



CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING PACKET

DECEMBER 2013

TAB 1



**WASHINGTON STATE
 CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**
 Suncadia Lodge
 3600 Suncadia Trail
 Cle Elum, WA 98922

PRELIMINARY MEETING AGENDA
December 5, 2013

TIME	TAB	ITEM	LEAD	ACTION/INFO
9:00 a.m.	1	Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additions/Corrections to Agenda Items (pgs. 3-4) 	Chair Jim Peters	
25 minutes		Introductions	All	
***** PUBLIC COMMENT WILL BE ALLOWED PRIOR TO ACTION ITEMS *****				
5 minutes	2	Consent Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of the WSCC September 19, 2013 Minutes (pgs. 6-11) Approval of Executive Director, Chair and Vice Chair to attend NACD February 2-5, 2014 		Action
180 minutes	3	Ag/Water Quality: Discussion on the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission letter to WSCC & related issues. (pgs. 13-32)	Mark Clark	Action
12:30 (30 min)	LUNCH: PLEASE RSVP TO THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION			
20 minutes	4	District Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good Governance procedure, checklist and policy (pgs. 34-49) Conservation District Supervisor Appointment (pgs. 50-50) Annexation of Orting into Pierce CD (pgs. 51-55) 	Ray Ledgerwood Lori Gonzalez Ray Ledgerwood	Action Action Action
45 minutes	5	Policy/Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural Conservation Easement Policy (pgs. 57-57) Update on Elections and Administrative Efficiencies Proviso (pgs. 58-93) VSP Report to Legislature 	Josh Giuntoli Ron Shultz/Ray Ledgerwood Ron Shultz	Action Action Action

15 minutes		BREAK		
40 minutes	6	Budget		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Shellfish Funding (<i>pgs. 95-102</i>) 	George Tuttle, David Guenther, Debbie Becker	Action
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shellfish Funding • Supplemental Budget (<i>pgs.103-107</i>) 	Ron Shultz Debbie Becker / Ron Shultz	Action Information
20 minutes	7	WACD Resolutions- will be provided at Commission meeting	Alan Stromberger, WACD Vice Chair	Information
5 minutes		Commission Operations		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominating Committee Chair/Vice Chair Elections 	Lynn Bahrych /Lynn Brown	Action
3:35 pm		Adjourn	Chair Jim Peters	

NEXT MEETING:

Conservation District Tour **hosted by King Conservation District** will be on January 15 & the **Conservation Commission Regular Business Meeting** will be held on January 16, 2014.

Location: TBA

The times listed above are estimated and may vary. Every effort will be made, however, to adhere to the proposed timelines. If you are a person with a disability and need special accommodations, please contact the Conservation Commission at 360.407.6200.

TAB 2

DRAFT MINUTES

Yakima, Washington

September 19, 2013

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/WSCC) met in regular session on September 19, 2013 in Yakima, Washington. Commissioner Peters called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chair, Jim Peters

Vice-Chair, Fred Colvin

Commissioner, Lynn Brown

Commissioner, Lynn Bahrych

Commissioner, Clinton O'Keefe

Commissioner, Kelly Susewind, (Ecology)

Commissioner, George Tuttle, (Agriculture)

Commissioner, Jim Kropf, (WA State University, Puyallup)

Commissioner, David Guenther, WA Association of Conservation Districts (WACD)

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT

Mark Clark, Executive Director

Debbie Becker, Financial Services Manager

Ray Ledgerwood, Program Facilitator

Ron Shultz, Policy Director

Bill Eller, Central WA Regional Manager

Lori Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant

PARTNERS REPRESENTED AT THIS MEETING:

Roylene Rides-at-the Door, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Sherre Copeland, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Dave Vogel, WA Association of Conservation Districts (WACD)

Alan Stromberger, Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD)

Don Larsen, Department of Fish and Wildlife

GUESTS:

Matt Heinz, Clallam CD

Wendy Pare, Skagit CD

George Boggs, Whatcom CD

Anna Lael, Kittitas CD

Larry Davis, Whatcom CD

Jennifer Boie, Palouse CD

Mike Tobin, N. Yakima CD

Chad Atkins, Dept. of Ecology

Mike Kuttle, Dept. of Ecology

Consent Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Guenther to approve the May 16, 2013 and July 18, 2013 Meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Colvin. Motion passed.

Election Manual and Procedures amendments

Bill Eller, SCC staff, provided the Commissioners with the newly revised draft of the manual after receiving and incorporating comments from district staff. Mr. Eller provided information in the meeting packets showing there were 20 topic areas in the Election Manual that were clarified, which also resulted in changes to the election forms.

Motion by Commissioner Bahrych to adopt the Election and Appointment Manual as revised in its entirety. Seconded by Commissioner Brown. Motion passed.

Whitman Conservation District Election

Motion by Commissioner O’Keefe for the Commission to certify the Whitman Conservation Election. Seconded by Commission Brown. Motion passed.

Conservation District Supervisor Appointment

The Commission received applications for the vacant appointed positions at the Mason and Thurston Conservation Districts. Lori Gonzalez, SCC staff, provided the Commissioners with the applications for review and also vetted the applications through the Department of Ecology and Department of Agriculture.

Commissioner Brown moved to appoint Eric Johnson to the Thurston Conservation District. Commissioner Guenther seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Colvin moved to appoint Jason Ragan to the Mason Conservation District. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

Farmland Preservation Easement Policy

Josh Guintoli, OFP staff, presented the proposed Conservation Easement Policy for adoption in December after review and comment is received from the conservation districts. The policy establishes a process by which Conservation Commission as an eligible entity for farmland preservation funding, would seek or hold an interest in real property and partner with entities for the purposes of farmland preservation.

Motion by Commissioner Colvin for the adoption (after review, input, and revision (if need be) of each change by the Commission so that the adopted, proposed policy can be published to conservation districts per regular policy adoption procedures. Districts would then have time to make comments before final adoption in November. In December, the Commissioners would be presented with a final version of the policy for adoption in time for their use during the 2014 grant cycle. Commissioner Bahrych seconded.

Dairy Nutrient Management and Dairy Planning

James Weatherford, Thurston CD provided the Commissioners on the progress of the Dairy Nutrient Management Certification. In August they had a meeting in Euphreta, in which seven planners attended. They have criteria established, and now need to develop the plans by the end of March. He hopes to present their concept paper about the technical abilities of CD staff at the December WACD meeting.

Commissioner Bahrych moved for the Commission and Commission staff to continue to move forward in their support of CD staff technical development. Commissioner Tuttle seconded. Motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Colvin to have the Commission staff develop a work group to review the elements of the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan and to work with our partners. Seconded by Commissioner Tuttle.

Commissioner Guenther made an amendment to emphasize the inclusion of technical staff including NRCS and conservation districts. Seconded by Commissioner Brown. Friendly amendment accepted. Motion passed.

Department of Ecology (ECY) Presentation

Ecology Presentation/ Kelly Susewind. Ecology staff, Mike Cuttle and Chad Adkins from the Eastern Region presented a PowerPoint and touched on the following: Biggest concern in watershed first. Pick watershed where there are problems / listing. Work with WSDA staff and local CDs in a collaborative way. ECY result is to get the problem voluntarily resolved first, but then regulatory if no success. ECY staff will be out to every CD board meeting this fall to give presentations on their process. Discussion about CD's working with ECY – problems and opportunities. Most livestock producers are cooperative. ECY doesn't have resources to cover all problem areas – how to allocate resources? Discussion evolves into how the WSCC can help work within the system to assist in taking care of water quality problems.

FY14 Budget Correction

At the July 2013 Commission meeting, while Commissioners reviewed the Category 2 funding, it was noted that three conservation districts experienced a 10% or more reduction from the prior fiscal year. The following motion was made:

Commissioner Brown moved to accept staff recommendation that no district received greater than a 10% reduction for the fiscal year. This correction would total \$23,650 for the three districts: E. Klickitat CD, North Yakima CD, and Palouse CD. Seconded by Commissioner O'Keefe. Motion Passed. One opposed.

Livestock Funding

Commission staff will send out a notice to all districts requesting their needs for livestock funding, which could be done through the end of the biennium. The current technical assistance needs will be used from existing funds available, at the discretion of Commission staff. SCC staff will evaluate the additional requests submitted and prepare a supplemental budget request package to the Governor's Office for FY15 funding.

Commissioner Brown moved to authorize staff to work with the executive committee to request the needs of other districts and move forward on the immediate needs. Commissioner Tuttle seconded. Motion passed.

Shellfish Funding

Ron Shultz, SCC staff, outlined the budget process as it relates to shellfish. Projects and programs distinction needs to be made, which will also be the same with non-shellfish projects. Districts have submitted proposed projects for a determination if it would fit the parameters. Ron referred to his memo in the meeting packet. Mark Clark, says staff can assist with looking at project v. programs and recommended commissioners assist with that effort as well. A three member committee was formed to decide on non-shellfish projects, and parameters of the Category 3 funding. Commissioners Tuttle, Guenther and Susewind will work with Debbie Becker, SCC Finance Manager. They will meet and report in December.

Commissioner Colvin moved to approve the staff recommendation to apply the criteria presented to shellfish eligible proposals and that no more than 10% be used for shellfish programs as defined in the staff memo and subject to future revisions. Commissioner Guenther seconded. Motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Brown to appoint a three member committee to assist the staff and the executive committee with the decisions that remain after today. Seconded by Commissioner Colvin. Motion passed.

Toxics Account Funding

Ron Shultz walked through his memo provided in the meeting packet stating the Commission has received operating funds from the state toxics account and is the first time receiving from this source. The state statute defines particular allowable uses for funds from account. Ron recommended the Commission establish guidelines for allocation proposals to ensure the statute and political considerations are met and provided recommendations for the Commission to consider. The funding is available for Commission and districts work as long as it is consistent with the guidelines.

Motion by Commissioner O’Keefe to approve the recommended allowed used and reporting requirements. Commissioner Guenther seconded. Motion passed.

Voluntary Stewardship Program Update

Ron Shultz, SCC Policy Director, provided the recent status of the VSP and the need for additional funding to maintain the momentum and implementation of the program. The Commission approved staff to submit a supplemental budget request of \$1, 000,000 to the Legislature for program implementation by five additional counties. Mr. Shultz also provided information on how the Operating funding would be broken out with the five additional counties, SCC program implementation and staff support, and other partnering agency staff support (Commerce, WSDA, ECY, and WDFW). Information was provided in their meeting packets.

Motion by Colvin to direct staff to prepare a \$1million supplemental budget request for the Voluntary Stewardship Program. Commissioner Kropf seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Guenther moved to direct staff to frequently brief the Conservation Commission and districts as to the status of the VSP, and encourage CDs to communicate early with their County Commissioners on how they can support the County on VSP implementation. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed.

Legislative Budget Requests

Motion by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner O’Keefe to develop a supplemental budget request for Firewise and fire recovery work. Motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Guenther to explore a supplemental budget for a project coordinator for the Puget Sound District Caucus. Commissioner Colvin seconded. Motion passed.

Whatcom CD Funding request for TA to Livestock Operations

Executive Director of the Whatcom CD, George Boggs, presented a letter submitted to the Commission regarding the allocation of discretionary funds to provide technical assistance to livestock operations. The request is to allocate funds from the toxics account to conservation districts whose livestock owners are under heightened regulatory pressure to protect surface and ground water from nutrients, pathogens and sediment.

Motion by Commissioner Colvin moved to direct staff to prepare a supplemental budget request for Livestock Technical Assistance. Commissioner O’Keefe seconded. Motion passed.

Category 3 funding

Debbie Becker and Ron Shultz discussed the background of the category 3 funding provided in the meeting packets. The Legislature in June 2013 funded \$9 million of the \$33 million dollar request submitted to fund the projects in that were entered into the CPDS system. The Commission needed to decide on an allocation system within the parameters of the conditions set from the Legislature. There were several decisions and scenarios presented with discussion.

Discussion on sprinkler conversions. Mr. Clark explains the Commission is looking to irrigation efficiencies money to fund those types of projects. Anna Lael, District Manager of the Kittitas CD speaks of the nature of sprinkler projects proposed by the district as their priorities 1 and 2, according to the criteria previously set by the Commission. The following motions were made.

Motion by Commissioner Brown that priorities 1 and 2 that was previously submitted to the Commission by Kittitas CD should be funded as part of the first round of prioritized funding. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Brown that the SCC allocate based on the instructions sent out to districts that the first 1and 2 priorities that met the date and criteria. Second, continue the process with the remaining projects 1 and 2 for each district with the three person committee and staff deciding whether it is allowable as a program or project and consider if these programs may be used with capital money. Commissioner Brown amended to take out the second, and fund all of the remaining projects that meet the date and criteria; and then have the three person committee and staff to consider all the postdated entries and questionable programs vs. projects capital vs non capital. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed as amended.

Conservation Commission Elected Position Process

Ron Shultz presented a proposal for the Commission elected positions. He presented the process prior to and at the WACD Annual Meeting to hold the election. (RCW 89.08.030). Mr. Shultz presented an interpretive statement.

Motion by Commissioner Bahrych to adopt the interpretive statement policy presented by staff regarding the election process of Conservation District supervisors. Commissioner O’Keefe seconded. Motion passed.

2014 Proposed Meeting Locations

Commissioners were presented with proposed meeting dates and locations for 2014.

Motion by Commissioner O’Keefe to approve the 2014 meeting locations proposed. Seconded by Commissioner Guenther. Motion passed.

Per RCW 42.30.110 (1) (i) Commissioners went into Executive Session at 4:05 p.m. to discuss personnel matters as allowed and returned at 4:45 p.m.

Chair Peters adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

TAB 3



Washington State Conservation Commission

November 18, 2013

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Ron Shultz, Policy Director

SUBJECT: Ag and Water Quality - NWIFC Letter to SCC and Plan for Response

SUMMARY

On September 25, 2013 the Commission received a letter from the NW Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) requesting the Commission take action to help protect member-tribes' treaty rights and help meet water quality standards. They requested the Commission "take decisive action" at the December Commission meeting.

COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED:

Staff requests guidance on a recommended path forward to collect further information and bring the issue back before the Commission at the January meeting.

Attachments:

- Letter from Michael Grayum, NWIFC to Mark Clark, WSCC September 25, 2013
- Letter from Mark Clark, WSCC to Michael Grayum, NWIFC October 3, 2013
- Letter from Will Stelle re buffers January 2013
- Letter from Will Stelle re modified buffers April 2013
- NMFS Riparian Buffer Table and Guidance August 2013

BACKGROUND

The letter from the NWIFC made several assertions regarding the programs of the Commission and conservation districts and whether these programs will protect treaty rights and protect water quality. The letter also included several requests of the Commission to correct the issues they identified. The NWIFC also requests the application of NMFS buffer recommendations to WSCC programs.

Actions of other state and federal agencies to address these resources are also described in the letter, and the NWIFC states there is a "recognition that dramatic change from business-as-usual habitat management" is needed.

The NWIFC letter makes several assertions as well as several requests outlined below:

Assertions:

- previous letters went unanswered
- inability to ensure temperature water quality standards are addressed through all WSCC-led conservation programs
- conservation districts are ideologically opposed to working with federal fish agency expertise, and unwilling to implement their recommendations
- conservation districts have commented funding programs should narrow their focus to only address one or two pollutants and not be required to address all resource impacts affecting treaty resources on a stream

Requests:

- Take action at the December WSCC meeting
- Provide appropriate guidance to conservation districts consistent with applicable state and federal obligations
- Apply the NMFS buffer table to WSCC funded conservation programs
- Communicate the importance of treaty right protection to conservation districts

Provided in this meeting packet for your reference are copies of two letters from Will Stelle, Regional Director, NOAA Fisheries regarding an interim matrix of riparian buffers recommended for use by EPA and NRCS. This matrix and Mr. Stelle's request and recommendation form the basis of recent actions by EPA and Ecology to require the use of these buffers to receive certain funding. This required use is what is commonly referred to as "conditioning of funds".

The NWIFC, as noted above, is requesting the Commission apply the buffer table to WSCC funded conservation programs as one tool to address resource concerns identified in the tribal Treaty Rights at Risk document and other sources.

Discussion

The issue of conditioning funds on the buffer table has generated a significant amount of discussion and concern among conservation districts and stakeholder groups. Concern has been raised that if conditions are too severe, landowners will not take advantage of incentive based programs and funding.

At the same time, concern has been growing that natural resource issues are not being adequately address in the implementation of incentive based programs. With limited funding at public agencies at all levels we need to show funds are going to those actions that are most likely to achieve the natural resources improvements that are needed.

As reflected in the reply letter from Mark Clark to Michael Grayum, this issue is a complex and has a significant impact on the work of conservation districts and their relationship with landowners. Also, as noted in the NWIFC letter, this discussion and decision involves an evaluation of our “book of business” and whether changes are needed.

Because of these factors, the WSCC staff recommendation is no action be taken at the December meeting on the NWIFC request. Instead, WSCC staff would engage with districts, stakeholders (of all interests), and other agencies to gather feedback and present the results of this fact finding to the Commission at the January regular meeting.



Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

6730 Martin Way E., Olympia, Washington 98516-5540

Phone (360) 438-1180

www.nwifc.org

FAX (360) 753-8659

September 25, 2013

Mark Clark, Executive Director
Washington State Conservation Commission
PO Box 47721
Olympia, WA 98504-7721

Re: Request for WSCC Action to Protect Treaty Rights

Dear Mark Clark,

On behalf of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) I would like to respectfully request that your agency take action to help protect our member-tribes' treaty rights and help meet water quality standards. Many state and federal agencies are now stepping forward to enhance the accountability of their grant programs and align their agency's efforts with protection of treaty-reserved resources. We are strongly encouraged by this forward movement, and it is our hope that your agency will join the effort. Specifically, the NWIFC would like to request that Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) take decisive action at the December Conservation Commission meeting, and agree to support implementation of the riparian buffer recommendations for grant programs from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Adoption by the WSCC of the NMFS recommended interim buffer guidelines would provide assurances that WSCC administration of funds will be consistent with protecting treaty-reserved resources, including salmon and shellfish, and implementing state water quality standards.

The NWIFC and its member tribes have worked long and hard to ensure that Washington State recognizes and protects treaty rights. As often noted by long-time member and current WSCC Chair Jim Peters, state agencies have obligations to support salmon recovery, protect shellfish beds, and implement state water quality standards. These obligations come from the fishery co-manager relationship, as well as state and federal statutes. These obligations are realized when state agencies conduct their efforts in a way that is consistent with protection of our treaty rights.

In previous correspondence, the NWIFC has identified how WSCC programs do not assure treaty resource protection. As a result, the NWIFC has made numerous requests that your agency take actions

to provide the necessary assurances and alignment with treaty resource protection.¹ Unfortunately, those requests have elicited little response, let alone prompt action. For example, we are disheartened that our January 2nd, 2013 letter and request for information remains unanswered. Also troubling is the inability to ensure that temperature water quality standards get addressed through all WSCC-led conservation programs. Nevertheless, the NWIFC remains hopeful that the WSCC will carry out their conservation mission by providing appropriate guidance to conservation districts that is consistent with applicable state and federal obligations.

At the federal level, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and NMFS have now taken significant steps forward to try to align some of their programs to be consistent with salmon recovery and meeting state water quality standards. For example, NMFS has recently identified interim riparian buffer recommendations to guide the use of federal and state funds spent to address water quality and/or fish habitat protection where agricultural activities occur along streams.² In turn, EPA has agreed to condition NEP and § 319 funds spent to address water quality problems stemming from agricultural activities to require implementation of the NMFS-recommended riparian buffers.³ Additionally, NRCS recognizes that its riparian guidance has been inadequate to address salmon recovery so we have been told that, consistent with its own procedures, it has developed its own requirements where the end results differ little from those called for by NMFS.

At the state level, the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Ecology (DOE) are also poised to take significant steps toward enhancing accountability and grant performance expectations. The DOH has undertaken efforts to provide better oversight of Pollution Identification and Control Programs, which we hope will ultimately mature into assurances that PIC programs implement pollution controls consistent with the protection of all treaty-reserved resources. Additionally, EPA and NMFS have also provided direction to DOE regarding the need to upgrade the state's Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Program (16 USC §1455b) to protect treaty reserved resources, implement water quality standards and support salmon recovery. Similar direction has also been provided regarding the state's §319 program.

Overall, these federal and state actions have been under consideration for many months and stem from the recognition that dramatic change from business-as-usual habitat management is necessary to reverse the decline of ESA-listed, treaty-reserved salmon. And again, it is our hope that the WSCC will join the effort to turn the tide.

¹ See Letters from NWIFC to Mark Clark, Executive Director of the Washington State Conservation Commission Dated: July 12, 2011, March 2, 2012, and January 2, 2013

² See Letter from Will Stelle, NMFS, to Roylene Rides at the Door, NRCS, and Dennis McLerran; EPA (January 30, 2013 (including accompanying matrix and technical justification from the NW Fisheries Science Center. *See also* Letter from Will Stelle, NMFS, to Roylene Rides at the Door, NRCS, and Dennis McLerran, EPA (April 9, 2013) (matrix modifications).

³ See Letter from Linda Anderson-Carnahan, EPA, to Josh Baldi, EPA (May 20, 2013).

The NWIFC would also like to request your support in communicating the importance of treaty right protection to conservation districts. We recognize the central role of the WSCC in coordinating with conservation districts. The NWIFC, therefore, believes that the WSCC is well suited to address some of the misunderstandings emerging from conservation districts. For instance, it has been repeatedly noted that a few select conservation districts are ideologically opposed to working with federal fish agency expertise, and are unwilling to implement their recommendations.⁴ Also, some conservation districts have commented that funding programs should narrow their focus to only address one or two pollutants and not be required to address all the resource impacts affecting treaty resources on a stream.⁵ The NWIFC believes that shellfish and salmon protection are not separate, water quality standards are not separate, and that riparian health, salmon productivity, and shellfish production are all interconnected. In other words, good stewardship should protect all of the treaty-reserved resources. We believe that the misunderstandings of a select few are not representative of the broader conservation community, and therefore these issues should be effectively addressed through good communication and coordination. We also believe that correcting these misunderstandings is an important task well suited for your organization.

