier Lopez, Vice president (South Yakima CD) - javier@treskilionag.com.

Amy McKay, Secretary (Whitman CD) - amy8424m@yahoo.com

Dave Fenn, Treasurer (Lewis CD) - Fennfarms@centurytel.net

Mark Craven, Past President (Snohomish CD) - oldhalloween@yahoo.com

Doug Rushton, National Director (Thurston CD) – doug.rushton@conservewa.net

Our new **WACD Executive Director**, Tom Salzer officially started on January 2, 2020.

TSalzer@wadistricts.org; Office phone- [360.357.2425](tel:360.357.2425).

II. **WACD 2019 RESOLUTIONS GOING TO NACD IN 2020.**

At the end of the 2019 WACD area meetings, we had five resolutions likely going to NACD. At the WACD annual meeting, that number was winnowed to two. NACD committees will discuss these and other resolutions at the 2020 NACD annual meeting in Las Vegas.

Resolution	Specific statement of action expected by NACD	NACD Committee Assigned to	Follow-up strategy
Grazing CRP as a Mid-management Practice (Originated with Whitman CD)	NACD supports adding prescribed grazing as an eligible mid-contract maintenance practice to rejuvenate CRP stands and reduce fuel loads.	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Loss of Crop Protection Products (Originated with Palouse CD)	NACD supports retaining use of current crop protection products until suitable replacements are found coupled with education on the benefits of these products.	To Be Determined	To Be Determined

III. **Washington State at NACD** (Attendees 12/30/19) **If others plan to attend – please let Doug know.**

- Mark Craven and Linda Lyshall, Snohomish Conservation District
- Dean Longrie, Clark Conservation District (WSCC chair; WACD SW area director)
- Carol Smith, Executive Director, WSCC
- Michael Crowder (Benton CD), NACD 1st Vice President; a plethora of other committees/groups.
- Wade Troutman (Foster Creek CD), WACD National Director Alternate.
- Larry Davis (Whatcom CD), Chair, Tribal Outreach and Partnership Resource Policy Group.
- Doug Rushton (Thurston CD), WACD National Director; and member Forestry Resource Policy Group.

IV. **NACD Updates** And News:

- NACD's 74th Annual Meeting will be held Feb. 8-12, 2020, at the Bally's Las Vegas in Las Vegas, Nev. See the [NACD 2020 Annual Meeting](#) page for more information.
- Please keep your eye on the [NACD Pacific Region Webpage](#) for additional information. If you have anything to share, please contact Ariel.

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| (NRCS) Conservation Planning Boot Camp (2017-2019) | Five WA attendees | https://www.nacdnet.org/general-resources/conservation-planning-boot-camp/ |
| Urban Agriculture Grants | Washington – 11 grants for \$546,255 | https://www.nacdnet.org/about-nacd/what-we-do/urban-and-community/ |
| Technical Assistance Grants | Washington – 8 grants for \$491,156 | https://www.nacdnet.org/technical-assistance-grants/ |
| Soil Health Champions Network | Washington – 6 champions | https://www.nacdnet.org/technical-assistance-grants/ |

V. NACD Pacific Region Leadership

- ## VI. NACD Calendar

- ## VII. PARTNER UPDATE

M:\WACD\2020\Board Meetings\1-3-20 NACD update WACD-WSCC January 2020 Meetings Rushton.docx