

**Washington State Conservation Commission  
Conservation District - Good Governance Checklist  
Approved December 2013**

This Checklist provides annual measurement of how Washington's conservation districts meet both legal requirements as well as those activities undertaken by public entities to maintain their value with the public. This Checklist is vetted annually with Washington's conservation districts and approved by the ten-member Washington State Conservation Commission.

The Good Governance Checklist contains two categories of activities, Category 1 and Category 2. All activities are important, but the manner in which conservation districts expend public funds and conduct supervisor elections are deemed very important for districts both individually and collectively.

***The identification of one or more opportunities for improvement in Category 1 of the Good Governance Checklist may have a negative impact on the budget allocation each district receives for the next fiscal year, subject to decisions by the Commission board. For rating purposes, evaluations will be graded as follows:***

***Tier 1: No deficiencies found***

***Tier 2: One deficiency in Category 2***

***Tier 3: Two deficiencies in Category 2***

***Tier 4: One deficiency in Category 1 – or – Three or more deficiencies in category 2***

***(Note: A deficiency is an element that is graded in “red” area on the Checklist.)***

Deficiencies identified by the Good Governance Checklist are opportunities for district improvement. Each district will work with their Conservation Commission Regional Manager to create an action plan to take advantage of those opportunities. The Good Governance Checklist is set out on the following page:

Conservation District:

Completed on:

Completed by:

Reviewed by:

"Yes" or Good Performance				
Consider Improvement				
"No" or Substandard Performance				
<b>Category 1 Performance Components</b>				
<b>Conservation On the Ground Performance</b>				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #00FF00;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #FFFF00;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #FF0000;"></td> </tr> </table>				1) The funded conservation activities in the district's previous year's Annual Work Plan address the resource concerns identified by the board of supervisors; the district has been in regular consultation with the state and local agencies of record for those resource concerns, and those activities have been implemented.
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #00FF00;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #FFFF00;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #FF0000;"></td> </tr> </table>				2) Implementation goals (intermediate outcomes) on WSCC funded work for the last state fiscal year were all met.
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<b>Financial Performance</b>				
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<b>Supervisor Election and Appointment</b>				
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<b>Audit Resolution – If Any</b>				
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<b>Category 2 Performance Components</b>				
<b>District Operations and Capacity</b>				
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<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #00FF00;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #FFFF00;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #FF0000;"></td> </tr> </table>				iii) Has no more than one board meeting cancelled due to lack of a quorum
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #00FF00;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #FFFF00;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #FF0000;"></td> </tr> </table>				10) Has a physical location that meets requirements for public offices with regular weekday office hours for public access, information, and services.
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			13) Supervisors & staff participate in annual training (WACD, WADE, WSCC, Enduris, NRCS, etc.).
			14) District has the technical capacity to implement and maintain conservation on the ground with reliable and consistent quality
<b>Working Within the Constraints of the Law</b>			
			15) The conservation district has used the Schedule 22 Internal Assessment to perform an internal audit as required by RCW 89.08.210 for the most recently completed fiscal year.
			16) The conservation district has, if needed, begun the process to address any identified opportunities for improvement uncovered by the Schedule 22 Internal Assessment.
			17) The conservation district has, if needed, used Enduris, WSCC, MRSC, and/or an attorney for legal questions.
<b>Long Range and Annual Work Plan</b>			
			18) Annual Work Plan:
			i) Is submitted on time and in the current WSCC template
			ii) Addresses highest priority resource concerns identified by the board of supervisors with data provided by the district as well as the agencies of record for those resource concerns
			iii) Contains achievable and measurable activities, reasonable completion target dates, staffing/task assignments, and a supporting budget
			iv) Has priorities compatible with the district submission to WACD budget request
			19) Long Range Plan
			i) Is on the current WSCC template, annually reviewed and on file with WSCC
			ii) Addresses highest priority resource concerns identified by the board with data provided by the district as well as the agencies of record for those resource concerns
			iii) Has been updated within the past 5 years

Public Outreach, Involvement, and Education		
		20) Regular communication to the public (such as: newsletters, current and updated website, social or other media, and educational programs or workshops) within the current fiscal year has occurred.
		21) All regular and special board meetings as well as other public events are properly publicized, conducted, and contain an official opportunity on the agenda for public comment.
		22) Input is sought from stakeholders (which include at least one public meeting) before annual work plan and long range plan are approved by the board. (Note – the public meeting could be either an identified portion of a regular board meeting or a separate public hearing held for that purpose)
		23) The annual report of accomplishments was submitted on time, in the prescribed format to the WSCC, and utilized for public/stakeholder education
		24) <i>Demonstrated ability to work with all local public, private, and nonprofit partners (as well as entities represented and partnering with the Commission) to identify and target areas for natural resource conservation and improvement.</i>
		i) <i>County government</i>
		ii) <i>Cities and towns</i>
		iii) <i>NRCS</i>
		iv) <i>Ecology</i>
		v) <i>WSDA</i>
		vi) <i>WDFW</i>
		vii) <i>DNR</i>
		viii) <i>RCO</i>
		ix) <i>Local Tribal governments</i>
		x) <i>Local watershed groups or other nonprofit partners</i>
		xi) <i>Enduris</i>
		xii) <i>WACD</i>
		xiii) <i>NACD</i>
		25) <i>The conservation district develops its goals and measures its accomplishments based on data that is self-generated as well as cooperatively received from partner agencies.</i>