The NWIFC recognizes that we are asking the WSCC to take a new direction, and that this type of change is not always easy. However, there has been much discussion of the tribes' requests in past years and we believe that the WSCC could provide the necessary leadership to the conservation districts to overcome any barriers that may emerge. Accordingly, we respectfully request that the WSCC adopt the NMFS-recommended riparian buffer guidelines for use in conservation district projects, plans, and practices along watercourses. Given the need to provide guidance so that conservation districts and others can make informed funding requests, we respectfully ask that the WSCC take definitive action at the December meeting.

We look forward to new leadership presence from your agency in ensuring that grant programs are aligned with treaty-resource protection, implementation of water quality standards and alignment with salmon recovery. Should you have any questions on this issue, please don't hesitate to contact myself or Jim Peters at (360) 438-1180.

⁴ For example at the Clean Samish Initiative Outreach and Education Meeting Notes June 26, 2013: "Kristi reported that SCD is unlikely to accept the EcoNet Social Marketing grant they were awarded for manure management outreach in the Thomas Creek watershed due to concerns regarding the requirement that the SCD require NOAA buffers if it takes the grant, and because less funding is being provided than was originally offered."

⁵ See Letter from the Puget Sound Conservation Districts to the Puget Sound Partnership (March 9, 2013) (comments on themes for pathogens and nutrients and toxics lead organizations): "Unlink salmon recovery from pathogen control efforts. The coupling has unduly complicated programs resulting in dissension [sic], lost time and deterioration of working relationships that have been examples of non-point pollution success stories in the past."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Grayum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" being more prominent than the last name "Grayum".

Mike Grayum, Executive Director

cc

Commissioners

Governor Jay Inslee

Dennis McLerran, US EPA Region 10

Dan Opalski, US EPA Region 10

Roylene Rides at the Door, NRCS

Maia Bellon, Department of Ecology

Will Stelle, NOAA Fisheries

Jerrold Davis, Office of Shellfish and Water Protection, WA DOH



STATE OF WASHINGTON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

PO Box 47721 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7721 • (360) 407-6200 • FAX (360) 407-6215

October 3, 2013

Michael Grayum, Executive Director
Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
6730 Martin Way E.
Olympia, WA 98516-5540

RE: NWIFC letter to the Conservation Commission dated September 25, 2013

Dear Mr. Grayum,

Thank you for your letter of September 25, regarding implementation of grant programs at the Conservation Commission.

As you indicate in your letter, your request involves issues that will require reflection on how the Commission and conservation districts have conducted business over the past many decades and how our work has supported protection of natural resources. Because of the composition of the Commission, our relationship with conservation districts, our relationship with various partner agencies and stakeholder groups, and our broad agency mission, it will take some time to evaluate your request and prepare a response. In the meantime, please be assured this will be a priority for us. We will schedule this matter to come before the Commission at the December meeting.

We share the commitment to the protection and enhancement of our natural resources as we also work to support our state's farmers and landowners. Commission staff has briefed the full Conservation Commission on several occasions since the Treaty Rights at Risk paper was released. Staff has also briefed all conservation districts as to the concerns of the Tribes and entered into discussions with them about evaluating our work in the context of the issues raised. Your staff has received copies of these.

Michael Grayum, Executive Director
NWIFC October 3, 2013

We recognize that balancing these needs is not always easy but a review of how we are doing is long overdue. We look forward to working with you on this matter.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me or Ron Shultz, WSCC Policy Director at (360) 407-6200.

Sincerely,



Mark Clark
Executive Director

cc: Governor Jay Inslee
Dennis McLerran, Administrator, US EPA Region 10
Roylene Rides at the Door, NRCS State Conservationist
Will Stelle, NOAA Fisheries
Dan Opalski, US EPA Region 10
Maia Bellon, Director, WA Department of Ecology
Bud Hover, Director, WA Department of Agriculture
Jerrod Davis, Office of Shellfish and Water Protection, WA Department of Health
JT Austin, Executive Policy Advisor, Governor's Executive Policy Office



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115

January 30, 2013

Ms. Roylene Rides-at-the Door
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
316 W. Boone Avenue, Suite 450
Spokane, Washington 99201-2348

Mr. Dennis McLerran, Regional Administrator
EPA - Region 10
1200 6th Ave., Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101

Dear Ms. Rides-at-the-Door and Mr. McLerran:

Our three agencies have been in very active discussions on opportunities to restore the health of our streams and nearshore areas as part and parcel of our collective effort to address the Treaty rights issues associated with the continuing loss of habitat productivity of importance to salmon and steelhead populations and other fishery resources in the Pacific Northwest. In particular, we have been examining the adequacy of our current approaches to describing those riparian buffers in lower elevation landscapes that may be necessary to protect and restore important aquatic functions.

NOAA Fisheries has recently reviewed the current scientific information associated with this topic in order to assist us in identifying approaches that might help protect aquatic functions important to fishery resources. In this context, I am writing to recommend that you use on an interim basis the enclosed matrix of riparian buffers in programs EPA or the NRCS support or fund. I would also couple this with our request to join with us and others to refine the matrix based on best available science over the coming months. For your information, I have enclosed a brief synopsis of existing scientific information about the relationship between riparian buffers and aquatic stream functions important to Pacific salmonids in the low elevation agricultural landscapes of western Washington which I believe will help provide some meaningful background for our recommendation.

Several factors provide context for our recommendation. Numerous populations of salmon and steelhead in the Pacific Northwest are at risk of extinction and as a consequence, federally-reserved treaty rights to harvest these fish are also at risk. Degradation and loss of freshwater and estuary habitat are significant factors in the decline of these populations. Salmon habitat ranges from the forested areas of the upper elevations to the lower-elevation floodplains to the estuarine and near-shore habitats of Puget Sound. All of these areas provide vital functions in



the system as whole, particularly the lower-elevation and estuarine areas that are the focus of my recommendation. There are many ongoing efforts to rebuild Puget Sound salmon, including those of numerous state and federal agencies, tribal and local governments and the private sector. I am providing the enclosed matrix as NOAA Fisheries' recommendation for minimum riparian buffers in lower-elevation agricultural landscapes. Our technical guidance is intended to help shape recovery and rebuilding efforts effectively and to offer our technical advice on what aquatic functions fish need.

In some cases, our recommendations are framed in terms of ranges of buffer widths rather than point estimates, and expressed as probabilities of achieving desired outcomes. Local conditions and local circumstances matter, and may affect the choice of the riparian buffer most effective at achieving salmon recovery. Nevertheless, the scientific information does support conclusions about the probability of differing buffer ranges to provide a range of aquatic functions that are essential for water quality and salmon needs, as depicted in the enclosures. We are ready to work with project proponents, landowners, agencies, departments and tribes to provide technical advice and find solutions that will support salmon recovery.

The enclosed matrix has its origins in the Washington Agriculture, Fish and Water process (AFW), which occurred from 1999 to 2003 and included participation by state and federal agencies, tribal governments and diverse agricultural interests. One of the efforts undertaken in the AFW process was to identify riparian buffers for agricultural landscapes that provide adequate salmon habitat and are implementable. Several options were developed by the AFW caucuses. For the sake of clarity, the enclosed matrix displays the proposal developed by the federal caucus at the request of the AFW Executive Committee, Option 3. It was presented to the Executive Committee by NOAA Fisheries, along with several caveats which still hold true today: 1) there is a technical basis for the buffer table, supported by the refereed literature and other references; 2) it represents a coarse-scale classification; and 3) the goal of the matrix is to meet state and federal water quality standards and improve salmon habitat. NOAA Fisheries explained the numbers are within an advisable range, and stated there is flexibility to implement more complex approaches when looking at specific sites, so long as water quality protection and salmon habitat function are equivalent or better than that provided by our recommendations.

This history is relevant today as our view of the buffer table is unchanged. We supported its use in 2002, and we still support its use in 2012 as a guide for establishing interim minimum buffers for programs to promote good water quality and aquatic conditions important to salmon and other aquatic life. While the table identifies buffers as narrow as 35 feet for limited situations, in most settings buffers will need to be significantly wider than this to meet salmon habitat needs. We recommend protecting wider buffers where they exist and creating wider buffers where it is practicable and where local watershed conditions warrant. Further, we are convinced that any strategy to meaningfully increase the agricultural landscape's contribution to salmon recovery, as well as any strategy to sufficiently protect water quality, should contain a robust riparian restoration program.

If you have any further questions about this letter, please feel free to call me directly or Mr. Steve Landino, the director of our Washington State Habitat Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William W. Stelle, Jr." in a cursive style.

William W. Stelle, Jr.
Regional Administrator

Enclosures

cc: Puget Sound Federal Caucus Agencies
Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Washington State Dept. of Ecology
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Washington State Department of Agriculture
Washington State Department of Health
Washington State Conservation Commission
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office
Puget Sound Partnership

**Interim Riparian Buffer Recommendations for Streams in Puget Sound Agricultural Landscapes
November 2012**

**(Originally proposed as federal Option 3 for the
Agriculture Fish and Water (AFW) Process, March 2002)**

Channel Type	Habitat Functions	Composition	Buffer Width	Comments
Class I Constructed ditches; small non-fish bearing streams	Water quality protection; shade; sediment filtration	Grasses, trees or shrubs; may only need woody vegetation on one side of channel	As wide as necessary to meet water quality standards; can be determined by NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG)	Channels constructed for purpose of draining farmland. If dredged, dredging should occur when fish are absent or at lowest densities
Class II Fish bearing streams; natural and modified natural watercourses that are incised and cannot move	Water quality; LWD for cover, complexity; litter fall; shade	Site potential vegetation; trees where they will grow	2/3 Site potential tree height; 50 ft. minimum to 180 ft. maximum	Portions of natural watercourses that can no longer migrate laterally
Class III Fish bearing; natural unconfined channels	Same as above, but structural LWD essential	Same as above	3/4 Site potential tree height	Highly desirable to buffer entire channel migration zone (CMZ)
Class IV fish bearing streams confined by dikes or other hardened man- made feature	Water quality; complex cover; litter fall; shade	Trees and shrubs	Face of levee, from top of dike to Ordinary High Water (OHW) mark	
Class V Fish bearing intertidal and estuarine streams and channels	Water quality; food inputs; habitat complexity	Site potential vegetation (salt- tolerant sedges, shrubs, trees)	35-75 ft.; varies according to adjacent land use	

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115

April 9, 2013

Ms. Roylene Rides-at-the-Door
Washington State Conservationist
USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
316 W. Boone Avenue, Suite 450
Spokane, Washington 99201-2348

Mr. Dennis McLerran, Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101

Dear Ms. Rides-at-the-Door and Mr. McLerran:

I am writing to convey my support for slight modifications to the riparian matrix that I distributed on January 30 of this year. As Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff developed guidance for implementing riparian restoration actions consistent with the matrix, they discovered that internal agency issues prevented the use of a 100-year soil site index upon which the matrix is predicated. It is my understanding that the NRCS is required to use soils data that are available on line, and that only 50-year soil site index data are so available. Fortunately, NRCS and NMFS staff crafted a workaround that requires only minor modifications to the matrix while enabling the use of 50-year soil site index data.

Buffers for two of the channel types on the matrix were to be set at minimums equal to either two-thirds or three-fourths of a 100-year-old site potential tree. Using the same fractions of a 50-year site index potential tree height, at least where site potential trees are conifers, would result in much narrower buffers. However, a review of conifer growth rates across a range of western Washington soil types suggests that modifying the matrix to set minimums at three-fourths and 100 percent of a 50-year old site potential tree height, respectively, would yield nearly identical minimum buffer widths as those in the original matrix. I support this modification as a practical accommodation to on-the-ground implementation.

In addition, I understand there are concerns that the matrix is too vague regarding type 1 channels. The intent is that type 1 channels not contribute to water quality problems downstream. Reference to the Field Office Technical Guide is intended to convey that the necessary width and composition of buffers on type 1 channels will vary depending on the adjacent land use and geomorphic setting.



To implement the recommendations in the matrix, when surface waters are present, water quality must be identified as a resource concern and appropriate combinations of best management practices (BMPs)¹ must be applied to ensure the associated farm operation will comply with water quality standards. For example, where pathogens are of concern, there is no support in the literature for buffers narrower than 35 feet. Therefore, we expect that type 1 channels on lands occupied by livestock or where manure is being applied will be treated with a combination of BMPs that will result in a buffer width of 35 feet or greater, e.g., a 15-foot wide hedgerow and a 20-foot or wider filter strip.

Lastly, I agree that channel type 4, leveed channels, should be removed from the list, as these features are managed according to Corps of Engineers' requirements.

I look forward to working with each of you in applying our shared authorities and responsibilities to dramatically improve habitat and water quality in the Puget Sound basin. If you have any further questions about this letter, please feel free either to call me directly or to contact Mr. Steve Landino, the director of our Washington State Habitat Office.

Sincerely,



William W. Stelle, Jr.
Regional Administrator

cc: Washington State Dept. of Ecology
Washington State Conservation Commission
Mike Grayum, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Thomas Eaton, Environmental Protection Agency
Linda Anderson Carnahan, Environmental Protection Agency
Sherre Copeland, Natural Resources Conservation Service

¹ BMPs may include conservation practices found in the Field Office Technical Guide applied in manner that results in compliance with water quality standards.

**NMFS Riparian Buffer Table
Guidance**

Channel Type	Functions	Composition	Buffer Width ("Option 3")	Buffer Length (Added by NRCS for Clarification for Field Staff; based on discussion with NMFS)
1. Fishless, or constructed ditches	Water quality, shade, filter	Grasses, trees or shrubs where shade needed	As determined by Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG)	Entire planning unit.
2. Fish bearing, modified natural channel, entrenched or spring fed	Water quality, large wood debris (LWD) for cover, complexity and shade	Site potential vegetation. Trees where they will grow.	2/3 Site potential tree height; 50 ft. min – 180 max.	Entire planning unit
3. Fish bearing	Same as above, but structural LWD is essential.	Same as above.	¼ Site potential tree height.	Entire planning unit
4. Diked, permanently fixed	Habitat complexity, near shore refuge, a food source.	Site potential vegetation. Trees where they will grow.	From top of dike to Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM).	Entire planning unit.
5. Fish bearing, intertidal/estuary	Same as #1, plus food source and habitat complexity.	Site potential vegetation (salt water) sedges, shrubs, etc.	35-75 feet varies according to adjacent land use	Entire planning unit.

1. Channel Type 1 “Fishless, or Constructed Ditches”

a. This is defined as:

i. *Fishless* streams

1. These are mapped by WDFW Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) and/or WDFW Salmonscape <http://wdfw.wa.gov/mapping/salmonscape/> as having no fish
2. Biologist (WDFW, Tribal, NRCS, etc) determines no fish within stream

ii. Constructed ditches

- 1. These ditches NEVER were streams historically; these were constructed solely for the purpose of removing water from a farm.**

2. Can have seasonal fish use during winter months when fish move into reaches and flooded fields with reduced flows
- b. ***Rachel and Deb to provide field staff with NRCS eFOTG Resource Concerns and Conservation Practices used to treat them for this Channel Type, such as:***
 - i. ***Water Quality, Temperature***
 1. ***422 Hedgerow and Filter Strip (example only)***
 2. ***422 Hedgerow***
 - ii. ***Water Quality, Excess Sediment***
 1. ***422 Hedgerow and Filter Strip (example only)***
 2. ***393-Filter Strip***
 3. ***327-Conservation Cover***
 4. ***383-Fence***
 - iii. ***Water Quality, Excess Nutrients***
 1. ***393-Filter Strip***
 2. ***327-Conservation Cover***
 3. ***382-Fence***
 - iv. ***Water Quality, Excess Pesticides***
 1. ***393-Filter Strip***
- c. ***Ditch maintenance is allowed***, but will be prescribed (for ditches NOT maintained by DD) to limit impacts to instream habitat such as:
 - i. Allow for machine entry on one side of ditch only. Allows woody vegetation to remain undisturbed on one side.
 - ii. Use mower to trim top of vegetation, then use machinery to dredge ditch and lift material out and over vegetation to upland area.
 - iii. Specify timing of dredging, ***especially if ditch has fish use during winter months. Emergency ditch clean out is authorized with appropriate regulatory agency permissions/permits.***

2. Channel Type 2 “Fish bearing, modified natural channel, entrenched or spring fed”

- a. This is defined as:
 - i. Fish bearing streams
 1. Mapped by WDFW PHS database and/or SalmonScape
 2. Local knowledge
 3. WDFW, Tribal or Agency Biologist (etc.)
 - ii. Fish bearing streams that have been or are modified:
 1. Occasionally ditched
 2. Moved and/or straightened historically
 3. Occasionally cleaned/dredged
 - a. Removal of wood/trees
 - b. Removal of gravels/silt/sand/other substrate
 - c. Etc.

- iii. Streams that are entrenched and not connected to floodplain
 - 1. Where stream bottom elevation has degraded and stream does not flow out of its banks during normal bankfull events.
 - 2. From dredging and spoil placement on sides of stream
- iv. Streams that are connected hydrologically to Springs
- b. Buffer Width is 2/3 Site Potential Tree Height (SPTH), 50 min – 180 max.
 - i. Conservation Planners will follow these steps:
 - 1. Identify Site Potential Tree Height from a NRCS Soil Survey or using Soil Data Mart (<http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>) or Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>) on the “Woodland Management and Productivity” Table.
 - 2. Find the **conifer** Site Index (if more than one is given, use the predominant tree species for the area)
 - 3. Multiply the Conifer site index by 2/3 for the INITIAL buffer width.
 - 4. If no Site Potential Tree Height is given, then consult Area Soil Scientist, Area Biologist, or State Biologist.
 - 5. The soils will need to be ground-truthed to determine whether or not the soil information for that site is correct (and therefore the SPTH is accurate).
 - 6. Adjust INITIAL buffer by ground-truthed soil inventory accordingly.
 - a. For Example, if the INITIAL SPTH buffer is 140, **but there is an inclusion of Semiahmoo muck adjacent to the stream for 40 feet, then the 92 ft wide planting may include:**
 - i. **A 40 foot buffer of grasses, emergent wetland species, or shrubs that would grow on those soils, and**
 - ii. **A 52 foot buffer of trees adjacent to the grass/shrub planting.**
 - 7. Planners can use an **AVERAGE width.**
 - a. Averages are only good for one side of the stream (i.e., a buffer can’t be 180 feet on one side and farming up to the bank (0 ft) on the other side = giving the producer an average of a 90-foot buffer total).
 - b. **Hard structures, such as barns and roads (etc.) or farming utility (tractor turn around areas, etc) can have narrower buffers and wider buffers elsewhere so that the average equals the above formula.**
- c. Projects on stream channels (natural or previously modified) that are within Drainage Districts with a stream maintenance program, or are disturbed by the landowner (or third party) to enhance drainage efficiency (dredging, removal of instream wood, removal of stream bank vegetation, etc) will not be funded.
 - i. Options for landowners to receive NRCS funding include:

1. Streams must be managed for salmon and salmon habitat. Meaning no removal of instream wood, no dredging and riparian vegetation planting as specified above.

3. Channel Type 3 “Fish bearing”

- a. As defined by:
 - i. Fish bearing streams
 1. Mapped by WDFW PHS database and/or SalmonScape
 2. Local knowledge
 3. WDFW, Tribal or Agency Biologist (etc.)
 - ii. These streams are not manipulated or constrained by levees
 1. No dredging
 2. No removal of materials
- b. Buffer Width is 3/4 Site Potential Tree Height (SPTH)
 - i. Conservation Planners will follow these steps:
 1. Identify Site Potential Tree Height from a NRCS Soil Survey or using Soil Data Mart (<http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>) or Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>) on the “Woodland Management and Productivity” Table.
 2. Find the **conifer** Site Index (if more than one is given, use the predominant tree species for the area)
 3. Multiply the Conifer site index by 3/4 for the INITIAL buffer width.
 4. If no Site Potential Tree Height is given, then consult Area Soil Scientist, Area Biologist or State Biologist.
 5. The soils will need to be ground-truthed to determine whether or not the soil information for that site is correct (and therefore the SPTH is accurate).
 6. Adjust INITIAL buffer by ground-truthed soil inventory accordingly.
 - a. For Example, if the INITIAL SPTH buffer is 140, but there is an inclusion of Semiahmoo muck adjacent to the stream for 40 feet, then the 105 ft wide planting may include:
 - i. A 40 foot buffer of grasses, emergent wetland species, or shrubs that would grow on those soils, and
 - ii. A 65 foot buffer of trees adjacent to the grass/shrub planting.
 7. Planners can use an AVERAGE width.
 - a. Averages are only good for one side of the stream (i.e., a buffer can’t be 180 feet on one side and farming up to the bank (0 feet) on the other side = giving the producer an average of a 90-foot buffer for both sides of the stream).
 - b. Hard structures, such as barns and roads (etc.) or farming utility (tractor turn around areas, etc) can have narrower buffers with wider buffers elsewhere so that the average equals the above formula.

4. Channel Type 4 “Diked, permanently fixed”

- a. The buffer width table requires planting 'From top of dike to Ordinary High Water Line' which does not meet NRCS Dike practice standard O&M; therefore, we will not be able to work with producers who have engineered dikes/levees constructed for flood control with FY 13 Salmon Recovery Funds.

5. Channel Type 5 "Fish bearing intertidal/estuary"

- a. As defined as:
 - i. Fish bearing streams
 - 1. Mapped by WDFW PHS database and/or SalmonScape
 - 2. Local knowledge
 - 3. WDFW, Tribal or Agency Biologist (etc.)
 - ii. Streams having direct, daily tidal influence such that the vegetation is adapted to saltwater conditions
- b. Adjacent Land Use is defined as:
 - i. Intensity of farming
 - 1. If cropland is adjacent to the stream, then the buffer width is 75 feet.
 - 2. If the area adjacent to the stream is covered with herbaceous vegetation, such as in a Pasture condition, then the buffer width is less than 75 feet (minimum of 35 feet).

TAB 4



Washington State
Conservation Commission

December 5, 2013

To: Mark Clark, Executive Director

From: Ray Ledgerwood, District Operations Manager

Re: Good Governance Policy, Procedure and Checklist

Summary: At the July Commission meeting, staff presented an updated good governance policy, procedure and checklist for review and comment. Commissioners approved a motion to send the draft good governance policy, procedure and checklist for comment by conservation districts. The policy was sent out immediately following the July meeting. Conservation districts provided comments. Commission staff have reviewed those comments. A final proposed good governance policy, procedure and checklist is presented for consideration by the Commission.