**Guidance Document for Conservation Commission Staff and Conservation Districts  
on Good Governance Elements.**

**Category 1**

<b>Conservation On the Ground Performance</b>	
1)	<p>The funded conservation activities in the district's previous year's Annual Work Plan address the resource concerns identified by the board of supervisors; the district has been in regular consultation with the state and local agencies of record for those resource concerns, and those activities have been implemented.</p> <p><b><i>Commission staff will review the previous year's AWP and compare it to the accomplishments reported by the district in reports, board minutes, or other documentation.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Green = Yes</i></b>  <b><i>Yellow = Partially</i></b>  <b><i>Red = No</i></b></p>
2)	<p>Implementation goals (intermediate outcomes) on WSCC funded work for the last State fiscal year were all met.</p> <p><b><i>Commission staff will review the intermediate outcomes on Commission funded work and compare it to the vouchers submitted and activity reported.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Green = Yes</i></b>  <b><i>Yellow = Partially</i></b>  <b><i>Red = No</i></b></p>
3)	<p>Supervisors and staff are leveraging resources with other districts to achieve efficiencies.</p> <p><b><i>Commission staff will review the performance of the district in implementing the conservation district administrative efficiencies recommendations.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Green = Yes district has either implemented administrative efficiencies or evaluated its program against the administrative efficiencies report.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Yellow = Partial progress, not yet implemented</i></b>  <b><i>Red = District has not evaluated its ability and/or shows no interest in implementing administrative efficiencies.</i></b></p>
<b>Financial Performance</b>	
4)	<p>Financial reporting and vouchering to the WSCC is on time, complete, accurate, and complies with WSCC Financial policies and procedures.</p> <p><b><i>Green = Vast majority of vouchers timely, complete and accurate and comply with WSCC procedures.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Yellow = Vouchers regularly require more time to process because of issues, but district demonstrating progress to address issues.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Red = District regularly in violation of WSCC policies and procedures and showing no progress to improve.</i></b></p>
5)	<p>WSCC allocated funding is utilized in a timely manner - and/or - WSCC has been notified by March 31st that funding allocations for that fiscal year cannot be utilized.</p> <p><b><i>Commission financial staff in consultation with the regional manager will evaluate the district's ability to utilize allocations in a timely manner.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Green = Yes</i></b>  <b><i>Yellow = District notified WSCC, but after the March 31<sup>st</sup> date</i></b>  <b><i>Red = No</i></b></p>
<b>Supervisor Election and Appointment</b>	
6)	<p>Election and appointment of district supervisors complies with WSCC rules and procedures.</p>

**Green = Performed election well with no violations of rules or procedures**  
**Yellow = Performed election with some violations, but were corrected in time for Commission certification and/or were not seen as being in significant non-compliance with the election rules and procedures.**  
**Red = Significant election violations occurred that resulted in non-compliance with election rules and procedures and, therefore, did not allow for Commission certification.**

**Audit Resolution – If Any**

7) Has addressed or is in the process of addressing any identified, resolvable State Auditor issues.  
**Green = No findings or management letters**  
**Yellow = Findings or management letters addressed or in the process of being addressed in a timely manner.**  
**Red = Audit findings not addressed by district.**

**Category 2**

<b>District Operations and Capacity</b>	
8)	Board of Supervisors actively governs the district by demonstrating leadership in conservation stewardship as well as instilling an ethic and culture of constant improvement. <b>District Board will be evaluated on its ability to lead and govern the district. The answers to the questions below will help guide this evaluation. In addition, this evaluation will be completed by answering the following questions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Does the Board lead the district manager or does the district manager lead the board?</b></li> <li>• <b>Does the Board insist on receiving and evaluating the reports of district progress on the ground?</b></li> <li>• <b>Does the Board attempt to reach out to legislators, county government, district partners and others critical to the success of the district?</b></li> <li>• <b>Do the Supervisors engage in and/or provide leadership in their area, state, and/or national associations?</b></li> </ul> <b>Green = Excellent performance</b> <b>Yellow = Performance needs improvement</b> <b>Red = Poor performance</b>
9)	Each district board holds regular board meetings attended by a quorum of supervisors who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Has chosen a supervisor to be Chair  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Red = No</b></li> <li>ii. Has performed its due diligence to ensure all supervisor seats are filled; and  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow – In Progress</b>  <b>Red = No</b></li> <li>iii. Has no more than one board meeting cancelled due to lack of a quorum  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Red = No</b></li> </ul>
10)	Has a physical location that meets requirements for public offices with a published schedule of weekday office hours for public access, information, and services. <b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Red = No</b>
11)	Regular board meetings are held in accordance to state law (“Regular” means monthly