Staff Contact: Ray Ledgerwood, District Operations Manager, 208-301-4728,
rlledgerwood@scc.wa.gov

Action Requested: Review and approve the proposed good governance policy, procedure and checklist.

Washington State Conservation Commission

Good Governance Policy for Conservation Districts Proposed December 2013

The Washington State Conservation Commission assists and guides local conservation districts in the implementation of natural resource conservation programs on private, public and non-government organizations lands across the state. To accomplish this, the Commission has established guidelines and controls to govern the conservation districts' use of state funds, property, and services (RCW. 89.08.070).

In 2009, after reviewing its statutory duties and powers, the Commission created a set of performance standards to determine "Districts in Good Standing." These performance standards have served as guidelines for districts to satisfy Commission accountability requirements. In 2012, in order to improve this evaluation process, the Commission considered comments from districts and from its staff, as well as governance outcomes from applying the new standards. As a result of these considerations, the Commission has adopted the current Good Governance Policy.

The Commission will assist and guide local districts in carrying out programs for resource conservation by:

- (1) Administering transparent performance standards;
- (2) Providing on-going feedback to improve district performance;
- (3) Enhancing public confidence in elected and appointed supervisors governance role as well as in effective and efficient delivery of conservation district programs and services;
- (4) Ensuring that assistance is available to help districts achieve annual and long-range goals in an effective, efficient, economic, and ethical manner;
- (5) Overseeing responsible management and stewardship of public funds;
- (6) Assisting districts to engage the public in identifying and measuring desired outcomes; and
- (7) Allocating resources to districts in accordance with demonstrated conservation needs, available funding, and past performance.

Washington State Conservation Commission
DRAFT Good Governance Process for Conservation Districts
Proposed December 2013

The conservation district good governance process is the annual process the Conservation Commission (WSCC) members and staff use to evaluate conservation district operations and effectiveness. The process also describes how the Commission will improve the procedure for the annual evaluation of district performance.

Using the Good Governance Checklist approved by the Commission, the WSCC District Operations Manager coordinates the evaluation of conservation districts. When significant changes are made to the Checklist, a one-year period will be given for districts to adapt to those changes. Assistance with the Good Governance process is available through the Commission's Regional Managers. Upon completion of the Checklist by Commission staff, the WACD Executive Director will be informed of those results. Here is the process and timeline:

January:

- The Good Governance checklist is sent to Districts to be utilized in an optional self-evaluation process in consultation with Regional Manager

March 1 – April 15:

Using the Good Governance Checklist approved by the Commission in July of the previous year, and after consulting with other Commission staff, each WSCC Regional Manager completes his or her Good Governance Checklist for each district in their region for the prior year.

Upon completion of the Checklist, the Washington Association of Conservation District (WACD) Executive Director will be informed of those results. The following apply to the above-described process:

- The WSCC Financial Manager coordinates evaluations of district performance on financial issues.
- The WSCC Election Officer evaluates district performance on district elections. *Note: compliance with WAC 135-110 (Commission election rules) could require that this evaluation be on-going until the first Thursday in May.*
- For issues related to audits and auditing, the evaluation will be made jointly between the Regional Manager, Financial Manager, and the State Auditor liaison.
- For all other issues, unless otherwise designated by the District Operations Manager, the Regional Manager will evaluate.
- Each Regional Manager will ensure the Checklist is completed for each of their districts and placed in a central electronic storage area.
- Each Regional Manager will contact the board chair via telephone and email, informing them about the district's preliminary good governance evaluation.
- Each Regional Manager, in consultation with applicable Commission staff, will immediately begin working with districts to address issues identified on the Good Governance Checklist.

April 15 – First Thursday in May:

- Each Regional Manager, in consultation with applicable Commission staff, continues working with districts to address issues identified on the Good Governance Checklist. Issues addressed and still outstanding prior to the first Thursday in May will be reflected in a written interim report to the Commission.
- Commission District Operations Manager reviews the Good Governance evaluations and begins drafting an interim written report to the Commission.
- The Commission District Operations Manager in writing, will inform each district of what their Good Governance rating will be.

First Thursday in May – May Commission Meeting:

- The WSCC District Operations Manager will provide a written interim Good Governance report to the Commission and Commission staff.
- Prior to the Commission meeting, each of the regionally-elected WACD Commission members will discuss the results of the evaluations with the applicable Regional Manager prior to the regular May Commission meeting.

May WSCC Meeting:

- The WSCC District Operations Manager will provide a written interim Good Governance report to the Commission and Commission staff.

May – July:

- Regional Managers, in consultation with Commission staff, will work with district supervisors and staff to create and implement an action plan to address issues that were identified in the May interim report to the Commission.

July WSCC Meeting:

- Commission receives final Good Governance recommendations from staff
- The Commission approves the Good Governance Checklist that will be used to evaluate district activities for the next fiscal year.
- The Commission reviews/takes action on the recommendation from Commission Staff.
- The Commission decides if financial allocations will be affected. The process/financial significance related to each Good Governance tier rating is:
 - **Tier 1:** District receives full allocation.
 - **Tiers 2, 3 & 4:**
 - Regional Managers, in consultation with Commission staff, will work with district supervisors and staff to create an action plan to address issues.
 - After the Commission designates the initial tier status of the district in May, the district must, by the July or September Commission meeting, develop and receive board and Commission approval of an action plan.

- Commission staff will evaluate the district's ongoing progress on the action plan, and make a recommendation to the Commission on a district's progress at each subsequent Commission meeting until issues are addressed.
- If the Commission determines that the district has complied with all aspects of the action plan, the Commission shall take action to move the district to Tier 1 status.
- If the Commission does not approve the action plan the Commission, at its discretion, may take the following actions:
 - **Tier 2:** The district will remain in Tier 2 status and may receive their Category 1 allocation and 90 percent of their Category 2 allocation until the Commission removes them from Tier 2 status; or
 - **Tier 3:** The district will remain in Tier 3 status and may receive their Category 1 allocation and 75 percent of their Category 2 allocation until the Commission removes them from Tier 3 status; or
 - **Tier 4:** The district will remain in Tier 4 status and may receive 50 percent of Category 1 allocation and 50 percent of their Category 2 allocation until the Commission removes them from Tier 4 status. A Supervisor (preferably the Chair) must attend each Commission meeting (after Commission approval of the action plan) to present their action plan and report on its implementation at each Commission meeting until the Commission takes action to remove that district from Tier 4 status, unless otherwise excused by a Commission motion. The supervisor may ask district staff to attend to help address elements of the action plan.
- Further allocations are dependent on the continued successful implementation of the action plan. Further funding allocations releases will be at the discretion of the Commission.
- By the 4th Thursday in July, all districts will be:
 - Notified in writing of their Tier status and, if necessary, the process/actions needed to address issues identified in the Good Governance Checklist.
 - Sent the Good Governance Checklist on which they will be evaluated for activities occurring in the next fiscal year.
- Through the WSCC Master Application, as a condition of receiving Commission funds in the next fiscal year, each district will agree to operate according to the newly approved Good Governance Checklist.

August 1 – November 1:

- Commission Regional Manager, in consultation with applicable Commission staff, will continue working with districts to implement any not completed action plan to address the issues identified by the Commission.
- Commission Regional Managers will report back to WSCC District Operations Manager on the progress of districts in addressing issues.

September (and subsequent) Commission Meeting(s):

The Commission:

- Receives a report from WSCC District Operations Manager on status of all districts not in Tier 1;
- Reviews, and take action on approved action plans;
- Following the approval and implementation of action plans, the Commission may take further action that could affect a district's financial allocation;
- If the district's Good Governance designation is changed or any other Good Governance action is made by the Commission, the WSCC District Operations Manager will notify the district in writing of that action.
- ***If a Tier 4 conservation district has not shown sufficient progress (as determined by the Commission) in implementing its action plan by the November/December Commission meeting, the Commission may revoke the remainder of that district's allocation.***
- ***Reallocation of revoked funds will be based on criteria set by the Commission.***

NOTE: Outside the above described process, at any point during the year, Commission staff may (by telephone and by email) inform a board chair and district manager of an instance in which they are not in compliance with the Good Governance process.

If that occurs, with the assistance of their Regional Manager, the district will develop and approve an action plan to resolve the issue as soon as possible. If the district does not resolve the issue within 3 months, Commission Staff will revise the good governance evaluation for that district and officially inform the Commission.

Process and Timeline for Annual Review & Improvement and Continuous Improvement of the Conservation District Good Governance Process Proposed December 2013

Beginning in the fourth quarter of each year the Commission Good Governance Process will be evaluated for possible improvement.

WACD Area Meetings – January Commission Meeting: The WSCC District Operations Manager surveys Commission members, conservation districts, and Commission staff with respect to the Good Governance Process to determine if improvement can be made. The survey process may include informational presentations/discussions at the WACD annual meeting and Conservation Commission meeting.

January Commission Meeting – March Commission Meeting: WSCC District Operations Manager develops and distributes a DRAFT Good Governance Checklist for comment.

March Commission Meeting – May Commission Meeting: Based on comments received, the WSCC District Operations Manager sends a final DRAFT Good Governance Checklist, along with a detailed process/timeline description, to Commission Members for their review and action at the May Commission meeting.

WSCC POLICY REVIEW – RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Policy: Good Governance Policy, Procedure and Checklist

Date of Responses to Comments: November 18, 2013

Comment Period: July 1, 2013 to November 15, 2013

COMMENT	SCC STAFF RESPONSE	REVISED TEXT
<u>Comment #1</u> – In the 2 nd line of the policy, it was pointed out that public lands and NGOs should be included. We frequently provide assistance to DNR, Land Trusts, TNC, etc, as we're sure many other districts have done.	Can incorporate	Revision included in the December Policy Recommendations for WSCC
<u>Comment #2</u> – Under #7 on the policy page, change it to read: Allocating resources to districts, in accordance with demonstrated conservation needs, <i>available funding</i> , and past performance.	Can incorporate	Revision included in the December Policy Recommendations for WSCC
<u>Comment #3</u> - Suggestion that if districts meet or exceed all of the elements they should be treated differently (funding or otherwise) than a district that had conditions still to be met.	Will use this recommendation for incentive system beyond the scope of the current minimum threshold set for the Good Governance process...perhaps an advanced rating for exceptional district programs	No revised text
<u>Comment #4</u> - I think I'll need more information on specific administrative efficiencies recommendations that we are supposed to be implementing or considering. We are informally "sharing resources" with neighboring districts when	We can make available the district administrative efficiencies paper with recommendations included to all districts	No revised text

appropriate/needed, but that is all.		
<u>Comment #5</u> - If we have one or two occurrences when vouchering is slightly tardy (due to isolated circumstances, and we are communicating with WSCC staff on those occurrences), this should fall within the Green category. Last year's review unnecessarily mentioned an isolated incident like this.	Have instituted a yellow category for this type of incident	Revision included in the December Good Governance Checklist Recommendations for WSCC
<u>Comment #6</u> - While I understand the WSCC's perspective on the need for notification of under-utilized funding by March 31st, there are times when it is impossible to know yet if a project will be complete or not. Sometimes weather, permitting, or landowner circumstances are such that we must wait until April, May or even June before we are sure that a project can go forward. Is there any way to have allow for some reasonable flexibility without going into the Yellow zone?	The March 31 st timeline is set with the concept of getting funding not spent to districts with viable projects that can complete the work by fiscal year end.	Revision included in the December Good Governance Checklist Recommendations for WSCC
<u>Comment #7</u> - This item seems quite subjective, especially the one on whether the manager leads the board or the board leads the manager. Will it be the Regional Manager evaluating this one?	Regional Managers will be evaluating this element	Revision (clarification) included in the December Good Governance Checklist Recommendations for WSCC
<u>Comment #8</u> - While I don't want CDs to become constrained by job classes and needing to jump through hoops in order to perform certain tasks, this item seems a little too subjective. Who sets the standards for what training is required for what type of work, and who determines proficiency? Our work is always changing, so our staff need to be flexible and adaptive to the changing needs of the district. Therefore we target certain trainings at different times, depending on the district's needs.	This element is evaluated taking the flexibility into consideration...generally if the district has training plans for employees and supervisors that are being carried out it will meet the threshold	No revised text
<u>Comment #9</u> - It's essential that CDs have access to the same Schedule 22 at the beginning of the fiscal year as the one they'll be using later in the year, so	A revision to the Schedule 22 is underway at present with this in mind	No revised text

that it can be complied with throughout the year.		
<u>Comment #10</u> - It'd be nice if we could be allowed to pay for lunches during this annual meeting instead of just light refreshments. It can be difficult to capture the public for this type of event in our rural district.	The light snack threshold is set by state audit standard	No revised text
<u>Comment #11</u> - It may be unrealistic to expect each CD to work/partner directly with NACD. Seems that WACD is our avenue for working with NACD.	Both the state and national associations are owned and led by conservation districts and represent districts interests. WACD can be an avenue to work with NACD...however each district has direct access to NACD for questions, input, and information.	No revised text
<u>Comment #12</u> - This item seems vague and subjective, however I know every CD would have a different way of approaching this.	The Good Governance elements that are subjective are by design allowing for a district to approach in the way the governing board determine is best. Regional Managers look for a 'threshold' of activity even with the flexibility that exists.	No revised text
<u>Comment #13</u> - It is unclear to me from the information on the cover sheet for the Good Governance Checklist whether both the yellow and red ratings have a possible negative impact on a CD's budget allocation from the Commission. The first sentence in bold type states "The identification for improvement in Category I may have a negative impact etc." In other words, is a yellow rating considered a "deficiency" or just a gray area with little meaning or consequence? If a CD receives yellow ratings particularly in Category I items revealing a pattern of low performance that should also constitute a "deficiency" in my mind.	The yellow area is a gray area of performance, allowing the District to work with assistance from the Commission staff to address a Good Governance element that needs improvement, but has not raised to the level of ongoing deficiency. Commission staff may place a district in a different tier for one on-going deficiency or number of deficiencies in the Good Governance Checklist.	No revised text
<u>Comment #14</u> - There is already a positive incentive for improvement (the possibility of a bigger allocation), so I believe that the results of the checklist should reflect the truth about a CD's activities be they good, bad, or mediocre. Do not give all participants a pass on the checklist simply for participating; this results in the use of the checklist and the tier rating system to be meaningless especially for those who have performed well.	Commission staff will consider this feedback as they evaluate District Good Governance status in 2014...appreciate the well stated recommendation	No revised text

Washington State Conservation Commission

Good Governance Policy for Conservation Districts

Proposed July 2013

The Washington State Conservation Commission assists and guides local conservation districts in the implementation of natural resource conservation programs on private lands across the state. To accomplish this, the Commission has established guidelines and **suitable (I would delete on the basis it is unnecessary to include this descriptor. Otherwise, what is the definition of suitable and who will develop the definition?)** controls to govern the conservation districts' use of state funds, property, and services (RCW. 89.08.070) **(if there is a specific subsection, include it.)**.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

In 2009, after reviewing its statutory duties and powers, the Commission created a set of performance standards to determine "Districts in Good Standing." These performance standards have served as guidelines for districts to satisfy Commission accountability requirements. **(Is there statutory language re: Commission accountability requirements?)** In 2012, in order to improve this evaluation process, the Commission considered comments from districts and from its staff, as well as statewide outcomes **(Where are the statewide outcomes identified? i.e., RCW? WAC? State budget language? Commission policy?)** from applying the new standards. As a result of these considerations, the Commission has adopted the current Good Governance Policy.

The Commission will assist and guide local districts in carrying out programs for resource conservation by:

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

(1) Administering fair **(What's the definition of 'fair' and who defines it?)** and transparent performance standards;

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

(2) Providing regular **(What's the definition of 'regular'?)** feedback to improve district performance;

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

(3) Enhancing public confidence **(How will this be measured? How will you know when public confidence has been enhanced?)** in elected and appointed supervisors as well as in district programs and services;

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

(4) Ensuring that assistance is available to help districts achieve annual and long-range goals in an effective, efficient, economic, and ethical manner;

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

(5) Overseeing impeccable **(I'm not sure this is the best word to use. Perhaps substitute with 'responsible'?)** management and stewardship of public funds;

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

(6) Assisting districts to engage the public in identifying and measuring desired outcomes **(How is this done at present?)**; and

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- (7) Allocating resources to districts in accordance with demonstrated conservation needs and past performance.

Are all seven of the above evaluated annually by each district? Maybe a different tack on this question is: Do/should these seven factors be applied to a good governance checklist for the Commission itself.

Washington State Conservation Commission **DRAFT Good Governance Process for Conservation Districts** **Proposed July 2013**

The conservation district good governance process is the annual process the Conservation Commission (WSCC) **members** and **Commission** staff uses to evaluate conservation district operations and effectiveness. The process also describes how the Commission **will** annually **will** improve the evaluation of district performance. **Specifically, now does the Commission use the process to improve the evaluation of district performance?** Using the Good Governance Checklist approved by the Commission, the WSCC District Operations Manager coordinates the evaluation of conservation districts. When significant changes are made to the Checklist, a one-year period will be given for districts to adapt to those changes. Assistance with the Good Governance process is available through the Commission's Regional Managers. Upon completion of the Checklist by Commission staff, the WACD Executive Director will be informed of those results. Here is the process and timeline:

January:

- ✦ **Send Good Governance checklist to Districts to be utilized in an optional self-evaluation process in consultation with Regional Manager. This sentence confuses me. Isn't the checklist mandatory rather than optional?**

March 1 – April 15:

Using the Good Governance Checklist approved by the Commission in **July** of the previous year, and after consulting with other Commission staff, each WSCC Regional Manager completes his or her Good Governance Checklist for **each** districts in their region for the prior year. Upon completion of the Checklist, the Washington Association of Conservation District (WACD) Executive Director will be informed of those results. The following apply to the above-described process:

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ The WSCC Financial Manager coordinates evaluations of district performance on financial issues.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ The WSCC Election Officer evaluates district performance on district elections. *Note: compliance with WAC 135-110 (Commission election rules) could require that this evaluation be on-going until the first Thursday in May.*

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ For issues related to audits and auditing, the evaluation will be made jointly between the Regional Manager, Financial Manager, and the State Auditor liaison.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ For all other issues, unless otherwise designated by the District Operations Manager, the Regional Manager will evaluate.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ Each Regional Manager will ensure the Checklist is completed for each of their districts and placed in a central electronic storage area.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ Each Regional Manager will contact the board chair via telephone and email, informing them about the district's preliminary good governance evaluation.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ Each Regional Manager, in consultation with applicable Commission staff, will immediately begin working with districts to address issues identified on the Good Governance Checklist.

April 15 – First Thursday in May:

- ✦ Each Regional Manager, in consultation with applicable Commission staff, continues working with districts to address issues identified on the Good Governance Checklist. Issues addressed and still outstanding prior to the first Thursday in May will be reflected in a written **interim** report to the Commission.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ Commission District Operations Manager reviews the Good Governance evaluations and begins drafting an **interim** written report to the Commission.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ The Commission **District** Operations Manager **will**, in writing, **will** inform each district of what **will be** their Good Governance rating **will be**.

First Thursday in May – May Commission Meeting:

- ✦ The WSCC District Operations Manager will provide a written **interim** Good Governance report to the Commission and Commission staff.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ Prior to the Commission meeting, each of the regionally-elected WACD Commission members will discuss the results of the evaluations with the applicable Regional Manager prior to the regular May Commission meeting.

May WSCC Meeting:

- ✦ The WSCC District Operations Manager will provide a written **and verbal** interim Good Governance report to the Commission and Commission staff.

May – July:

- Regional Managers, in consultation with Commission staff, will work with **applicable** district supervisors and staff to create and implement an action plan to address issues that were identified in the May interim report to the Commission..

July WSCC Meeting:

- ✦ Commission receives final Good Governance recommendations from staff

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ The Commission approves the Good Governance Checklist that will be used to evaluate district activities for the next fiscal year.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ The Commission reviews/takes action on the recommendation(s) from Commission Staff.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ The Commission decides if financial allocations will be affected. The process/financial significance related to each Good Governance tier rating is:

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- **Tier 1:** District receives full allocation.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

o Tiers 2, 3 & 4:

- Regional Managers, in consultation with Commission staff, will work with district supervisors and staff to create an action plan to address issues. **Seems redundant. Already covered under the bulleted text unde 'May—July.'**

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- After the Commission designates the initial tier status of the district in May, the district must, by the July or September Commission meeting, develop and receive ~~board~~ **(Should this say 'Commission' instead?)** approval of an action plan.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- Commission staff will evaluate the district's ongoing progress on the action plan, ~~and make~~ a recommendation to the Commission on a district's progress at each subsequent Commission meeting until issues are addressed.

- If the Commission determines that the district has complied with all aspects of the action plan, the Commission **may (Shouldn't this be 'shall'?)** take action to move the district to Tier 1 status.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- If the Commission does ~~not~~ **not** approve the action plan ~~or, in some way, take action on it,~~ **(Seems to me the Commission acts, or does not. I don't see the value-added of the 'or' clause.)** the Commission, at its discretion, may take the following actions:

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- **Tier 2:** The district will remain in Tier 2 status and may receive their Category 1 allocation and 90 percent of their Category 2 allocation until the Commission removes them from Tier 2 status; or

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- **Tier 3:** The district will remain in Tier 3 status and may receive their Category 1 allocation and 75 percent of their Category 2 allocation until the Commission removes them from Tier 3 status; or

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- **Tier 4:** The district will remain in Tier 4 status and may receive 50 percent of **their** Category 1 allocation and 50 percent of their Category 2 allocation until the Commission removes them from Tier 4 status. A Supervisor (preferably the Chair) must attend each Commission meeting (after ~~adoption~~ **Commission**

approval of the action plan) to present their action plan

and report on its implementation at each Commission meeting until the

Commission takes action to remove that district from Tier 4 status, unless otherwise excused by a Commission motion. The supervisor may ask district staff to attend to help address elements of the action plan.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- Further allocations are dependent on the continued **successful of the** implementation of the action plan, ~~and~~ **and** Further funding allocations releases will be at the discretion of the Commission.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

◀ By the 4th Thursday in July, all districts will be:

- o Notified in writing of their Tier status and, if necessary, the process/actions needed to address issues identified in the Good Governance Checklist.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- o Sent the Good Governance Checklist on which they will be evaluated for activities occurring in the next fiscal year.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ ~~Each district,~~ Through the WSCC Master Application, ~~will agree,~~ as a condition of receiving Commission funds in the next fiscal year, **Each district will agree** to operate according to the newly approved Good Governance Checklist.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

August 1 – November 1:

- ✦ Commission Regional Manager, in consultation with applicable Commission staff, will continue working with districts to create an action plan to address the issues identified by the Commission. **When is the action plan actually done? I thought it was before August?**

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ Commission Regional Managers will report back to WSCC District Operations Manager on the progress of districts in addressing issues.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

September (and subsequent) Commission Meeting(s):

The Commission:

- ✦ Receives a report from WSCC District Operations Manager on status of all districts not in Tier 1;

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ Reviews, and takes action on ~~board-~~approved action plans;

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

- ✦ Following the approval and implementation of action plans, the Commission may take further action that could affect a district's financial allocation

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

⬅

If the district's Good Governance designation is changed or any other Good Governance action is made by the Commission, the WSCC District Operations Manager will notify the district in writing of that action.