<p>unless it can be shown that a different schedule better meets the needs of the public.)  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>12) There is a board-approved delegation of district managerial responsibilities to a district manager, administrator, executive director, coordinator or other primary point of contact.  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>13) Supervisors &amp; staff participate in annual training (WACD, WADE, WSCC, Enduris, NRCS, etc.)  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Special circumstances preventing participation</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>14) District has the technical capacity to implement and maintain conservation on the ground with reliable and consistent quality.  <b>District staff has the proper training and certifications to perform the work they are being assigned to do. This is demonstrated by participating in the WADE/WACD/WSCC/NRCS district technical employees training proficiency and training needs inventory</b>  <b>Green = Staff are properly trained for the work they are being asked to do or are in the process of receiving such training or the district contracts with entities that have staff who are properly trained.</b>  <b>Yellow = District has made little progress toward increasing the technical capacity of the district.</b>  <b>Red = District has no interest in having the technical capacity to implement conservation on the ground.</b></p>

<p><b>Working Within the Constraints of the Law</b></p>
<p>15) The conservation district has utilized the Schedule 22 Internal Assessment to perform an internal audit as required by RCW 89.08.210 for the most recently completed district fiscal year.  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>16) The conservation district has, if needed, begun the process to address any opportunities for improvement identified by the Schedule 22 Internal Assessment.  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>17) The conservation district has, if needed, used Enduris, MRSC, WSCC, and/or an attorney for legal questions.  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>

<p><b>Long Range and Annual Work Plan</b></p>
<p>18) Annual Work Plan:</p>
<p>i. Is submitted on time and in the current WSCC template  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>ii. Addresses highest priority resource concerns identified by the board of supervisors with data provided by the district as well as the agencies of record for those resource concerns  <b>Green = Yes</b></p>

	<p><b>Yellow = Special circumstances</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>
iii.	<p>Contains achievable and measurable activities, reasonable completion target dates, staffing/task assignments, and a supporting budget</p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Yellow = Special circumstances</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>
iv.	<p>Are the priorities compatible with the district submission to WSCC budget application</p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Yellow = Special circumstances</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>
19) Long Range Plan	
i.	<p>Long Range Plan is current, annually reviewed by district board and Commission Regional Manager, and on file with WSCC</p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>
ii.	<p>Addresses highest priority resource concerns identified by the board with data provided by the district as well as the agencies of record for those resource concerns</p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Yellow = Partially</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>
iii.	<p>Has been updated within the past 5 years</p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Yellow = In progress</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>

<b>Public Outreach, Involvement, and Education</b>	
20)	<p>Regular outreach to the public (such as: newsletters, current and updated website, social or other media, and educational programs or workshops) within the current fiscal year has occurred.</p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Yellow = District has the funding and ability but could do better</b> <b>Red = District does the bare minimum or has no regular communication tools</b></p>
21)	<p>All regular and special board meetings as well as other public events are properly publicized and conducted and contain an official opportunity on the agenda for public comment.</p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Yellow = An occurrence but not reoccurring issue</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>
22)	<p>Input sought from stakeholders (which include at least one public meeting) before annual work plan and long range plan are approved by the board. <b>(Note – the public meeting could be either an identified portion of a regular board meeting or a separate public hearing held for that purpose).</b></p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>
23)	<p>Annual report of accomplishments was submitted on time and in the prescribed format to WSCC and utilized for public/stakeholder education</p> <p><b>Green = Yes</b> <b>Yellow = Special circumstances</b> <b>Red = No</b></p>
24)	<p><b>Demonstrated ability to work with all applicable local public, private, and nonprofit partners</b></p>

<p>(as well as entities represented and partnering with the Commission) to identify and target areas for natural resource conservation and improvement.</p> <p><b>This will be evaluated by the existence of active regularly exercised MOA's or by active interactions between the district and the entities in the list below.</b></p>
<p>i) County government  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>ii) Cities and towns  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>iii) NRCS  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>iv) Ecology  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>v) WSDA  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>vi) WDFW  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>vii) DNR  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>viii) RCO  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>ix) Local Tribal governments  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>x) Local watershed groups or other nonprofit partners  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>xi) Enduris  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>xii) WACD  <b>Green = Yes</b></p>

<p><b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p><i>xiii) NACD</i>  <b>Green = Yes</b>  <b>Yellow = Could Improve</b>  <b>Red = No</b></p>
<p>25) The conservation district develops its goals and measures its accomplishments based on data that is self-generated as well as cooperatively received from partner agencies.  <b>Demonstrated use of natural resource data for planning, evaluation, and reporting of conservation work needed and completed.</b>  <b>Green = District does outstanding job of using data to make decisions</b>  <b>Yellow = District could do better using data to make decisions</b>  <b>Red = District has no interest in partnering to use data to make decisions</b></p>