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

⬅ *If a Tier 4 conservation district has not shown sufficient (What's the definition of 'sufficient' and who defines this word?) progress in implementing its action plan by the November/December Commission meeting, the Commission may revoke the remainder of that district's allocation.*

Insert space to break up the text. Easier on the eyes.

⬅ *Reallocation of revoked funds will be based on criteria set by the Commission.*

NOTE: Outside the above described process, at any point during the year,

Commission staff may (by telephone and by email) inform a board chair and district manager of an instance in which they are not in compliance with the Good Governance process at any point during the year. If that.

occurs, the district will, with the assistance of their Regional Manager, the district will, develop and approve an action plan to resolve the issue as soon as possible. If the district does not resolve the issue within 6 months (Seems like a long time to me.), Commission Staff will revise the good governance evaluation for that district and officially inform the Commission.

Process and Timeline for Annual Review & Improvement and Continuous Improvement of the Conservation District Good Governance Process Proposed July 2013

Beginning in the fourth quarter of each year the Commission Good Governance Process will be evaluated **and improved for possible improvement.** Timeline:

WACD Area Meetings –

January Commission Meeting: The WSCC District Operations

Manager surveys Commission members, conservation districts, and Commission staff with respect to the Good Governance Process to determine if improvement can be made. The survey process may include informational presentations/discussions at the WACD annual meeting and Conservation Commission meetings.

March Commission Meeting: WSCC District Operations

Manager develops and distributes a DRAFT Good Governance Checklist for comment.

May Commission Meeting: Based on comments received, the

WSCC District Operations Manager sends a final DRAFT Good Governance Checklist, along with a detailed process/timeline description, to Commission Members for their review and action at the May Commission meeting.



Washington State Conservation Commission

December 5, 2013

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Lori Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant

RE: Mid-term appointment for Conservation District Supervisor

Summary: The Conservation Commission has received one application for the vacant appointed supervisor position to serve on the Pierce Conservation District Board of Supervisors. This appointment will carry out the remainder of the incumbent, Mr. David Batker's term to May 2016.

The application has been vetted by the Department of Ecology, Department of Agriculture, Area Commission Representative, and the Chair of the conservation district.

Action Requested: Approval by the Commission to appoint the applicant as recommended by the Commission Area Representative, to the Pierce Conservation District.

District	Applicant	Incumbent	Area Commission Representative
Pierce	Scott Gruber	David Batker	Commissioner Lynn Brown on behalf of vacant SW Commission Representative.

CITY OF ORTING
WASHINGTON
RESOLUTION NO. 2013-8

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF Orting, WASHINGTON, APPROVING THE CITY'S INCLUSION IN PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PURSUANT TO STATE LAW; REQUESTING THAT THE PIERCE COUNTY COUNCIL APPROVE THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT RESOURCE CONSERVATION FEE OR OTHER AUTHORIZED FUNDING WITHIN THE CORPORATE BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY OF ORTING.

WHEREAS, various Federal and State government laws and regulations mandate local governmental action relative to protection and enhancement of natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the City of Orting is required to plan and implement programs and projects in response to these Federal and State mandates, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA); and

WHEREAS, outside funding for said programs and projects is often insufficient to meet the needs of local government, including local government needs from "unfunded mandates" of the State and Federal governments; and

WHEREAS, the Pierce Conservation District, a locally-led agency of Washington State government offers significant assistance to local governments and private citizens in response to Federal and State mandates; and

WHEREAS, the City of Orting has significant natural resources such as prime agricultural soils, forest lands and river corridors important for endangered species recovery, floodplain management and the quality of life of the region; and

WHEREAS, the City of Orting wishes to take advantage of the Pierce Conservation District programs for wetland and habitat mitigation as related to the Calistoga Levee Setback Projects, water quality improvement, river bank clean ups, river bank stabilization, water quality monitoring, rain garden and rain barrel program development and agricultural land support;

WHEREAS, the Pierce County Council possesses the authority under Chapter 89.08. RCW to enhance the ability of the Pierce Conservation District to assist local governments by enacting an annual Resource Conservation Fee or Rate or Charge of up to Five Dollars (\$5.00) per parcel within the Pierce Conservation District's boundaries for a period of not greater than ten (10) years;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Orting, Washington, as follows:

Section 1. The City of Orting hereby requests to be included in and a part of the Pierce Conservation District (The "District"). The Petition for inclusion in the District shall be submitted to the Washington State Conservation Commission ("commission"), as provided in RCW 89.08.010(4). The Commission is requested to approve the Petition. Upon approval by the District and the Commission,

the District is authorized to file such documents with Pierce County as may be necessary to implement this authorization.

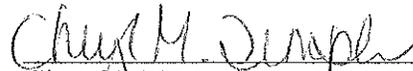
Section 2. The City of Orting requests the Pierce Conservation District Board of Supervisors include eligible properties within the City limits within the Resource Conservation Fee or Rate or Charge (or other lawful funding) to fund said programs in accordance with Chapter 89.08 RCW or other applicable law.

Section 3. No further action of the City shall be necessary following approval by the Commission. The Mayor is authorized to execute on behalf of the City any additional documents necessary to carry out the authorizations and approvals of this Resolution.

Section 4. Any act prior to and consistent with the authority of this Resolution is hereby ratified and confirmed.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AT A REGULAR MEETING THEREOF ON THE 9th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2013.

CITY OF ORTING


Cheryl M. Temple, Mayor

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:


Mark Bethune, City Clerk/Administrator

Approved as to form:


Chris Bacha,
Kenyon Disend
City Attorney

Passed by the City Council: 10/9/13
Resolution No.:2013-8

PETITION FOR INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL TERRITORY
WITHIN THE
PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

TO: The Washington State Conservation Commission

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

First: That heretofore the Pierce Conservation District was duly organized as a governmental subdivision of this state, and a public body corporate and politic.

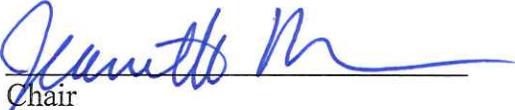
Second: That there is need, in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare, for the inclusion of the territory hereinafter described within the said Pierce Conservation District.

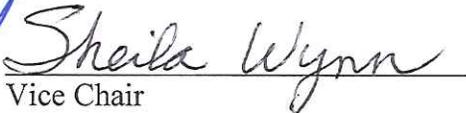
Third: That the territory proposed for inclusion within the said district includes substantially the following:

Incorporated City of Orting

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 Pierce Conservation District.

Pierce Conservation District


Chair


Vice Chair

Auditor


Member

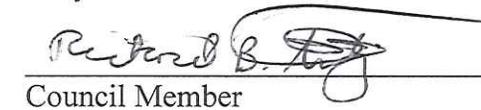
Member

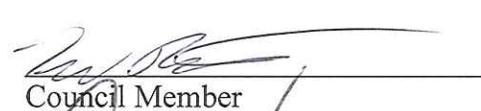
City of Orting

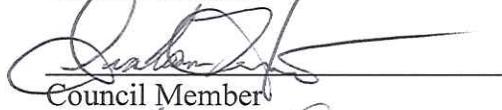

Mayor

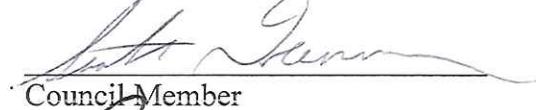

Council Member


Council Member


Council Member


Council Member


Council Member


Council Member


Council Member

Date: 10/9/13

PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Resolution NO. 2013-11-02

A RESOLUTION OF THE PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT, APPROVING THE CITY OF ORTING'S INCLUSION IN THE PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PURSUANT TO STATE LAW; REQUESTING THAT THE PIERCE COUNTY COUNCIL APPROVE THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT RESOURCE CONSERVATION FEE OR OTHER AUTHORIZED FUNDING WITHIN THE CORPORATE BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY OF ORTING.

WHEREAS, various Federal and State government laws and regulations mandate local governmental action relative to protection and enhancement of natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the City of Orting is required to plan and implement programs and projects in response to these Federal and State mandates, including the Clean Water Act, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA); and

WHEREAS, outside funding for said programs and projects is often insufficient to meet the needs of local government, including local government needs from "unfunded mandates" of the State and Federal governments; and

WHEREAS, the Pierce Conservation District, a locally-led agency of Washington State government offers significant assistance to local governments and private citizens in response to Federal and State mandates; and

WHEREAS, the City of Orting has significant natural resources such as agricultural soils, forest lands and river corridors important for endangered species recovery and the quality of life of the region; and

WHEREAS, the City of Orting wishes to take advantage of the Pierce Conservation District programs for water quality improvement, river bank stabilization, urban flooding reduction, wetland and habitat creation, rain garden and rain barrel program development and agricultural land support; and

WHEREAS, the City of Orting unanimously approved Resolution No. 2013-8 on October 9, 2013, approving the city's inclusion in Pierce Conservation District and requesting that the Pierce County Council approve the conservation district resource conservation fee or other authorized funding within the corporate boundaries of the City of Orting; and

WHEREAS, the Pierce County Council possesses the authority under Chapter 89.08. RCW to enhance the ability of the Pierce Conservation District to assist local governments by enacting an annual Resource Conservation Fee or Rate or Charge of up to Five Dollars (\$5.00) per parcel within the Pierce Conservation District's boundaries for a period of not greater than ten (10) years;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, as follows:

Section 1. The Board of Supervisors hereby approves the inclusions of the City of Orting to be included in and a part of the Pierce Conservation District (The "District"). The Petition for inclusion in the District shall be submitted to the Washington State Conservation Commission ("commission"), as provided in RCW 89.08.010(4). The Commission is requested to approve the Petition. Upon approval by the District and the Commission, the District is authorized to file such documents with Pierce County as may be necessary to implement this authorization.

Section 2. The District Executive Director is hereby authorized to take any action necessary to facilitate this approval on behalf of the Board of Supervisors.

Section 3. Any act prior to and consistent with the authority of this Resolution is hereby ratified and confirmed.

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT AT A REGULAR, OPEN MEETING THEREOF ON THE 7th DAY OF November, 2013



Jeanette Dorner, Chair

Attest:



Selena Corwin, Clerk of the Board

TAB 5



Washington State Conservation Commission

December 5, 2013

TO: Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Josh Giuntoli, OFP Coordinator

RE: SCC Easement Policy 13-24

Summary:

At the September Commission meeting, staff presented an SCC easement policy for review and comment. Commissioners reached a consensus to send out the draft policy for comment by conservation districts. The policy was sent out immediately following the September meeting. Conservation districts were given six weeks to provide comments. Commission staff has reviewed those comments. A final proposed easement policy is presented for consideration by the Commission.

Staff Contact:

Josh Giuntoli, OFP Coordinator 360-407-7474, jgiuntoli@scc.wa.gov

Action Requested:

Review and approve the proposed SCC easement policy 13-24.

Description:

The purpose of this policy is to establish the process by which the Conservation Commission would seek or hold an interest in real property for the purposes of farmland preservation.

Staff would like to present a clear, concise, and accurate policy and procedure to districts that wish to participate.



Washington State
Conservation Commission

December 5, 2013

To: Mark Clark, Executive Director

From: Ray Ledgerwood, District Operations Manager

Re: Efficiencies Proviso Report

Summary: At the December meeting the Commission will be provided with the report to the Legislature on District & Commission Efficiencies generated from a budget proviso in the most recent state budget. In the meeting packet is the most recent draft of the report.

Staff Contact: Ray Ledgerwood, District Operations Manager, 208-301-4728,
rledgerwood@scc.wa.gov

Action Requested: Information

Draft for Review 11.17.13 version

Report to the State of Washington Office of Financial Management and Legislative Fiscal Committees

Related to outlining opportunities to minimize conservation districts' overhead costs, including consolidation of conservation districts within counties in which there is more than one district.

By Washington State Conservation Commission
December 2013

Table of Contents:

- Foreword
- Background
- Consolidation of Conservation Districts - Activities to Date
- Conservation District Efficiencies - Activities to Date
- Conservation Commission Efficiencies - Activities to Date
- Anticipated Future Savings
- Contact information
- Addendums:
 - A. Summary of Consolidations of Conservation Districts
 - B. Informational Guide for Consolidation of Conservation Districts
 - C. WACD Policy Position on Conservation District Consolidation
 - D. Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies Report to WSCC Members
 - E. Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies Checklist
 - F. Fact Sheet on Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies
 - G. Competitive Efficiency Grant Program Application Form
 - H. Competitive Efficiency Grant Program Project Proposals
 - I. Administrative Efficiencies Grant Program Final Discovery

Foreword:

This report addresses a proviso in the FY 13-15 State Budget passed by the State Legislature requiring a report on Agency and Conservation District Efficiencies.

The Budget language: "Within the amounts appropriated in this section, the conservation commission, in consultation with conservation districts, must submit to the office of financial management and legislative fiscal committees by December 10, 2013, a report outlining opportunities to minimize districts' overhead costs, including consolidation of conservation districts within counties in which there is more than one district. The report must include details on the anticipated future savings that could be expected from implementing these efficiencies starting on July 1, 2014".

Background:

The Conservation Commission and Conservation Districts have been actively implementing methods of administrative cost reduction including self-initiated consolidation throughout their history particularly intense efforts to improve district efficiencies over the past four years.

Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of state government operating locally in Washington with the purpose of helping **land users conserve natural resources**. **In total there are 265 staff throughout the state helping our citizens to manage and protect the state's natural resources on private land.** The 45 districts are guided by 230 elected and appointed board members (Supervisors) who provide expertise and governance while giving their time, without pay, in this effort to help protect our state's natural resources.

In the 1930's and 40's, 97 Conservation Districts were formed in Washington State, based on communities of landowners with common interests. The formation of a district was based on 25 land owners petitioning to form a district on boundaries defined by the landowners petitioning for the Conservation District, and approved by the State Conservation Commission.

In the 2011-13 Biennial Budget there was a \$400,000 reduction to the Conservation Commission budget and a proviso for the Conservation Commission to conduct activities to reduce administrative overhead in Conservation Districts and the Conservation Commission including consideration of district consolidation. The three-year Commission and district-led effort to promote and implement best practices in reducing administrative overhead has produced results that have increased conservation work done in our state. However, the current state budget provides only 43.7% of the budget request for conservation work by the Conservation Commission and Conservation Districts in our State. Therefore savings realized from administrative cost reductions through efficiencies have been utilized to support conservation services and programs for land managers wanting to continue their conservation treatments.

This report includes summary information and supporting materials describing past, and current activities to reduce administrative overhead in the Conservation Districts and Conservation Commission.

Consolidation of Conservation Districts Activities to Date

Since 1939, a total of 97 Conservation Districts have been formed throughout the state by petition of landowners. As a result of consolidations occurring over time, today there are 45 Conservation Districts. The consolidations that have occurred have been self-initiated by local Conservation District board requests to the State Conservation Commission. Numerous factors have contributed to the requests for consolidation, including efficiencies, budgets, conservation services, citizen involvement and interest. A historical summary of consolidations that have occurred to date is included in this report as **Addendum A**. Of the 45 Conservation Districts in existence today, 33 share the same boundaries as their respective counties.

In contrast, active Conservation District boards that are governing active conservation programs and services delivery are not requesting consolidation with another district and have no logical reason to do so.

While discussions have been held about basing Conservation District boundaries on county boundaries, there is no direct correlation in the effectiveness of program and services delivery of Conservation Districts tied to county boundaries. Nor is there a direct correlation between the geographic size of a district and its effectiveness in delivering conservation programs and services. In addition to the many effective and efficient Conservation Districts that are based on county boundaries, we have other, equally as effective and efficient districts that include a sub-area of a county or parts of two counties. Washington State's diversity presents both an opportunity and challenge to meet the natural resource needs of any area of our state.

As an example of where county boundaries are not a logical structure for some conservation districts, the Underwood CD was formed originally in the Underwood area and later added all of Skamania County and part of western Klickitat County. The current boundaries of Underwood CD represents a logical area of natural resource needs including hills, plateaus, canyons, etc. that vary widely between White Salmon and Goldendale, along with the varying climatic/environmental, different land uses and natural resource issues between these bordering districts.

The most recent consolidation example is the Grant County Conservation District. It was a District Supervisor-led consolidation of the Grant, Warden and Moses Lake Conservation Districts. The Boards of Supervisors of three district's held their respective meetings at the same location on the same night. At the conclusion of their individual meetings, the supervisors met jointly to discuss improved program delivery, staffing and funding issues. The boards worked on comparative business planning including programs and services needed by land managers, workforce needs to deliver the programs and services and the related comparison of combined budgeting to separated districts with increased partnering on certain activities.

The key to the decision for consolidation by the Supervisors of the three districts in Grant County was a commitment by the State Conservation Commission to fund the new consolidated district at the three-district level for three years. This was done to provide time and resources for the district to secure additional funding and facilitate the transition for three districts in the county to one conservation district. On request, we can provide the work session agendas, notes, business plan, supervisor election and appointment plan, budgets, land manager needs summary, and programs summary.

The Conservation Commission provides assistance to Conservation Districts considering or engaging in consolidation. The Commission has requested that staff identify and reduce and/or eliminate policy disincentives to consolidations led by the local Supervisors of Conservation District Boards. As an example, the Conservation Commission now splits the \$25,000 allocated for Category 1 funding within a county where more than one Conservation District is operating. The Commission staff has prepared an informational guide for consolidation of Conservation Districts which is made available to Districts that are candidates for consolidation. The informational guide is included as **Addendum B**.

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts, a non-profit, non-governmental organization has considered ramifications of consolidation by conservation districts and have a member-approved policy that is included as **Addendum C**.

Of all the examples of increasing administrative efficiencies included in this report, the consolidation of districts is the most controversial among the potentially affected districts. District supervisors who volunteer their time to serve on the boards in multi-district counties often feel "defeated", or "underappreciated" when the issue of consolidation is raised. Nonetheless, districts are still willing to discuss consolidation.

Conservation District Efficiencies Activities to Date

Conservation Districts have continued to increase their administrative efficiencies in various ways throughout their history, but in the last three years Districts have accelerated the adoption of administrative efficiencies actions. The recent Conservation Commission and Conservation Districts activities have included the following:

- formation of a Task Force on Administrative Efficiencies
- development of a checklist for districts to self-evaluate their potential to increase administrative efficiencies
- a grant program to encourage Conservation Districts to employ actions to increase administrative efficiencies
- maximum Category 1 funding distribution to multi-district counties of \$25,000, as opposed to \$25,000 per district.

Task Force on Administrative Efficiencies: The 2011-13 State Operating Budget reduced by \$400,000 the State Conservation Commission (SCC) pass-through monies to conservation districts and directed the Commission address his budget reduction through administrative efficiencies. In response, SCC created the Task Force on Administrative Efficiencies. The goal of the Task Force was to identify opportunities and strategies that conservation districts could employ to achieve efficiencies and reduce costs. The Task Force completed this goal. The report of the task force is included as **Addendum D**.

On its own initiative, the Task Force defined administrative expenses, considered mechanisms to measure administrative efficiencies, identified characteristics of conservation districts that are very efficient and those that are inefficient; encouraged the adoption of administrative efficiency practices, and collected examples of administrative efficiency practices. To focus the discussion, administrative expenses were defined as: "Expenses that can be related to the operation of the organization as a whole, that are different from the expenses needed to complete individual conservation projects or activities".

Examples of areas for potential administrative efficiencies improvement identified by the task force included:

- **Finances & Accounting** including timekeeping; purchasing; bookkeeping; accounting; payroll; invoicing; auditing; budget work; grant reviews; seeking funding; grant writing, management and accounting; district financial management; non-project contracting, procurement; interest on debt; monthly expenditure and income reporting; taxes (property, sales, B&O); other
- **Personnel** including salaries and benefits for administrative staff; supervising; hiring; other personnel duties; human resource needs; personnel supervision and administration; training and professional development; development and implementation of personnel policies and procedures; other
- **Vehicles & Transportation** including vehicles maintenance and repair; replacement costs; fuel; mileage records, some travel; except expenses related to direct program delivery; other
- **Physical Plant** including rent, utilities, phone; facility rent and leasehold improvements; facility maintenance; custodial and grounds maintenance; other
- **District Board** including some travel, lodging, per diem; some training; manager board interactions; elections; basic operations expenses including management of district to comply with laws and regulations (89.08); preparation and carrying out board meetings and elections, other
- **Communications** including mail and general communications; representation at meetings; telecommunications; information technology (IT); conferences and meetings including NGOs and agencies; time working with WSCC, NRCS, and others; other
- **Supplies** including copying and printing; general office supplies; other goods and services; other

- **Equipment** including computers; printers; copy machines; other office equipment; equipment maintenance; depreciation; inventory records and assessments; other
- **Risk Management** including insurances (liability, casualty, other); bonding for board members and staff; legal assistance; legal services; security; licenses and permits; other
- **Operations** including management studies, annual and long-range planning; expenses directly associated with assuring the rules and responsibilities set forth in RCW 89.08; any non-grant reimbursable expense; records management and retention; other

Administrative efficiencies implemented by Conservation Districts

Finances / Accounting: Conservation Districts sharing the cost of a bookkeeper/accounting position through inter-governmental agreements for vouchering, timekeeping, grant management, etc. – examples include: Benton & Franklin CDs; Cowlitz & Wahkiakum CDs; Grant, Warden, and Moses Lake CDs (this sharing helped the districts make the decision to consolidate); Central Klickitat & Eastern Klickitat CDs; Stevens and Pend Oreille CDs; at least three other combinations of districts are having discussions about sharing the expense of the bookkeeper/accountant position.

Share Employees (administrative and/or technical): Seven shared engineering positions are currently providing engineering services to multi-district areas; Districts meet regularly to determine highest priority engineering needs and coordinate the work of the engineers. Districts have entered into inter-governmental agreements to share management services. Examples include: Benton & Franklin CDs; Moses Lake, Grant, Warden CDs (this sharing helped the districts make the decision to consolidate); Central Klickitat & Eastern Klickitat; Cowlitz & Wahkiakum CDs; at least two other combinations of districts are having discussions about sharing the expense of the manager position. Whatcom and Skagit CDs are currently sharing a bookkeeper.

Sharing of staff with specialized expertise is common throughout the state with examples including employees with conservation planning expertise, special credentialing in areas such as nutrient management planning, comprehensive nutrient management planning, small acreage conservation planning, forestry, soil science, rangeland, low impact development, stormwater management, air quality, public relations and education program delivery. No less than 60% of the conservation districts have shared staff agreements with neighboring districts.

District staff restructuring: The Okanogan CD modified their staffing plan to remove one administrative position in favor of a technical position. This shift allowed the District to increase direct services to landowners and the public without adverse impacts to District management. The administrative workload was picked up by other staff and where possible some work that was not mission critical was stopped.

Training: The largest change to increase administrative efficiencies in the past two years has been the increased use of webinars, net-meetings and teleconferences to conduct training and hold meetings. This revision in culture has decreased the cost of travel expenses to attend meetings, and events, receive critical training and exchange of

information; at least one webinar, and no less than six net-meetings and teleconferences are held each month.

The annual Washington Association of District Employees (WADE) annual training event in Leavenworth has provided an effective forum for training district employees and supervisors as well as needed interchange of information in an efficient and effective "one-stop" forum. Over 160 of approximately 500 employees and supervisors typically attend this annual training and interchange of information.

Procedures / Rules: A web-based virtual library is being considered to facilitate a greater sharing of all information between districts. It will include templates for common outreach materials, program materials, contract templates, example policy/procedure manual templates, and much more.

Administrative Efficiencies Checklist

Conservation Commission staff developed a checklist for districts to self-evaluate their potential to increase administrative efficiencies and encouraged each district to evaluate potential savings and efficiency opportunities for their own district operations. The checklist is included as **Addendum E**. A fact sheet was developed to accompany the administrative efficiencies checklist and is included as **Addendum F**.

Competitive Efficiency Grant Program

To implement the FY 2011-13 budget requirement, the Commission implemented a competitive grant program for conservation districts. Under this program, conservation districts submitted proposals to implement efficiencies activities. Districts were encouraged to submit proposals that, when implemented and proven, can be replicated in other districts. Two or more districts could partner in a joint proposal. The application form for this competitive grant program is included as **Addendum G**.

Thirty-three applications were received from combinations of 24 conservation districts, totaling \$885,117 in requests. Seven projects were funded with the \$200,000 in grant funding made available. A report of projects, both funded and non-funded is included as **Addendum H**. Highlights of the seven funded projects are noted below with additional information on each project included as **Addendum I**.

Cascadia - Provided support to Foster Creek and South Douglas CDs by developing vegetation monitoring protocol and conducting the initial monitoring surveys of the planting sites. Cascadia was instrumental in establishing riparian vegetation monitoring protocols and monitoring on 11 restoration sites in Chelan County. This partnership continues with additional sharing of Cascadia, Foster Creek and South Douglas CD technical staff services in both Chelan and Douglas Counties.

Jefferson - entered into a joint Memorandum of Agreement with Whidbey Island Conservation district to share bookkeeping in order to relieve staff workload in Jefferson CD. This led to the efficient and accurate submittal of grant vouchers, grant tracking and accountability, and training that ultimately resulted in Jefferson County Conservation District's ability to independently fulfill these responsibilities

Palouse Rock-Lake - Contracted with grant writer who wrote a successful proposal for the four Conservation Districts in Whitman County to support their respective natural resource educational and informational outreach to Eastern Washington students in

Grades 5, and 9 through 12. Grant proposals were also developed for: the Five Star Urban Waters Restoration Program of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and a NRCS Conservation Innovations Grant to support a project relating to Nutrient Management and Assessing Risk Incorporating Oilseed Crops into Cereal Grain Rotations in the Inland Northwest.

Snohomish - Snohomish CD partnered with Clallam, King, Pierce, Whatcom and Whidbey Island CDs to help engineering services, as well as partnering with NRCS and neighboring CDs on 22 conservation projects.

South Douglas - South Douglas CD was able to form the community's wildfire protection plan (CWPP) with wildfire risk assessments conducted throughout the county. Also through this program, South Douglas CD was able to establish a final draft booklet on targeting noxious weeds in Douglas County.

Stevens - Stevens County CD was able to extend administrative opportunities to allow the Pend Oreille and Ferry CDs to upgrade their financial systems to BIAS (a software system that is specifically designed for public entities, such as cities and water, fire, park, and conservation districts). Staff members from Pend Oreille and Ferry CDs were trained in using the BIAS system.

Whatcom - Whatcom CD was able to effectively adopt technology into district livestock planning and beyond (tested for riparian and forestry planning; increase communication and collaboration between districts, and create a more efficient and uniform planning process and product). Through the adoption of common planning templates/process etc, the Dairy Nutrient Management Plans have greater consistency. This has made it more efficient for WSDA to conduct inspections. As well the Manure Spreading Advisory (See <http://www.whatcomcd.org/manure-spreading-advisory>) provides forecasts that producers around the sound can utilize to avoid a discharge. Also, moving to a paradigm where guidance/portions of DNMPs that are generic and dynamic are on the web. (See <http://www.whatcomcd.org/dairy-plan-table-of-contents>) These can be update as needed so producers in all cooperating CDs get the most up to date guidance real time when they need it. Delivers a more informed client based while saving planner time.

Adopting the use of iPads and applications for field inventory assessment and planning, it increased efficiency, productivity, and quality of service in the field and office. This technology was shared with other districts state wide, including information and technical assistance on how to properly and effectively use the equipment.

WACD Forestry Committee - developed a list forestry skills available from each district so other districts could obtain 'in-house' expertise and advice. This self-identified list is posted on the WACD website.

Conservation Commission Efficiencies Activities to Date

The Conservation Commission has actively pursued administrative efficiencies activities in the past few years. Highlights include:

Net-meetings and Webinars: The use of net-meetings for coordinating services, programs and activities of staff has greatly reduced both travel expenses and travel

time by Commission staff. Webinars allow the Commission staff to communicate with Conservation District Supervisors and employees at the same time with the same information. The savings in travel expenses and travel time is converted to conservation services and program delivery.

Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS) Enhancements: The Commission utilizes a computer data system for the 45 districts to enter project activities, cost share applications, before and after photos of projects, project location, and resource issues addressed by the projects. Enhancements to CPDS include the entry of implementation monitoring information by Commission staff and the ability for districts to enter projects that are in need of funding. The proposed projects information can be pulled and used to produce budget needs reports, and identify what resource needs would be addressed. WSCC and Conservation Districts are collaborating on a way to quickly and effectively prioritize among conservation projects using other states systems as examples.

Grants & Contracts Efficiencies: Several administrative efficiencies practices have been implemented by the Conservation Commission including the implementation of a **biennial master grant contract** that contains contract language needed only in one document with details of grants in separate addendums to the master contract; requirement of **electronic funds transfers** between the Commission and Districts to eliminate the printing of warrants, preparing and mailing of checks, and the reduction in time required to transmit payments; requirement of monthly voucher submittal to better manage district expenses, improve district cash flow, increased accountability; all leading to a 2.5 day average grant processing time.

Mid Biennium Close – contracts will not be closed out in 2014 allowing for a district to manage its expenditures more effectively, better meeting conservation practice implementation windows, and resulting in an overall reduction by more than 500 documents in the number of annual documents tracked by Commission staff.

Audit Schedules – in FY13 all conservation district financial schedules were filed electronically to the State Auditor's Office (SAO), eliminating over 500 documents that used to be printed and sent by regular mail to the SAO and the Commission. SAO provides Commission staff electronic access to examine Conservation District Schedules and reports.

Anticipated Future Savings

The examples above demonstrate the commitment of the 45 Conservation Districts and Conservation Commission to find and implement administrative efficiency practices. The state budget request developed by the Commission and each conservation district for the FY13-15 state budget was funded at 43.7% of the requested and needed budget. In order to protect and conserve Washington's natural resources, all funding and time efficiencies were utilized to fund high priority conservation services and programs for Washington State's land owners and managers for conservation planning, conservation practice application, technical, financial and educational conservation needs.

State funding for conservation work needs to be increased to support the level of identified need for conservation services and programs. Even after state funding for natural resource conservation services and programs increases, the Conservation Districts and Commission will continue to implement administrative efficiencies and seek new efficiency opportunities.

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Addendum A - Summary of Consolidations of Conservation Districts to Date

Washington State Conservation District Creation Date and History of Consolidations				
Creation Date	District Name	DENOTES CURRENT CONSERVATION DISTRICT		
July 7, 1944	Davenport Reardan			
July 28, 1944	South West Spokane			
July 26, 1949	North Spokane	11/26/1973	Spokane County	
July 26, 1949	Central Spokane			
May 2, 1940	Latah Rock Creek			
April 26, 1941	Douglas			
July 22, 1941	Moses Coulee	10/7/1969	Douglas	
July 12, 1947	East Wenatchee	10/7/1969	East Wenatchee	8/5/1975 South Douglas
September 9, 1947	San Juan Island			
September 9, 1947	Orcas Island	4/3/1977	San Juan County	
June 16, 1949	Lopez Island			
June 7, 1940	Loomis			
July 1, 1948	North East Okanogan	7/1/1963	North Okanogan	
July 30, 1949	South Central Okanogan	2/1/1971	South Okanogan	
January 14, 1946	Methow Valley		4/12/1977	Okanogan
July 1, 1948	South East Okanogan	7/1/1948	South East Okanogan	
May 28, 1942	Ahtanum Valley			
October 1, 1945	Hi-Land	1/17/1983	North Yakima	
August 16, 1941	Wenas Valley			
August 11, 1952	Odessa			
January 11, 1952	Northwest Lincoln			
September 27, 1948	Sprague Harrington	3/28/1975	Lincoln County	
July 7, 1944	Davenport Reardan			
July 10, 1950	Hartline Highland	11/13/1974	North Grant	
June 26, 1950	Wilson Creek	10/7/1969	Ephrata	6/10/1981 Upper Grant
December 24, 1951	Ephrata			2/12/1986 Upper Grant
July 22, 1941	Moses Coulee			
December 24, 1951	Quincy	10/7/1969	Quincy	12/1/2004 Grant
January 26, 1951	Othello	1/26/1951	Othello	1/26/1951 Othello
May 7, 1954	Warden			05/07/54 Warden
April 30, 1945	Moses Lake		4/30/1945	Moses Lake 9/20/2012 Grant County

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Washington State Conservation District Creation Date and History of Consolidations				
Creation Date	District Name	DENOTES CURRENT CONSERVATION DISTRICT		
July 24, 1944	Roza			
June 9, 1947	Lower Yakima Valley	12/20/1961	Lower Yakima Valley	
March 10, 1950	Wapato	5/5/1967	Toppenish	9/24/1974 South Yakima
June 9, 1947	West Benton			
May 28, 1942	North Benton	3/24/1967	West Benton	
May 28, 1942	East Benton	5/28/1942	East Benton	2/1/1974 Benton
September 13, 1945	Central Whitman			
October 7, 1946	West Whitman	12/8/1966	Whitman	
April 22, 1941	Walla Walla			
February 13, 1947	South Walla Walla	12/18/1961	Walla Walla County	
June 9, 1947	Cle Elum			
May 26, 1942	Kittitas	6/5/1962	Kittitas	
May 28, 1948	Curlew			
May 20, 1947	South Ferry	12/30/1964	Ferry	
March 24, 1948	Wenatchee Entiat			
March 30, 1948	Lake Chelan	9/27/1973	Cascadia	
November 23, 1951	Ritzville			
November 25, 1952	Benge Washtucna	4/11/1963	Adams	
April 25, 1940	North Palouse			
November 13, 1944	South Palouse	4/10/1974	Palouse	
June 15, 1940	Asotin			
June 21, 1940	Grays Harbor			
June 28, 1940	Wahkiakum			
July 1, 1940	Underwood			
September 24, 1940	Eastern Klickitat			
August 7, 1941	Pine Creek			

District Consolidation History.xlsx, Page 7 of 3

Washington State Conservation District Creation Date and History of Consolidations

Creation Date	District Name	DENOTES CURRENT CONSERVATION DISTRICT
August 28, 1941	Snohomish	
March 6, 1942	Stevens	
September 11, 1942	Palouse Rock Lake	
September 14, 1942	Foster Creek	
September 16, 1942	Skagit	
January 4, 1943	Lewis	
January 22, 1943	Clark	
December 27, 1945	Cowlitz	
April 16, 1945	Central Klickitat	
April 27, 1945	Jefferson	
June 4, 1945	Whatcom	
May 25, 1948	Pacific	
May 25, 1948	Thurston County	
March 15, 1949	Pend Oreille	
June 29, 1949	Columbia	
July 14, 1949	Pierce County	
July 20, 1949	King County	
March 10, 1950	Kitsap	
March 22, 1951	Pomeroy	
October 2, 1951	Franklin	
June 7, 1956	Mason County	
October 2, 1959	Clallam	
June 21, 1967	Whidbey Island	

At one time, Washington State had 97 conservation districts reflecting the diverse nature of the landscape and the primary resources in the area. Since then, through a variety of consolidations, the state now has 47 conservation districts in which a majority reflect county boundaries.

Addendum B - Informational Guide for Consolidation of Conservation Districts

Conservation District Consolidation

Updated June 2012

Authority to Consolidate

RCW 89.08.180 contains three paragraphs pertaining to the combination or consolidation of two or more conservation districts, and gives the Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission) certain powers and duties:

- *"Upon petition of the boards of supervisors of two or more districts, the commission may approve the combining of all or parts of such districts and name the district, or districts, with the approval of the name by the secretary of state. A public hearing and/or a referendum may be held if deemed necessary or desirable by the commission in order to determine the wishes of the voters."*
- *"When districts are combined, the joint boards of supervisors will first select a chairman, secretary and other necessary officers and select a regular date for meetings. All elected supervisors will continue to serve as members of the board until the expiration of their current term of office, and/or until the election date nearest their expiration date. All appointed supervisors will continue to serve until the expiration of their current term of office, at which time the commission will make the necessary appointments. In the event that more than two districts are combined, a similar procedure will be set up and administered by the commission."*
- *"When districts are combined or territory is moved from one district to another, the property, records and accounts of the districts involved shall be distributed to the remaining district or districts as approved by the commission. A new certificate of organization, naming and describing the new district or districts, shall be issued by the secretary of state."*

Required steps

The Commission will require the following information and actions before taking action to approve or deny a petition to combine or consolidate two or more conservation districts:

1. A petition must be provided to the Commission by the combining districts. RCW 89.08.180. The petition shall include:
 - a. A schedule for reducing the number of board members serving the consolidated conservation district to the required composition of three elected and two appointed conservation district supervisors. RCW 89.08.180.
 - i. The schedule must provide that the number of elected supervisors is always equal to, or greater than, the number of appointed supervisors; appointed supervisors may not outnumber elected supervisors.
 - ii. Each supervisor will serve his or her full three-year term as specified in statute. Supervisors may voluntarily resign at any time. A vacancy created by such a resignation may or may not be filled depending on the schedule submitted in the petition.
 - b. A description of the property, records, and accounts of each conservation district requesting to be combined. The description must be approved by each petitioning conservation district board of supervisors, and must be acceptable to the Commission for the consolidation petition to be approved. RCW 89.08.180. The petition must include:
 - i. Identification of all assets that will be transferred to the consolidated conservation district.
 - ii. Identification of which conservation district office will be the official office of the consolidated conservation district, and identify any planned reduction in the location and number of offices available to the public during the consolidation period. All official records of the consolidated district must be maintained at the official district office location.
 - iii. Identification of the location of all assets of the consolidated district, particularly if any asset is to be located at a place other than the official office.

- iv. A description of the liabilities of each of the combining districts and the disposition of those liabilities following consolidation.
 - c. A plan to combine the authorized conservation programs of the petitioning conservation districts must accompany the petition, and must be approved by each petitioning conservation district board of supervisors.
 - d. A listing of all memoranda of agreement or understanding that each district has with other entities (governmental or private) and a description of whether those memoranda need to be reviewed or modified to take into account the consolidation of the districts.
 - e. A name for the proposed consolidated conservation district must accompany the petition, must be approved by each petitioning conservation district board of supervisors, and must be acceptable to the Washington State Conservation Commission for the consolidation petition to be approved. RCW 89.08.180.
2. After receipt of the petition, the Commission will:
 - a. Hold a public hearing before the Commission will act on a request to combine conservation districts.
 - b. Consider all comments received by the public.
 - c. Consider all required information provided by the petitioning conservation districts.
 - d. Determine whether consolidation will promote the practice and feasible administration of the proposed consolidated conservation district.
 - e. Determine whether consolidation will best provide for addressing resource needs contained in each conservation district's authorized conservation program.
3. Finding in the affirmative for all required elements, the Commission may approve such a combination or consolidation of two or more conservation districts. If the Commission denies the petition, a specific statement of the reasons for the denial will be submitted to each of the boards of supervisors of the requesting districts. Any denial of a petition by the Commission may include information on how the districts may resubmit a petition for further consideration. If the petition is approved, the Conservation Commission will request the Washington State Secretary of State issue a new certificate of organization, naming and describing the new consolidated conservation district.
4. After approval of the petition to consolidate:
 - a. The joint boards of supervisors will first select a chairman, secretary and other necessary officers from the consolidated group of supervisors. RCW 89.08.180.
 - b. The consolidated board will select a regular date for meetings. RCW 89.08.180.
 - c. All elected supervisors will continue to serve as members of the board consistent with the schedule submitted as part of the petition for consolidation.

The Commission shall assist all affected conservation districts as needed to effect an orderly and effective transition during the consolidation period.

Addendum C – WACD Policy on Conservation District Consolidation



WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

WACD POLICY # 2013-001 **CONSERVATION DISTRICTS' CONSOLIDATION** **May 1, 2013 DRAFT**

A frequent question raised by legislators and other decision-makers is *why there are 45 conservation districts when we have only 39 counties in Washington State*. Granted, this question assumes an often misinterpreted relationship between counties and conservation districts in terms of organization, purpose, funding and governance. And it is often asked without an understanding of how and why conservation districts were established, and how they are maintained, as state-subdivision special purpose districts under state law. Nevertheless, **conservation district consolidation** has been a periodic occurrence in Washington's history since districts were established. Case in point: in 2012, three conservation districts merged into a single, county-sized district (Grant County CD), reducing our number from 47 to 45. Looking at the conservation district map, we see ten conservation districts not meeting what may be considered to be a general consistency with their respective counties' size and boundaries.

Together with the supervisor elections issue, district consolidation is a topic that sometimes arises in state budget discussions with legislators. **As of May, 2013, both House and Senate 2013-15 budget proposals include proviso language that requires the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) to consider district consolidation options related to district overhead costs and efficiencies.** Therefore, it is important that WACD adopt a policy on conservation district consolidation, if we are to be prepared to educate legislators, to deal with legislative inquiry and opportunities, or to respond quickly in the case of formal legislative action.

(Here, it is important to note, for some readers, that the number of governing supervisors on a conservation district board is five [5]. Three of these five supervisors are publicly elected by local citizenry; two are appointed by the WSCC based upon applications submitted through the conservation district. When two or more conservation districts consolidate, the number of district board supervisors is reduced over a period of time to five from some multiple of five, depending on how many districts consolidate. The larger area comprising a consolidated district is then governed by fewer local supervisors altogether.)

In 2012, the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) adopted a revised commission policy on district consolidation. This new WSCC policy established improved procedures and assistance for districts initiating a consolidation process. It is important to note that the revised WSCC policy does not include an advocacy position on consolidation. That is, it does not take a position on whether districts *should*

consolidate, leaving the initiative to the individual districts. WACD commented in support of this policy. WACD believes that **local district initiative** should be the basis for any consolidation effort, rather than forces from outside a district, be it the WSCC or other source. WACD bases this belief on our long-standing support of the **locally-led principle**, and the need to maintain strong local leadership and governance of conservation districts.

The basis for a WACD policy, first then, is that consolidation, should it occur, must come at the initiative of involved conservation districts – **internally**, in response to a shared need for joining together. It follows then that WACD would not support an external influence seeking to **force** conservation districts to consolidate, **against their will**, regardless of the external rationale (e.g., simply accommodating allocation or other logistics; making an assumption about perceived efficiencies).

A WACD policy on district consolidation is not enough to satisfy questions arising about the issue. WACD also should identify the factors that would (or *should*) cause two or more conservation districts to determine whether they may wish to consolidate – pro and con.

Considering Consolidation - Pro and Con

This WACD policy is based on the assumption that a conservation district's decision to consolidate with another district is really a self-determination of **proper governance**. Conservation districts are founded on the **locally-led principle** – a principle based on recognition that a conservation district board of supervisors governs the conservation district to provide the local leadership, accountability, and trust needed to effectively respond to natural resource concerns of citizens in their local area. At what point does governance improve through consolidation? At what point does a *consolidated* conservation district become so large or contain so varied, divergent and competing interests that its five-member board of supervisors loses its **critical locally-led nature**? A decision on merging, while it often involves consideration of administrative and technical costs, also comes down to what the board(s) believe is the proper governance for the local area. *Who sets policy? Who makes decisions?*

Districts already share many resources to a large extent, either on a short-term or permanent basis. This level of cooperation has resulted from personnel shortages and the need to accommodate reductions in funding for basic infrastructure – and from a **failure to expand** resources to meet an expanding demand for services. Also, the **need to become more efficient** in services delivery has driven greater collaboration among districts. Most prominently, districts share engineering services (cluster engineers), conservation planners, financial personnel, or even a district manager. Districts have shared partner agency (NRCS) technical staff resources for many years, as federal agencies have reduced staff levels. It is expected that the drive to become even more efficient and reduce overhead costs will continue to improve resource sharing and collaboration across district boundaries.

At what point, then, should a conservation district decide that its board of supervisors is in need of, or suitable for, merging with a neighboring board of

supervisors to form a new, consolidated district? What in the governance process indicates that this should – or *should not* – occur?

WACD recommends that conservation districts consider, from a governance standpoint, the following factors - both pro and con - for consolidation, looking at the benefits and possible risks associated with district consolidation.

Pro:

1. A district may share staff resources to the degree that a **single point of staff supervision or policy-setting** is required to maximize services delivery, reduce duplication of administrative workload, and to avoid conflicts in scheduling, compensation or employee actions.
2. A board of supervisors may suffer from **poor governance** (poor performance) to the degree that merger with a neighboring well-functioning board will help to resolve governance or performance problems.
3. A board may not generate local candidates for **supervisor elections** sufficient to sustain a full – **and active** - board of supervisors.
4. District board **expenses** may warrant savings achieved through consolidation (in conjunction with other benefits).
5. Legislative conditioning of overall appropriated funds and WSCC funding allocation policies may provide a **dis-incentive** to maintaining current (separate) governance for districts sharing similar resource concerns.
6. Two or more conservation districts (contained within a single county) may find **more receptive county leadership** to adopting an assessment or rates and charges for a consolidated, county-area conservation district.
7. Two or more conservation districts may find that their local resource concerns (and/or state or federal resource concerns) consistently **overlap**, making consolidation result in a more efficient and effective resource targeting of available funding and planning resources.

Con:

1. A consolidated district's larger size and land area may lead to a **loss of true local representation, leadership and accountability**. A too-large consolidated district (e.g., regional scale district) may lose the ability to **govern effectively** (representatively) with a five-member board.
2. One district's leadership (board) may be **overwhelmed** (subsumed) by another via consolidation, leading to a loss of local leadership and fairness in addressing a combined area's resource concerns.
3. Neighboring conservation districts may share resources while having substantially **different local policy approaches** to conservation services, based on resolutions or policies adopted by the board of supervisors.
4. Adjacent conservation districts may be sufficiently different in terms of resource needs, customer type, agricultural practices, etc., so as to **lose fairness and equity** in their response capacity with consolidation (limited resources prioritized to one area's issue at the expense of another).
5. **Insufficient funding** may be allocated to a larger, consolidated conservation district area, depending on funding allocation formulae.
6. Existing critical **local district partnerships** may be jeopardized if local ties (via board of supervisors) are lost or weakened through consolidation.

7. Pressure may increase to involve county officials in conservation district leadership selection (e.g., ***supervisor appointment by county officials versus public elections***) as districts consolidate into county-size districts, resulting in a loss of accountability to a ***direct electorate***.
8. Legislative pressure may increase to ***replace needed state appropriations*** with county-assessed funds as districts consolidate into county-size districts, resulting in loss of critical state infrastructure funding for conservation districts.
9. Legislative (or county) pressure may increase with district consolidation to county-size to ***incorporate conservation districts (now special purpose districts) into general purpose, local government***, resulting in a loss of state-level partnership and program and administrative support, and local shifting of funds away from conservation work to (priority) general purpose government functions (e.g., police, fire, criminal justice).
10. In terms of natural resources, agriculture, urbanization and other conservation issues, there is nothing special about ***county or other political boundaries***. These boundaries are not set using criteria related to naturally-occurring resource similarities. Political boundaries are often set using natural resource features as ***separating*** boundaries rather than as ***uniting*** natural features. Such organization of conservation districts (as an end-product of consolidation) could be inefficient and ineffective in some cases compared to existing boundaries for conservation districts.

In summary, WACD hereby adopts a policy that, **when conservation districts identify their own need to consolidate, and when it works for them, to improve efficiencies and conservation services delivery, and to sustain the locally-led principle, WACD supports the process.** WACD should collaborate with the WSCC to advise and inform conservation districts about the factors that should be evaluated when considering an option to consolidate with a neighboring district.

WACD should share information with legislators and others to educate decision-makers about consolidation as an option for conservation districts. Better information will produce better policy. And better policy will mean putting more conservation on the ground.

Addendum D - Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies

Report to WSCC Members

Developed by the WSCC Task Force on Administrative Efficiencies
November 8, 2011

Administrative Expenses Defined:

The Commission Task Force on Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies offers the following definition and example groupings of administrative expenses related to conservation district operations:

Definition:

"Expenses that can be related to the operation of the organization as a whole, that are different from the expenses needed to complete individual conservation projects or activities"

Example Groupings of Administrative Expenses:

Accounting & Finances: Examples include: timekeeping; purchasing; bookkeeping; accounting; payroll; vouchering; auditing; budget work; grant reviews; seeking funding; grant writing, management & accounting; district financial management; non-project contracting, procurement; interest on debt; monthly expenditure and income reporting; taxes (property, sales, B&O); other

Operations: Examples include: management studies, annual and long-range planning; expenses directly associated with assuring the rules and responsibilities set forth in RCW 89.08; any non-grant reimbursable expense; records management & retention; other

District Board: Examples include: some travel, lodging, per diem; some training; manager working with board; elections; basic "keep the doors open" expenses; subscriptions; memberships; professional services; overall management of district to comply with laws and regulations (89.08); preparation and carrying out board meeting and elections, other

Physical Plant: Examples include: rent, utilities, phone; facility rent & leasehold improvements; facility maintenance; custodial & grounds maintenance; other

Communications: Examples include: answering the mail & general communications; representation at meetings; telecommunications; information technology (IT); conferences & meetings including NGOs and agencies; time working with WSCC, NRCS, and others; other

Personnel: Examples include: some salaries and benefits (administrative); supervising; hiring; other personnel duties; human resource needs; personnel supervision & administration; training & professional development; development & implementation of personnel policies and procedures; other

Supplies: Examples include: copying & printing; general office supplies; other goods & services; other

Equipment: Examples include: computers; printers; copy machines; other office equipment; equipment maintenance; depreciation; inventory records and assessments; other

Vehicles & Transportation (administrative & operations): Examples include: vehicles maintenance & repair; replacement costs; fuel; mileage records, some travel; except expenses related to direct program delivery; other

Risk Management: Examples include: insurances (liability, casualty, other); bonding for board members and staff; legal assistance; legal services; security; licenses & permits; other

How Should We Measure Administrative Efficiencies?

The task force discussed several ideas for how to measure district administrative efficiencies including; various ratios for comparison of expenses, comparative analysis, and reduction in repetitive functions, being able to meet deadlines and relation of administrative efficiencies to effectiveness in delivering conservation services.

One member offered "If the goal is the "measure" the results, then it must be something that is quantifiable. It is very difficult to "measure" something consistently and without bias on a qualitative basis. However, some qualitative measure may also be important to evaluate. That is, the presence or absence of characteristics of an efficient district (see below) could be important factors to evaluate. Need benchmarks that tie to legislative expectations and audit performance. Also, the easiest and fastest way is not always the efficient way, and it may not generate the best and most effective outcomes."

Notes:

- Must have quantitative and subjective elements to measurement.
- There are several metrics that might be used to determine the administrative efficiency of a district.
- Measurement should be used as a tool for districts to evaluate their own operations.
- We need not create additional administrative burden for conservation districts in order to improve or account for administrative efficiencies – our purpose is to do conservation work and not to spend undue time accounting for the administrative efficiencies.
- Sometimes administrative expenses relate to several funding sources or projects.

Opportunities for Conservation Districts to Improve Administrative Efficiencies

Bookkeeping / Accounting:

- Have financial clusters, such as 1 bookkeeper for multiple districts or districts share bookkeepers for centralized/regionalized vouchering, timekeeping, grant management, etc.
- Evaluate the potential of all districts moving towards a consistent, consolidated accounting software purchased statewide (longer term opportunity).
- Supervisors encouraged to conduct a workload analysis including time and budget impacts.

Share Employees (administrative and/or technical)

- Coordinate more closely on natural resource issues in a geographic area and base funding on natural resource goal rather than by program - this allows technicians and other staff to address the issue and not be limited by "program" allocation.
- Share Management services in smaller adjoining districts.
- Sharing of staff with specialized expertise; sharing of expertise, resources, and tools; collaboration with partners and other districts; further the mission and goals of the technical employees; development group; flexible work hours and place; share resources with non-district entities.
- Provide examples of districts sharing administrative expertise and capability among themselves to reduce duplication and lower expenses.

Training:

- Teach Board's and lead staff to develop processes of budget review that promote a true fiscally responsible government entity.
- Attend training where options/ideas are presented and shared; use/promote area meetings or clusters of districts to explore best practices and efficient ways to use available/limited resources; consistency in best practices between state funding agencies.
- Increase use of webinars, teleconferences, and videoconferences to conduct meetings.
- Attend WADE training where options and ideas are presented.

Opportunities for Conservation Districts to Improve Administrative Efficiencies

Procedures / Rules:

- Rewrite the RCW to allow larger districts to have regions, and add one additional supervisor per region. Or have them elected by region. There are groups out there using a regional approach to representation. This would address the landscape, natural resource issues described as the basis for multiple districts per county. Even existing large districts with only one district per county could adopt a regional approach with their district. This would get to 39 districts, but with a local contact for those folks who feel they get lost in the size or the issues in the area.
- Continue to automate; standardize planning; progress tracking processes; efficiency of reporting and other financial requirements.
- Explore the use of one data system for reporting BMPs through WSCC that would share data to other agencies. (long term opportunity).
- A **virtual library** under WACD needs to be created to facilitate a greater sharing of all information between districts, containing everything from templates for common outreach materials, program materials, contract templates, example policy/procedure manual templates, and much more. Standardization of software would be created so that each district can adapt and localize these templates. This might be done through purchasing site licenses for all districts in the state.

Funding:

- Reduce administration & overhead costs where feasible.
- There needs to be a special assessment council made up of those who have been involved in laying the ground work for an assessment that could be available to coach those districts who would like to pursue that as a funding source.
- Increase operating margin through increase in revenue or reduction in administrative costs.
- Apply for grants.
- Reduce the need for competitive "soft money" funds (perhaps by having the WSCC leverage on our behalf – example garner SRFB funds to complement those CD's who's Cat.1 or Cat.2 funds are being used on Salmon Recovery Projects).
- Employ a mechanism of "bulk grant writing" (WACD, RC&D, other non-profits, etc...) to develop funding pots to address Cat. 1, 2 and 3 needs.
- Evaluate the grant submittal and evaluation process to increase efficiencies; encourage partnerships and creative solutions that drive toward efficient use of limited resources.
- Forming clusters of districts with similar resource concerns - formally uniting them to solicit and administer grants such as is being done with the Puget Sound Districts. An opportunity to make this effective and efficient – perhaps districts pooling funding to get grants written, having WSCC or the most efficient administrator of grants.

Consolidate:

- Multiple districts in areas (perhaps in same counties or adjacent districts) doing similar functions, programs, and projects - likely should merge – streamlining board and administrative functions.
- Districts where local landowners are not vested in serving on local district boards should combine if this lack of interest in having a viable, dynamic district has historically been a problem.
- To help with consolidation have a phase in period with full allocation for each of the CDs this year, Second year - $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total allocation for all districts granted to a joint board, and third year $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total allocation for all districts.
- Commission will reevaluate what the state budget language requests are in the area of consolidation and remove disincentives to consolidation of districts in multi-district - county areas.

Examples of Conservation Districts Improving Administrative Efficiencies in the Current Biennium

Bookkeeping / Accounting:

- Conservation Districts are sharing the cost of a bookkeeper/accounting position through inter-governmental agreements for vouchering, timekeeping, grant management, etc. – examples include: Benton & Franklin CDs; Cowlitz & Wahkiakum CDs; Grant, Warden, and Moses Lake CDs; Central Klickitat & Eastern Klickitat CDs; Stevens and Pend Oreille CDs; at least 3 other combinations of districts are having discussions about sharing the expense of the bookkeeper/accountant position.
- Supervisors have been encouraged to conduct a workload analysis including time and budget impacts.

Share Employees (administrative and/or technical)

- Seven shared engineering positions are currently providing engineering services to multi-district areas; districts meet regularly to determine highest priority engineering needs and coordinate the work of the engineers.
- Districts have entered into inter-governmental agreements to share management services. Examples include: Benton & Franklin CDs; Moses Lake, Grant, Warden CDs; Central Klickitat & Eastern Klickitat; Cowlitz & Wahkiakum CDs; at least 2 other combinations of districts are having discussions about sharing the expense of the manager position.
- Sharing of staff with specialized expertise is common throughout the state with examples including employees with conservation planning expertise, special credentialing in areas such as nutrient management planning, comprehensive nutrient management planning, small acreage conservation planning, forestry, soil science, rangeland, urban, stormwater, public relations and education. No less than 30% of the conservation districts have shared staff agreements with neighboring districts

Training:

- The largest change in the past two years has been the increase use of webinars, net-meetings and teleconferences conduct training and hold meetings to increase administrative efficiencies. This revision in culture has decreased the cost of travel expenses to attend meetings, events, and receive critical training and information exchange; at least one webinar, and no less than 6 net-meetings and teleconferences are held each month.
- The annual Washington Association of District Employees annual training event in Leavenworth has provided an effective forum for training district employees and supervisors as well as needed interchange of information in an efficient and effective “one-stop” forum. Over 160 employees and supervisors of approximately 500 attend this event.

Procedures / Rules:

- A **virtual library** is being considered to facilitate a greater sharing of all information between districts, containing everything from templates for common outreach materials, program materials, contract templates, example policy/procedure manual templates, and much more.

Funding:

- A special assessment council is being considered that would be made up of those district supervisors and employees who have been involved in laying the ground work for an assessment that could be available to coach those districts who would like to pursue that as a funding source.
- Conservation districts have a history of working together on like and similar resource concerns by formally and informally uniting to solicit and administer grants such as is being done with the Puget Sound Districts.

Consolidate:

- Districts in 4 of the 5 multi-district counties are engaging in discussions of sharing employees and reducing administrative overhead. WSCC staffs are providing facilitation assistance in these on-going multi-district board discussions of the conservation program delivery, representation, benefits, drawbacks, and procedures for consolidating districts on county boundaries.
- Commission will reevaluate what the state budget language requests are in the area of consolidation and consider removing disincentives to consolidation of districts in multi-district county areas.
- Note: of all the above examples of increasing administrative efficiencies, consolidation of districts is the most controversial among the effected districts...district supervisors who have volunteered their time to serve on these boards often feel "defeated", "underappreciated" and some even get "angry" that someone is suggesting their district program is not worthy to be funded or remain; this coupled with a "heritage" culture exists where fathers and grandfathers began and/or served on the conservation district over the years; along with the reduced representation on the local board; along with the combining of assets (and liabilities) make for a volatile environment. Despite this volatility, districts are still discussing this option. Further reductions in state funding of conservation districts will not lead to a direct effect in consolidating districts and could even set back the discussions being held.

Characteristics of Conservation Districts that are Efficient or Inefficient

The task force produced the following example characteristics of conservation districts that are efficient and inefficient.

Staffing:

The task force identified staffing characteristics and examples of **efficient** districts.

- District with adequate staff to meet the workload needs. Eg. Managers can do managerial tasks, bookkeepers can handle financials and often have collateral duties such as education and outreach, and field staff can work more directly with landowners.
- Staff is involved in their community and knows their district; they know their district board and understand them.
- Low number of administrative personnel as a ratio of technical staff.
- High number of experienced workers and /or a high number of years of service per employee; ability to multi-task and work different programs or the ability to specialize and share that expertise with other districts.
- Shared employees with other districts.

The task force identified staffing characteristics and examples of **inefficient** districts

- Administrative efficiencies **is not**... Two districts, same manager, same bookkeeper, same technician for both districts but submitting 'identical' annual plans, report of accomplishments, addendums, deliverables, etc. If they are identical – then they should be 1 district, not multiple districts/no multiple boards.
- Districts would be better served if Regional Managers were replaced with various specialists available to the districts as resources. (i.e. HR Specialist, Accounting/Finance Specialist, Grant Writing Specialist, etc..).
- Volunteers may not cost much to use, but at times may not be an efficient use of some staff resources (it comes down to management, projects types, task requirements, etc.).

Administrative Expenses:

The task force identified administrative expense characteristics and examples of **efficient** districts

- Low ratio of administrative expenses to total revenue.
- Low administrative costs as a percentage of overall district costs.
- Co-management, partnership and co-location with NRCS (2 free spots, access to vehicles, etc...), belonging to Enduris, eligible for surplus (desks/chairs etc...from USDA partners etc...), technology (webinars, e-mail etc...), past consolidations, staff sharing, cluster engineer (and the concept).
- Ability to form partnerships and use MOAs and Inter-Local Agreements (LTAs) to secure and share resources.
- Overhead costs of districts are typically lower than comparable costs at government agencies.

The task force identified administrative expense characteristics and examples of **inefficient** districts

- Districts with a low number of grants/contracts as compared to staff costs or staff FTEs should be evaluated.
- Each district has its own purchasing, timekeeping and other similar/redundant admin functions
- Maybe the redundant administrative tasks performed by each district.
- Autonomy in many of the administrative functions that need to be accomplished has the potential to create inefficiencies. Every district creates all of their policies, their legal contracts, their own materials and templates for everything from reporting to outreach. We have a tremendous streamlining opportunity here.
- Multiple adjacent small districts in similar ecological areas.
- Planning may be necessary, but it may also be inefficient.
- The amount of time required to work with some NRCS staff and programs.
- District Supervisor elections in some districts are too expensive and arduous for the results. Efficiency would dictate revisions in the Supervisors selection processes be considered. (long term opportunity)

Characteristics of Conservation Districts that are Efficient or Inefficient

Accountability:

The task force identified accountability characteristics and examples of **efficient** districts

- Look to the WSCC 'good standing checklist' for potential guidance.
- Use databases, accounting software, and other efficient methods to track and report progress.
- High use of technology and systems for accounting, data management, communications and reporting.
- Utilize templates/boiler plate/checklists to develop effective plans accurately and quickly.
- Districts try to ensure that the bean counting effort doesn't take more than the bean is worth.

Finances & Accounting:

The task force identified finances and accounting characteristics and examples of **efficient** districts

- Vouch and complete Commission identified tasks accurately and in a timely manner.
- High ratio of non-commission revenues relative to total revenues.
- High ratio of non-Commission funds relative to total available funds.
- Voucher and complete Commission and other entity tasks accurately and in a timely manner

The task force identified finances and accounting characteristics and examples of **inefficient** districts

- Financial reports are different from CD to CD that they cannot consult with each other, one bookkeeper cannot take over for another bookkeeper in case of illness or job changes, a new bookkeeper will have difficulty seeking advice from another with a different system..

Characteristics of Conservation Districts those are Effective

The task force produced the following example characteristics of conservation districts that are **effective**.

Effective Districts:

- Ability to work with land owners as a non-regulatory agency.
- Local oversight of programs and activities and the ability to structure programs to local needs.
- Ability to provide a wide range of programs and assistance to district members.
- High program specific metrics: for e.g., the number of CREP plans.
- Practices procured, installed, maintained.
- Need to be flexible and willing to evaluate programs objectively; and be willing to make tough choices and changes.
- Willingness and ability to share expertise, employees, and other tools with other districts; use of volunteers.
- Implement policies that are consistent with other districts.
- High program specific measures (e.g., number of plans generated or updated, number of site visits, number of website hits, number of practices installed, etc.).
- Even though districts have local, state and federal laws to comply with – our ability to work with a local board as our decision making body creates a very nimble and quick way to make decisions in a timely way. Also, district employees are not tied to labor negotiations (outside of state and federal laws) that allow us to be more cost effective in how we work. Districts create effectiveness because of our ability to coordinate private landowners, county departments, and other local partners resulting in streamlined and collaborative local process to get projects done.
- Much of the management and time is from volunteers. Some believe that administrative expenses could be reduce by combining districts; however, combination could result in loss of much of the volunteer leadership and expertise provided by supervisors who would be lost from combinations. The issue is much more complex than just making all counties have just one district.

Addendum E - Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies Checklist

Working Draft: 11.21.2013

This checklist provides ideas for consideration in enhancing your districts efficiency. It was built from work done by the WSCC District Efficiencies Work Group

Conservation District:

Completed on:

Completed by:

Reviewed by:

Administrative Expenses Defined:

The Commission Task Force on Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies offers the following definition and example groupings of administrative expenses related to conservation district operations:

Definition:

“Expenses that can be related to the operation of the organization as a whole, that are different from the expenses needed to complete individual conservation projects or activities”

Already Implementing		
Could Improve (see action plan)		
Not Interested or Not Applicable		
Accounting & Finances:		
		Currently sharing the cost of a bookkeeper/accounting position through inter-governmental agreements for centralized/regionalized vouchering, timekeeping, grant management
		Vouchering and completing Commission and other entity tasks accurately and in a timely manner
		Increasing efficiencies by forming partnerships and creative solutions that drive toward efficient use of limited resources
		High ratio of non-Commission revenues relative to total revenues
		Low ratio of administrative expenses to total revenue
		Reducing administration & overhead costs where feasible
		Increasing operating margin through increase in revenue or reduction in administrative costs
		Reduction in the need for competitive “soft money” funds
		Employing a mechanism of “bulk grant writing” or districts pooling funding to get grants written
		Analyzing and reduction non-grant reimbursable expenses
		Currently using the most efficient practices in timekeeping; purchasing; bookkeeping; accounting; payroll; vouchering; auditing; budget work; grant reviews; seeking funding; grant writing, management & accounting; district financial management; non-project contracting, procurement; interest on debt; monthly expenditure and income reporting; taxes (property, sales, B&O)
Action Plan:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 		

Operations & Procedures:		
		Currently using management studies, effective records management & retention
		Utilize templates/boiler plate/checklists to develop effective plans accurately and quickly.
		Utilizing co-management, partnership and co-location with NRCS past consolidations, staff sharing, cluster engineer (and the concept).
		Utilizing new technology to reduce administrative efficiencies
		Signed up for surplus equipment availability from state and federal sources
		Forming partnerships and using MOAs and Inter-Local Agreements to secure and share resources
		Overhead costs of districts are typically lower than comparable costs at government agencies
		Evaluating number of grants/contracts as compared to staff costs or staff FTEs
		Looked at the WSCC 'good standing checklist' for potential administrative efficiencies
		Working on reducing time required to work with some NRCS staff and programs.
		Examined redundant administrative tasks performed by one district.
		Use databases, accounting software, and other efficient methods to track and report progress.
		High use of technology and systems for accounting, data management, communications and reporting.
		Coordinating more closely on natural resource issues in a geographic area
		Increase use of webinars, teleconferences, and videoconferences to conduct meetings.
		Continuing to automate; standardize planning; progress tracking processes; efficiency of reporting and other financial requirements
		Using CPDS data system for reporting BMPs and potential project funding through WSCC that can share data to other agencies
		Examining and making decisions to reduce some travel, lodging, per diem; some training; manager working with board; elections;
		Sharing of information between districts, including templates for common outreach materials, program materials, contract templates, example policy/procedure manual templates, and much more
		Currently using the most efficient practices for answering the mail & general communications; representation at meetings; telecommunications; information technology (IT); conferences & meetings, other
		Currently have most efficient risk management including insurances (liability, casualty, other); bonding for board members and staff; legal assistance; legal services; security; licenses & permits; other
Action Plan:		

Personnel:			
			Sharing of staff with specialized expertise; sharing of expertise, resources, and tools; collaboration with partners and other districts; further the mission and goals of the technical employees; development group; flexible work hours and place; share resources with non-district entities.
			Sharing management services in smaller adjoining districts.
			Have a low number of administrative personnel as a ratio of technical staff
			Have a high number of experienced workers and /or a high number of years of service per employee; ability to multi-task and work different programs or the ability to specialize and share that expertise with other districts.
			Have examined examples of districts sharing administrative expertise and capability among themselves to reduce duplication and lower expenses.
			Attending training where options/ideas are presented and shared; use/promoting area meetings or clusters of districts to explore best practices and efficient ways to use available/limited resources
			Attend WADE training where options and ideas are presented
			District Supervisors with manager are conducting a workload analysis including time and budget impacts
			Teaching board members and lead staff to develop processes of budget review that promote a true fiscally responsible government entity
			Share Employees (administrative and/or technical)
Action Plan:			
Vehicles, Equipment, Supplies & Physical Plant:			
			Our district is currently using the most efficient practices such as; copying & printing; general office supplies; other goods & services
			Utilizing a competitive system for equipment purchases, equipment maintenance; and other
			Utilizing an efficient vehicles maintenance & repair system; consideration of replacement costs; fuel costs; mileage records
			Our district is currently using the most efficient practices in rent, utilities, phone; facility rent & leasehold improvements; facility maintenance; custodial & grounds maintenance; other
Action Plan:			

Consolidation or Partnering:			
			Forming clusters of districts with similar resource concerns - formally uniting them to solicit and administer grants such as is being done with the Puget Sound Districts.
			Examined administrative efficiencies through consolidating multiple adjacent small districts in similar ecological areas
			Multiple districts in areas (perhaps in same counties or adjacent districts) doing similar functions, programs, and projects - likely should merge – streamlining board and administrative functions
Action Plan:			

Addendum F – Fact Sheet on Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies

Report on Conservation District Administrative Efficiencies



Washington State
Conservation
Commission
<http://www.scc.wa.gov/>

State Conservation Commission

March 2012

Background on the Washington State Conservation Commission and our state's 47 Conservation Districts

Since 1939, the State Conservation Commission (SCC) has worked in partnership with conservation districts to help citizens protect renewable resources through the use of proven, incentive-based practices.

SCC helps districts coordinate programs, facilitate productive working relationships with other organizations, and help districts be successful.

Our state's 47 Conservation districts serve as implementers of actions in local areas. This work, done with landowners on a voluntary basis, provides incentive-based conservation assistance on private lands.

Conservation districts are a unique form of non-regulatory government, matching local needs with technical and financial resources to help landowners solve on-the-ground conservation issues. Across the state, nearly 250 citizens devote their time, energy and talent in providing local governance of the 47 conservation districts.

Chapter 89.08 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes conservation districts and provides the framework for their activities.

Background on Administrative Efficiencies Task Force

The 2011-13 Omnibus Operating Budget directed SCC to reduce pass-through monies to conservation districts by \$400,000 to encourage administrative efficiencies. In response, SCC created the Task Force on Administrative Efficiencies. Representation included three District Supervisors, three District employees, three SCC Members, and three SCC Staff. All meetings were held via the web in an effort to reduce costs for all participants and to model efficiency in practice.

The Task Force provided regular updates to SCC commissioners and presented their findings at conservation district area meetings and also at the 2011 Washington Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting. The Task Force concluded its work in January of 2012. The concepts and ideas presented in this report will continue to be worked by SCC Staff and Commissioners in an effort to identify new or continuing savings opportunities.

Goal of the Task Force

The goal of the Task Force was to identify opportunities and strategies conservation districts could employ to reduce costs and encourage efficiencies. The Task Force completed this goal. On its own initiative, the Task Force defined **administrative expenses**, considered **mechanisms to measure administrative efficiencies**, and identified **characteristics of conservation districts that are very efficient or inefficient**.

To focus the discussion, administrative expenses was defined as: *Expenses that can be related to the operation of the organization as a whole, that are different from the expenses needed to complete individual conservation projects or activities.*

Based on this definition, the Task Force identified areas that could yield savings and efficiencies in the near term through immediate actions, and long term savings that could change the shape and look of districts through consolidation.

Who we are:

The mission of the Washington State Conservation Commission is to lead the citizens of the state in the wise stewardship, conservation, and protection of soil, water, and related natural resources. Find us on the web at: <http://www.scc.wa.gov/> or contact us at 360-407-6200

WSCC Task Force on Administrative Efficiencies

Dan Downs - District Supervisor
Bill Burrows - District Supervisor
Larry Davis - District Supervisor
Monte Marti - District Employee
Karen Bishop - District Employee
Mike Tobin - District Employee
Lynn Brown - WSCC Member
Jim Peters - WSCC Member
Tom Davis - WSCC Member
Debbie Becker - WSCC Staff
Larry Brewer - WSCC Staff
Ray Ledgerwood - Facilitator

Where can administrative efficiencies be found?

One of the early actions the Task Force worked to accomplish was describing what an administratively effective and efficient conservation district looked like. To accomplish this, the Task Force identified common areas consistent with all districts. The groupings, with examples, included:

Finances & Accounting (bookkeeping, purchasing, payroll, etc.);

Personnel (training, supervision, human resource needs, etc.);

Vehicles & Transportation (vehicle maintenance & repair, fuel, replacement costs, etc.);

Physical Plant (rent, utilities, custodial, etc.);

District Board (per diem, elections, basic "keep the doors open" expenses, memberships, etc.);

Communications (representation at meetings, telecommunications; information technology, etc.);

Supplies (copying & printing; general office supplies; other goods & services, etc.);

Equipment (computers; printers; copy machines, etc.);

Risk Management (insurance, bonding for board members and staff, legal assistance, etc.); and

Operations (annual/long range planning, records management, etc.).

Within these administrative functions, where can efficiencies be gained?

The Task Force then took the administrative groupings and began identifying opportunities where districts could improve. Each area of improvement included several ideas and options for consideration. Areas with an example are:

Bookkeeping/Accounting: Have financial clusters, such as one bookkeeper for multiple districts or districts share bookkeepers for centralized/regionalized vouchering, timekeeping, grant management, etc.

Training: Board and staff training to develop processes of budget review that promote a fiscally responsible entity.

Procedures/Rules: Continue to: automate; standardize planning; improve tracking processes; and seek reporting efficiencies.

Consolidate: Merging multiple districts by area (perhaps in same counties or adjacent districts) doing similar functions, programs, and projects. Streamlining of board and administrative functions.

Share Employees: Share administrative and/or technical services in smaller adjoining districts.

What early administrative actions have conservation districts already made?

Conservation Districts have already begun initiating cost-cutting efforts during the 2011-13 biennium including have: inter-governmental agreements developed among districts to share management services (9 CDs); the cost of bookkeeper/accounting personnel shared (11 CDs); and, shared engineering positions are currently providing services to multi-district areas, coordinated by the participating districts on a highest priority need (7 positions).

Consolidation deliberations are occurring in 4 of the 5 multi-district counties. Districts here are engaging in discussions of sharing employees and reducing administrative overhead through consolidation. SCC staff are providing facilitation assistance in these on-going, multi-district board considerations which include conservation program delivery, representation, benefits, drawbacks, and procedures for consolidating districts along county boundaries.

Measuring success

Of greatest importance is how to measure success. The Task Force discussed several ideas for how to measure district success in administrative efficiencies including; reduction in repetitive functions, relation of administrative efficiencies to effectiveness in delivering conservation services. A key next step will be developing qualitative measures to evaluate efficiencies, possibly through benchmarks, that tie to legislative expectations and audit performance. Work will continue in this area as districts learn of these opportunities in the coming months, and evaluate the fiscal impacts. SCC staff and commissioners will continue working to develop measures for analyzing administrative efficiency actions taken by districts while working to maintain the high level of program delivery that districts perform and to which participating landowners are accustomed.

Addendum G – Competitive Efficiency Grant Program Application Form



WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

BACKGROUND

The 2011-13 Operating Budget directed SCC to reduce pass-through monies to conservation districts by \$400,000 to encourage administrative efficiencies. In response, SCC created the Task Force on Administrative Efficiencies.

The goal of the Task Force was to identify opportunities and strategies conservation districts could employ to reduce costs and encourage efficiencies. The Task Force completed this goal. On its own initiative, the Task Force defined **administrative expenses**, considered **mechanisms to measure administrative efficiencies**, and identified **characteristics of conservation districts that are very efficient or inefficient**.

To focus the discussion, administrative expenses was defined as: *Expenses that can be related to the operation of the organization as a whole, that are different from the expenses needed to complete individual conservation projects or activities.*

EXAMPLES OF AREAS FOR POTENTIAL EFFICIENCIES

Finances & Accounting (bookkeeping, purchasing, payroll, etc.);
Personnel (training, technical assistance, supervision, human resource needs, etc.);
Vehicles & Transportation (vehicle maintenance & repair, fuel, replacement costs, etc.);
Physical Plant (rent, utilities, custodial, etc.);
District Board (per diem, elections, basic “keep the doors open” expenses, memberships, etc.);
Communications (representation at meetings, telecommunications; information technology, etc.);
Supplies (copying & printing; general office supplies; other goods & services, etc.);
Equipment (computers; printers; copy machines, etc.);
Risk Management (insurance, bonding for board members and staff, legal assistance, etc.); and
Operations (annual/long range planning, records management, etc.).

COMPETITIVE EFFICIENCY GRANT PROGRAM

To implement this budget requirement, the Commission is implementing a competitive grant program for conservation districts. Under this program, conservation districts may submit proposals to implement efficiencies activities. Districts are encouraged to submit proposals that, when implemented and proven, can be replicated in other districts. Two or more districts may also partner in a joint proposal.

Applicants are encouraged to review the Task Force report, which can be found on the Commission’s web page at <http://www.scc.wa.gov/index.php/Download-document/2123-Administrative-Efficiencies-Report.html>

APPLICATION

- Total Available \$200,000 (FY13 gfs)
- Maximum per application \$35,000
- Funding Period 7/20/12 – 6/30/13
- Ranked by 3 SCC members & 3 staff.
- Awarded by July 20, 2012
- Evaluation – maximum 30 points
 - ✓ High 5 points
 - ✓ Medium 3 points
 - ✓ Low 1 point
 - ✓ Does not meet criteria 0 points
 - ✓ *The six individual scores will be averaged and assigned a base score.*

- Lead Applicant:

- Co- Lead Applicant (if applicable):

- Project Title (maximum 15 words)

- Total Cost

- Amount of Request

- Source of additional funding support

- Project Description (maximum of 25 words)
 - Pilot Study Functional

- Project Need (maximum 50 words) (5 points)

- Project Benefits (maximum 50 words) (5 points)

- Linkage to Work Plan and Natural Resources (maximum 50 words) (5 points)

- Management Capability and Local Support (maximum 50 words) (5 points)

- Return on Investment/Savings (10 points)
 - Use a minimum of 2 efficiency descriptions defined on page 1

Addendum H - Competitive Efficiency Grant Program Project Proposals

Administrative Efficiencies Grant						Brief Project Description
Project ID	District	Request	Average Score	Amount Funded	Rank	
19	S. Douglas	\$ 35,000	26.83	35,000	1	with Cascadia & Foster Creek - expanding technician expertise into So. Douglas
20	Stevens	\$ 22,600	26.83	22,600	1	with Ferry & Pend Oreille - Operations standarization for the tri-district area - to include payroll, accounting, inventory, etc.
4	Jefferson	\$ 4,000	26.17	4,000	2	with Whidbey Island - pilot project to share bookkeeping staff from Whidbey with Jefferson
25	Whatcom	\$ 34,807	26.17	34,807	2	with Skagit, Snohomish, King - increase planning efficiencies with innovative field technologies and uniform planning templates
11	Palouse Rk Lk	\$ 35,000	26.00	35,000	3	with Pine Creek & Lincoln - employ grant writer
15	Snohomish	\$ 35,000	26.00	35,000	3	with Clallam, King, Pierce - additional engineering services for puget sound districts
31	Cascadia	\$ 35,000	25.83	33,593	4	with So Douglas & Foster Creek - shared monitoring, landowner assistance, accounting savings

Unfunded Projects	Amount	Average Score	Brief Project Description	
13	Pierce	\$ 35,000	25.17	With King to support implementation of rates and charges
29	Whidbey Is.	\$ 9,000	25.17	Pilot project with PS Districts to create CD-Cloud for virtual library
26	Whidbey Is.	\$ 5,000	25.00	Create database of staff expertise within PS Districts for staff sharing
21	Thurston	\$ 35,000	24.17	With 3 SW districts secure centralized accounting services
32	Cen Klickitat	\$ 35,000	24.00	With East Klickitat, No. Yakima, Underwood districts to hire an assistant to aid engineer with water quality monitoring & other field project duties.
28	Whidbey Island	\$ 5,000	23.83	With Snohomish to submit LID applications on behalf of PS districts
5	King	\$ 35,000	23.50	Create and fund PS Districts Caucus Coordination with 11 PS Districts
14	Skagit	\$ 35,000	23.50	With Whatcom to develop and implement an outreach program to address the Shellfish Initiative

Unfunded Projects	Amount	Average Score	Brief Project Description	
23	Underwood	\$ 5,000	23.33	With Clark CD hire, train and share staff expertise
10	Palouse	\$ 35,000	22.83	Palouse with Whitman Districts to share administrative/financial staff
27	Whidbey Is.	\$ 6,800	22.67	Survey, review, identify options for accounting software and financial practices to be used by all districts
30	Tech Dist Empl Dev	\$ 35,000	22.67	Achieve statewide competency model for District technical staff proficiencies for planning
2	Clark	\$ 20,000	22.50	Funding to secure county assessment
12	Pierce	\$ 35,000	21.83	With Whid Island & Pierce to construct district messages and refine purpose statements-providing product statewide
33	Foster Creek	\$ 35,000	21.40	With Cascadia & So Douglas to hire a grant writer
16	Snohomish	\$ 35,000	21.33	With King to provide services to coordinate services to the City of Bothell.
7	Lincoln	\$ 35,000	21.17	Outreach & Education for livestock producers in Lincoln, Pine Creek, Whitman, Palouse & Palouse Rock Lake Districts
18	Snohomish	\$ 35,000	21.17	Pilot integration of data/project management with SCC's CPDS system
22	Underwood	\$ 15,000	21.17	Update to IT system
6	Kitsap	\$ 7,910	20.67	Purchase new copier
24	Underwood	\$ 15,000	20.33	New vehicle
17	Snohomish	\$ 35,000	20.00	With PS Districts to fund participation & representation, identify & share
3	E. Klickitat	\$ 35,000	19.67	Feasibility study for office consolidation with NRCS/FSA/Cent. Klickitat, IT consultant, Employee benefit pkg.
8	N. Yakima	\$ 35,000	18.83	Feasibility study for property acquisition & construction
9	Okanogan	\$ 35,000	17.50	Fuel efficient vehicle, priority training for staff and supervisors, rent
1	Benton	\$ 35,000	16.00	Benton / Franklin staff sharing plan for management & accounting

Total Request \$ 885,117

Addendum I - Administrative Efficiencies Grant Program Final Discovery

Final Report from Awarded districts

Cascadia – For the first quarter, Cascadia’s scope of work consisted of monitoring and maintaining to protect the overall survival from the last three planting seasons. With assistance from US Fish & Wildlife, Wenatchee High School and the Washington State Conservation Corps; they performed maintenance on 16 riparian sites by removing over 16,000 bamboo stakes and 7,000 browse guards in the: Entiat River, Tyee Spring 1 & 2, Wenatchee Watershed (North Road/Chumstick, Yaksum Creek, and CMZ 2 Lower Sleepy Hollow Island), and the Entiat Watershed (Indian Creek, Tillicum creek, Mom & Me Gardens, Bortz Road, RM 12, Keystone Ranch, WDFW Lower Entiat, Stillwater 1 & 2, Medsker Canyon, Mud creek, River Mile 12, Tyee Spring 1) areas. During the second and third quarters, there was little work done with the exception of administrative maintenance so the major push could be immediately available for farming season due to the seasonal weather change. Cascadia provided support to Foster Creek by developing vegetation monitoring protocol and conducting the initial monitoring surveys of the planting sites. As well as provided direct support to South Douglas as a cooperator. Cascadia was instrumental in establishing riparian vegetation monitoring protocols and monitoring on approximately 11 restoration sites in the Chelan County.

Jefferson County – From August 2012 through June 2013, Jefferson County entered into a joint Memorandum Of Agreement with Whidbey Island Conservation district to share bookkeeping to relieve staff burden in support of, and according to, the guidelines of the administrative efficiencies grant. The support was only limited to one day a month with assisting in the preparation and submittal of vouchers from multiple funding sources. This would eventually train the Jefferson county staff to take over from Whidbey Island on a permanent basis. The opportunities provided by this grant were extremely valuable in the efficient and accurate submittal of grant vouchers, grant tracking and accountability, and training that ultimately resulted in Jefferson County Conservation district’s ability to independently fulfill these responsibilities.

Palouse Rock-Lake – Palouse Rock-Lake used this grant to contract with grant writer in the hopes of giving them a competitive advantage for receiving potential grants that Palouse Rock-Lake fits the criteria for. The opportunity that Palouse Rock-Lake’s grant writer was able to secure funding for the conservation district was with The Verle Kaiser Conservation Endowment Proposal which continued the. Opportunities they are still waiting to know if the district has secured the grant funding for are: the Five Star Urban Waters Restoration Program, NRS Conservation Innovations Grant-Nutrient Management and Assessing Risk Incorporating Oilseed Crops into Cereal Grain Rotations in the Inland Northwest due to the fact the application deadline are after the Administrative Efficiencies grant close out date.

Snohomish – Snohomish partnered with Clallam, King, Pierce, Whatcom and Whidbey Island to help with their administrative services, as well as partnering with NRCS for various projects. Snohomish was able to successfully complete the following: Hoggarth Bridget project, the Portage Creek hydrology new pipeline project, TLC, Pinkley, Manorcare, KCD Gunderson, Hemingson, Pierce and Clallam rain garden site designs, Hima Farms lift station design, address Androw’s drainage issue, Carelton Storm water pipeline design, Wilcox Farms photovoltaic system design and pup station, Hooves with Hearts drainage improvement and operational efficiencies, created Poortinga Dairy pipe & gutter designs, assisted with

Whidbey Island's drainage project, provided cost estimates with Clallam to B&T Cattle Co. for drainage project, developed standard costs for waste storage structures with roofs, Pinkely SWPP, Arlington wetlands tour, Pond 6 water quality, evaluated ditch system for Boone Dairy, evaluate compost bin replacements and buffer needs for Warm Beach, held Tulalip Tribes meeting for review on creek crossing design on Filbert acres, attended Edmonds CC Earth Day event, evaluated Richards HUA and waste storage, and visited Stanfield in assessing road flooding issues.

South Douglas – Unfortunately, shortly before South Douglas was awarded funding from this grant, Chelan County was devastated by wild fires losing 80,000 acres. They were able to learn firsthand on the technical assistance needed to implement a Firewise Program for their own county. South Douglas County was able to form the community's wildfire protection plan (CWPP) with assessments throughout the county. Also through this program, South Douglas was able to establish a final draft booklet on targeting noxious weeds in Douglas County.

Stevens County – Sharing this grant, Stevens was able to extend the administrative opportunities to Pend Oreille and Ferry. They upgraded their financial systems to BIAS. BIAS is a software system that is specifically designed for public entities, such as cities and water, fire, park, and conservation districts. They were able to have a staff member from each county be personally trained in using the BIAS system. The BIAS system allows them to enter data for payroll, including daily notes with tracking tasks more easily for grant vouchering. Stevens County was able to use a considerable amount of time to update and review their inventory list. This was something that before this grant was not afforded to them.

Whatcom – Whatcom was able to effectively adopt technology into District livestock planning and beyond (tested for riparian and forestry planning; increase their communication and collaboration between districts and create a more efficient and uniform planning process and product). Whatcom administered training to personnel that increased their technical proficiency and understanding of planning topics that provided for better quality and efficient technical assistance to clients. Through information technology and sharing of expertise, Whatcom was able to increase their ability to communicate with producers and each other. Adopting the use of iPads and applications for field inventory assessment and planning, it increased efficiency, productivity, and quality of service in the field and office. The technology advancement opened a new window of opportunity, that Whatcom was able to gift to other districts on how to properly implement the equipment state wide.

TAB 6

December 5, 2013

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Debbie Becker, Financial Manager

SUBJECT: Non-Shellfish Funding

Summary: This material covers in detail, the actions taken by staff and the subcommittee based upon direction of the Commission from the July and September meetings. There are several decision points necessary to move forward in allocating the remaining \$1.7 million in Non-Shellfish funds.

Documents attached for reference include:

- Memo sent to conservation districts after the September Commission meeting.
- Subcommittee ranking and evaluation results.
- Current allocated funding to conservation districts based upon the direction of Commissioners.

Staff Contact: Debbie Becker at 360.407.6211 or dbecker@scc.wa.gov.

Action is requested for the following decisions:

Decision point #1 -

Is there a maximum dollar value awarded per conservation district?

Decision point #2 -

The first column of Yes/Yes, before July 1 covers 8 conservation districts, 26 practices and utilizes 68% of the available funds. If approved, this would leave \$548,964 available for the next series of decisions.

Decision point #3 -

Practices entered before July 1, with a majority "NO" are valued at \$610,954 prior to the 20% surcharge. How should these practices be handled? A majority of them were not clearly defined as water quality eligible or were programmatic in nature.

Decision point #4 -

Are funds placed in escrow to fund practices not qualified for shellfish, but qualify for water quality and were entered before July 1? If yes, how much?

Decision point #5 -

If the available \$548,964 is placed in escrow and the NO votes Before July 1 plus all After July 1 practices are not funded, it creates a funding gap in excess of \$1,981,144. This deficit does not include the potential for a large number of projects which may transfer from the Shellfish funds, or the 19 irrigation conversions for Kittitas which they chose to remove from consideration at this time. The 13-15 biennium is only 6 months old, and substantial construction windows remain allowing more work to be completed. Is there an effort by SCC and WACD to attempt to secure additional funds from the Legislature or NRCS for EQIP eligible practices?

Decision point #6 -

Is there a need to place additional criteria on funding returned to SCC due to landowner withdrawals, allowing a proof of concept area addressing place-based conservation and conduct monitoring of practice installations? Or should those funds merely be issued to the next practice in line?

Background:

July Commission meeting direction to staff: Authorized funding for district eligible practices, prioritized as #1 and #2.

September Commission meeting direction and motion for Non-Shellfish funding practices prioritized by conservation districts:

1. Authorized staff to distribute funds to remaining prioritized practices meeting the criteria.
2. A Commission member subcommittee was appointed to evaluate the practices in the CPDS where additional questions remained. Members appointed were Dave Guenther, WACD; George Tuttle, AGR; and Kelly Susewind, ECY. These included:
 - Role of practices vs. programs;
 - Review of requests entered after July 1;
 - Does it meet a water-quality definition; and
 - Non brick & mortar practices.

Commissioners Dave Guenther and George Tuttle completed the ranking using the following scale: "Yes, No, Maybe." Upon completion the list was organized in the following fashion:

Yes and Yes	No Vote	Yes and Yes	Split Vote
Before July 1	Before July 1	After July 1	After July 1
Value: \$1,151,036	Value: \$766,145	Value: \$618,000	Value: \$629,999

For each practice, I have already applied the maximum eligible award of \$50,000. In addition, the 20% overhead allowed is also applied. You will also note on this report, I did not provide the detail which has been previously supplied, but will have the information available at the meeting. Also, Kittitas voluntarily reduced their list of landowners requesting funds for irrigation conversions from 30 to 11.

The Commission authorized cultural resource investigations be charged against this account without a maximum. This creates an unknown for the project costs and it is difficult to budget the need from the remaining funds.

There are several decision points that will be required even with the subcommittee's evaluation. To aid in the discussion and decision-making, the budget for the Non-Shellfish program is displayed with Commissioner's decisions to help aid in the understanding of the allocations.

Non-Shellfish Funding	
Appropriation (2-year funds)	4,500,000
SCC Administration	(135,000)
<hr/>	
Available for Distribution	4,365,000
July SCC Decision - Priority 1 & 2 Eligible & Authorized	(1,071,012)
Overhead on Priority 1 & 2	(214,202)
September SCC Decision - Priority 3 & Beyond Eligible	(1,061,288)
Overhead on Priority 3 & Beyond	(242,805)
<hr/>	
Subtotal - Funds remaining for distribution	1,775,692

The identified budget and subcommittee ranking does not account for practices within the 14 shellfish-related conservation districts, which may not actually address shellfish and could qualify for the non-shellfish funding.

Commission Member SubCommittee Evaluation and Ranking

YES, NO, MAYBE

E, C, SW Yes/Yes Before July 1				SubCommittee NO Before July 1				E, C, SW Yes/Yes After July 1				E, C, SW Split After July 1			
Owning CD	Priority Designation	Date	Request	Owning CD	Priority Designation	Date	Request	Owning CD	Priority Designation	Date	Request	Owning CD	Priority Designation	Date	Request
Benton	1	10 May 2010	50,000	Benton	2	10-May-10	5,000	CKlickitat	2	28 Aug 2013	23,275	Benton	4	17 Jul 2013	50,000
	2*	10-May-10	50,000		3	21-May-10	50,000								
Franklin	1	10 May 2010	50,000		5	10-May-10	50,000	FosCreek	3	23 Jul 2013	50,000	Cascadia	1	09 Sep 2013	-
	4	10 May 2010	15,000		6	8-Aug-12	50,000	Franklin	5	01 Aug 2013	50,000		2	09 Sep 2013	-
	7	01 Jul 2013	50,000	FosCreek	1	25-May-10	50,000	Kittitas	3	09 Sep 2013	50,000		3	09 Sep 2013	-
	9	09 Aug 2012	50,000		2	27-Sep-06	50,000	Lincoln	1	12 Aug 2013	3,500	Cklickitat	2	28 Aug 2013	2,000
Grant	5	15 Jan 2013	50,000		4	24-May-10	50,000		2	03 Jul 2013	3,500	Franklin	6	30 Jul 2013	50,000
Kittitas	5	10 Aug 2012	50,000		5	24-May-10	50,000		3	12 Aug 2013	7,000	W2	2	19 Aug 2013	50,000
	6	10 Aug 2012	50,000		6	24-May-10	50,000		5	12 Aug 2013	3,500		5	19 Aug 2013	25,000
	9	10 Aug 2012	50,000		7	24-May-10	50,000	PalRock	1	19 Aug 2013	10,000		7	19 Aug 2013	50,000
	10	10 Aug 2012	50,000		8	24-May-10	50,000	Spokane	1	08 Aug 2013	41,250	Cascadia	1	09 Sep 2013	50,000
	17	09 Nov 2012	50,000	Franklin	2	10-May-10	50,000	W2	3	19 Aug 2013	50,000		2	09 Sep 2013	50,000
	22	10 Aug 2012	50,000	NoYakima	1	8-Aug-12	2,080		4	19 Aug 2013	50,000		3	09 Sep 2013	20,000
	25	15 Aug 2012	50,000		2	4-Mar-13	3,874		6	19 Aug 2013	50,000	Franklin	8	17 Jul 2013	25,000
	26	10 Aug 2012	50,000	Palouse	2	16-Sep-10	50,000	Clark	2	31 Aug 2013	49,725	NoYakima	3	30 Jul 2013	49,999
	27	10 Aug 2012	50,000						3	31 Aug 2013	18,125	Spokane	1	19 Jul 2013	50,000
	30	10 Aug 2012	50,000						4	31 Aug 2013	5,125	Clark	4	31 Aug 2013	3,000
NoYakima	4	8-Aug-2012	7,025												
	5	4-Mar-2013	21,672												
SoYakima	6	13 Feb 2013	50,000					Lewis	5	03 Jul 2013	50,000	Wahiak	3	03 Sep 2013	50,000
	7	01 Jun 2012	50,000												
Lincoln	1	17 Oct 2012	3,500												
	2	19 Oct 2012	3,500												
	4	05 Mar 2013	2,000												
	5	05 Nov 2012	3,500												
Pal-Rock	2	21 Aug 2012	3,000												
Yes/Yes Before July 1			Subtotal 959,197	NO Before July 1			Subtotal 610,954	Yes/Yes After July 1			Subtotal 515,000	Split After July 1			Subtotal 524,999
			20% 191,839				20% 122,191				20% 103,000				20% 105,000
			Total 1,151,036				Total 733,145				Total 618,000				Total 629,999

Does not include any practices from Shellfish districts which don't meet shellfish, but qualify for water quality improvements. Or the 20% TA, Eng, Travel, OH surcharge.

*Benton has 60 days to secure landowners prior to being awarded funding.

Non Shellfish Districts						<i>Last Updated:</i>	<i>11/15/2013</i>
Conservation District	Priority #	DESCRIPTION	Awarded	Running Total Per District	Allowable Overhead	Total Per District CS + OH	
Asotin	1	Kevin Botts	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00		
	2	Ron Scheibe	\$ 50,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$ 10,625.00		
	3	Rod Hostetler	\$ 50,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$ 10,625.00		
	4	Tom Hendrickson	\$ 50,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$ 10,625.00		
	5	Casey Hagenah	\$ 45,225.00	\$245,225.00	\$ 9,611.00		
	6	Tom & Barb Appleford	\$ 50,000.00	\$295,225.00	\$ 10,625.00		
					\$ 62,736.00	\$357,961.00	
Benton	1	Pat McKena	\$ 27,000.00	\$27,000.00	\$ 5,738.00		
	2	Brad Klingele	\$ 44,000.00	\$71,000.00	\$ 9,350.00		
					\$ 15,088.00	\$86,088.00	
Central Klickita	1	Slater Livestock	\$ 20,250.00	\$20,250.00	\$ 4,303.00		
					\$ 4,303.00	\$24,553.00	
Clark	1	Wiseman	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00		
					\$ 10,625.00	\$60,625.00	
Cowlitz	1	Richards Barn	\$ 7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$ 1,594.00		
	2	Peters Restoration	\$ 5,000.00	\$12,500.00	\$ 1,063.00		
	3	Kayser & Sons Poultry	\$ 44,500.00	\$57,000.00	\$ 9,456.00		
	4	Andrews Home Place	\$ 10,000.00	\$67,000.00	\$ 2,125.00		
	5	Carlyne Braun	\$ 10,000.00	\$77,000.00	\$ 2,125.00		
	6	Andrews Alberti	\$ 10,000.00	\$87,000.00	\$ 2,125.00		
	7	Richards Restoration	\$ 12,500.00	\$99,500.00	\$ 2,656.00		
					\$ 21,144.00	\$120,644.00	

Conservation District	Priority #	DESCRIPTION	Awarded	Running Total Per District	Allowable Overhead	Total Per District CS + OH
Ferry	1	HK Ranch	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
					\$ 10,625.00	\$60,625.00
Franklin	1	DeGroot Dairy	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
					\$ 10,625.00	\$60,625.00
Grant	1	Klingeman Pork	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	2	Youngren Dairy	\$ 50,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	3	DeTray	\$ 12,000.00	\$112,000.00	\$ 2,550.00	
	4	Fekkes	\$ 50,000.00	\$162,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	5	Country Morning Farr	\$ 25,000.00	\$187,000.00	\$ 5,313.00	
	6	Floen Feedlot	\$ 16,000.00	\$203,000.00	\$ 3,400.00	
	7	Dieringer	\$ 10,000.00	\$213,000.00	\$ 2,125.00	
	8	Willamette Eggs	\$ 25,000.00	\$238,000.00	\$ 5,313.00	
	9	Voss	\$ 25,000.00	\$263,000.00	\$ 5,313.00	
					\$ 55,889.00	\$318,889.00
Kittitas	1	Bart Bland	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	2	Fred Feddema	\$ 50,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
					\$ 21,250.00	\$121,250.00
Lewis	1	Mark Hornby	\$ 25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$ 5,313.00	
	2	Darrell Perry	\$ 25,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 5,313.00	
	3	Dave Fenn	\$ 50,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	4	Elmer Loose	\$ 21,574.00	\$121,574.00	\$ 4,584.00	
	6	Marvin Courtney	\$ 11,720.00	\$133,294.00	\$ 2,491.00	
	7	Bill Wood	\$ 50,000.00	\$183,294.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	8	Heinz Jeg	\$ 44,000.00	\$227,294.00	\$ 9,350.00	

Conservation District	Priority #	DESCRIPTION	Awarded	Running Total Per District	Allowable Overhead	Total Per District CS + OH
	10	Leo Zylstra	\$ 9,000.00	\$236,294.00	\$ 1,913.00	
	11	Katie Humphrey	\$ 5,000.00	\$241,294.00	\$ 1,063.00	
	12	Mike Peroni	\$ 3,000.00	\$244,294.00	\$ 638.00	
					\$ 51,915.00	\$296,209.00
Lincoln	1	Northface	\$ 3,500.00	\$3,500.00	\$ 744.00	
	2	JR Farms, Inc.	\$ 3,500.00	\$7,000.00	\$ 744.00	
	3	Laurel Tiphareeth	\$ 2,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$ 425.00	
	4	Gary McKay, Inc.	\$ 3,500.00	\$12,500.00	\$ 744.00	
					\$ 2,657.00	\$15,157.00
North Yakima	1	Jack Field	\$ 42,975.00	\$42,975.00	\$ 9,131.00	
	2	Morton	\$ 28,328.00	\$71,303.00	\$ 6,020.00	
					\$ 15,151.00	\$86,454.00
Okanogan	1	Troy Acord	\$ 17,464.00	\$17,464.00	\$ 3,711.00	
	2	Derek Olma	\$ 17,563.00	\$35,027.00	\$ 3,732.00	
	3	Ellis Barnes	\$ 28,640.00	\$63,667.00	\$ 6,086.00	
	4	Leah Arroyo	\$ 30,110.00	\$93,777.00	\$ 6,399.00	
	5	Gerold Scholz	\$ 24,407.00	\$118,184.00	\$ 5,186.00	
					\$ 25,114.00	\$143,298.00
Pacific	1	Bob Zieroth	\$ 10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$ 2,125.00	
	2	Jerry Martin	\$ 10,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$ 2,125.00	
					\$ 4,250.00	\$24,250.00
Palouse	1	Boyd Heavy Use	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
					\$ 10,625.00	\$60,625.00

Conservation District	Priority #	DESCRIPTION	Awarded	Running Total Per District	Allowable Overhead	Total Per District CS + OH
Pend Oreille	1	George Stuivenga	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	2	Ron & Linda Wilson	\$ 43,000.00	\$93,000.00	\$ 9,138.00	
					\$ 19,763.00	\$112,763.00
South Yakima	1	Double P	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	2	Haringa	\$ 50,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	3	Tuxedo	\$ 50,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	4	Sun Valley	\$ 50,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	5	View Point	\$ 50,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
					\$ 53,125.00	\$303,125.00
Underwood	1	Robert Schmid	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	2	Travis Pearson	\$ 50,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	3	Jake Anderson	\$ 32,250.00	\$132,250.00	\$ 6,853.00	
					\$ 28,103.00	\$160,353.00
Wahkiakum	1	Skamokowa	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	2	Guerden Restoration	\$ 15,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$ 3,188.00	
	3	Bill Ower	\$ 15,000.00	\$80,000.00	\$ 3,188.00	
	4	Paul & Jae Steward	\$ 15,000.00	\$95,000.00	\$ 3,188.00	
					\$ 20,189.00	\$115,189.00
Walla Walla	1	McCaw	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
					\$ 10,625.00	\$60,625.00
TOTAL NON SHELLFISH			\$2,135,506.00			\$2,589,308.00
Shellfish Districts						
Clallam	1	B&T Cattle	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	\$10,625.00

Conservation District	Priority #	DESCRIPTION	Awarded	Running Total Per District	Allowable Overhead	Total Per District CS + OH
King	1	Two Mountain	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
	2	Keller	\$ 50,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
					\$ 21,250.00	\$121,250.00
Kitsap	1	Merriman	\$ 25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$ 5,315.00	
	2	Boundy	\$ 20,000.00	\$45,000.00	\$ 4,250.00	
	3	Steele	\$ 50,000.00	\$95,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	
				\$ 20,190.00	\$115,190.00	
Mason	1	Jeff Floreck	\$ 32,925.00	\$32,925.00	\$ 6,997.00	\$39,922.00
Pierce	1	Daley	\$ 28,028.00	\$28,028.00	\$ 5,956.00	\$33,984.00
Skagit	1	Hinson, Judy	\$ 17,510.00	\$17,510.00	\$ 3,722.00	
	2	Wesen	\$ 2,000.00	\$19,510.00	\$ 425.00	
	13	Hull	\$ 27,680.00	\$47,190.00	\$ 5,882.00	
	25	Rodriguez/Weber	\$ 9,416.00	\$56,606.00	\$ 2,001.00	
	30	Pasma	\$ 11,830.00	\$68,436.00	\$ 2,515.00	
				\$ 14,545.00	\$82,981.00	
Snohomish	2	Holy Cross	\$ 10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$ 2,125.00	\$12,125.00
Whatcom	1	Blok	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	\$60,625.00
Whidbey Island	2	Wirth	\$ 50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$ 10,625.00	\$60,625.00
\$484,389.00						\$537,327.00



Washington State Conservation Commission

November 20, 2013

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Debbie Becker, Administrative and Budget Director
Ron Shultz, Policy Director

SUBJECT: WSCC 2014 Supplemental Budget Request Status Report

Supplemental Budget Request Status

The Commission approved four supplemental budget requests at the September meeting. These were submitted to the Office of Financial Management and the legislature. OFM staff has briefed Governor Inslee on the proposals in a "first run" review with final decisions to be made after the November 20 revenue forecast. Commission staff has also met with legislative budget committee staff to answer questions about the proposals.

Attached is a fact sheet on the supplemental requests.

The Governor is required to provide his supplemental budget proposals to the legislature by December 20.

November 20 Revenue Forecast Report

The state Economic and Revenue Forecast Council issued their November report and predict a decline of \$19.2 million in anticipated revenue for the current 2013-15 biennium. This is largely due to a reclassification of some state general fund revenue as non-revenue resources. Otherwise, state general fund revenues are expected to grow 7.6%.

This reduction could impact our supplemental budget requests if additional funds are not available.

Attached you will find the breakdown of the forecast for the 2013-15 and the 2015-17 biennia.

2013-15 Supplemental Budget Requests

The State Conservation Commission has approved advancing four supplemental budget requests to the Governor, Office of Financial Management (OFM), and the legislature for consideration during the 2014 legislative session. The requests, all operating budget, include:

- **Addressing Livestock Inputs (\$1m FY14, \$1.5m FY15)** – This approach will prevent negative impacts to water quality from agricultural and livestock activities.
- **Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) (\$1,020,000 FY15)** – This proposal provides funding for five counties to implement VSP in addition to the two counties that are currently funded (Chelan and Thurston). Twenty-nine counties have opted-in to VSP, but they do not have to implement the program until funding is provided. The deadline for counties to act is July 2015. This program was a negotiated resolution to the contentious issue of how to address agricultural activity impacts to critical areas.
- **Firewise: Defensible Communities (\$3,512,697 FY15)** – Funding will assist conservation district and DNR efforts to work with landowners on the removal of fire hazards and reduction of wildfire impacts to structures. Funding will also assist in soil recovery after fires to prevent degradation of water quality.
- **Implementation of Puget Sound District Activities (\$55,000 FY15)** – The 12 conservation districts bordering Puget Sound are part of a district caucus that helps coordinate on-the-ground work relating to the Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda. Requested funding will help the districts be more effective and efficient in these activities.

These budget request submittals will help advance Governor Inslee's policy priorities as reflected in his Results Washington initiative in the following measurable areas:



Goal – Healthy Fish and Wildlife

Sub topic – Shellfish

Outcome Measure: Increase improved shellfish classification acreage in Puget Sound from net increase of 3,076 acres from 2007-13 to net increase of 8,614 acres by 2016.

Leading Indicator: Increase number of implemented agricultural best management practices (BMPs) to improve water quality in shellfish growing areas in Puget Sound, Grays Harbor, and Pacific counties.



Goal – Clean and Restored Environment

Sub topic – Clean, cool water

Outcome Measure: Increase the percentage of rivers meeting good water quality from 43% to 55% by 2020.

Leading Indicator: Increase number of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) sites to improve water temperature and habitat from 1,021 to 1,171 sites by 2015.

Goal – Working and Natural Lands

Sub topic – Forests and farmland

Outcome Measure: Increase the net statewide acreage dedicated to working farms from 7.237 million to 7.347 million by 2020; reduce loss of designated forests of long-term commercial significance.

Leading Indicators: Maintain current level of statewide acreage dedicated to working farms with no net loss through 2015. Increase treatment of forested lands for forest health and fire reduction from X to X by 2016.

Leading Indicators: Increase treatment of forested lands for forest health and fire reduction from X to X by 2016.

These proposals will also support the Governor’s overarching goal of Puget Sound Recovery.

For more information on these proposals, please contact:

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Ron Shultz, Policy Director
(360) 407-7507 rshultz@scc.wa.gov

Total Changes to General Fund-State, Education Legacy Trust Account and Washington Opportunity Pathways Account Forecasts

Comparison of the November 2013 to the September 2013 Forecast
 2013-15 Biennium
 Cash Forecast; Millions of Dollars

	September 2013 Forecast*	Non-economic Changes**	Forecast Change	November 2013 Forecast	Total Change [#]
General Fund-State	\$33,007.2	(\$30.3)	\$5.5	\$32,982.4	(\$24.8)
Education Legacy Trust Account	\$363.6	\$0.0	\$13.1	\$376.7	\$13.1
WA Opportunity Pathways Account	\$236.9	\$0.0	(\$7.5)	\$229.3	(\$7.5)
Total	\$33,607.7	(\$30.3)	\$11.1	\$33,588.5	(\$19.2)

*Forecast for GF-S for the 2013-15 biennium adopted September 2013

**Re-classification of prior period adjustments as non-revenue resources, tobacco settlement arbitration payment to state.

[#]Details may not add due to rounding

Total Changes to General Fund-State, Education Legacy Trust Account and Washington Opportunity Pathways Account Forecasts

Comparison of the November 2013 to the September 2013 Forecast
 2015-17 Biennium
 Cash Forecast; Millions of Dollars

	September 2013 <u>Forecast*</u>	Non-economic <u>Changes**</u>	Forecast <u>Change</u>	November 2013 <u>Forecast</u>	Total <u>Change[#]</u>
General Fund-State	\$35,699.4	(\$40.8)	(\$43.7)	\$35,614.9	(\$84.5)
Education Legacy Trust Account	\$413.1	\$0.0	(\$16.0)	\$397.1	(\$16.0)
WA Opportunity Pathways Account	\$232.7	\$0.0	\$3.9	\$236.6	\$3.9
Total	\$36,345.2	(\$40.8)	(\$55.9)	\$36,248.5	(\$96.7)

*Forecast for GF-S for the 2015-17 biennium adopted September 2013

**Re-classification of prior period adjustments as non-revenue resources

[#]Details may not add due to rounding

TAB 7