



CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING PACKET

MARCH 2015

TAB 1



**WASHINGTON STATE
 CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**
 Best Western Plus Lacey Inn & Suites
 8326 Quinault Drive NE
 Lacey, WA 98516

**PRELIMINARY MEETING AGENDA
 March 19, 2015**

TIME	TAB	ITEM	LEAD	ACTION/INFO
8:30 a.m.		Call to Order		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additions/Corrections to Agenda Items 	Chair Clinton O'Keefe	
9:00 a.m. 30 minutes		Introductions/Comments	All	
		Partnership Reports	All	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency updates 		
10:00 a.m. 30 minutes		Tribal History of the Area (invited)		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squaxin Island Indian Tribe Nisqually Indian Tribe 		
10:30 a.m. 15 minutes		BREAK		
***** PUBLIC COMMENT WILL BE ALLOWED PRIOR TO ACTION ITEMS ***** Please note: 3 minutes per person				
10:45 a.m. 5 minutes	2	Consent Agenda		Action
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of the WSCC January 15, 2015 Meeting Minutes (<i>pgs. 6-10</i>) 		
10:50 a.m. 20 minutes		WDFW's Priority Landscapes presentation by: Cynthia Wilkerson, Lands Conservation and Restoration Section Manager		
11:10 a.m. 50 minutes	3	Policy/Programs		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative Updates (<i>pgs. 12-28</i>) Policy Updates (<i>pgs. 29-41</i>) Non Point Plan Update (<i>pgs. 42-46</i>) RCPD Status Update RMS Planning 	Ron Shultz Ron Shultz Ron Shultz/Kelly Susewind Roylene Rides at the Door Roylene Rides at the Door	Information Information Information Information Information
12:00 p.m. 30 minutes		LUNCH PROVIDED- please RSVP by March 9 to the Commission		

******* PUBLIC COMMENT WILL BE ALLOWED PRIOR TO ACTION ITEMS *******
Please note: 3 minutes per person

TAB 2

Washington State Conservation Commission Regular Business Meeting

DRAFT

Port Angeles, Washington

January 15, 2015

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/WSCC) met in regular session on January 15, 2015, in Port Angeles, Washington. Commissioner O’Keefe called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Clinton O’Keefe, Chair
Lynn Brown, Vice Chair, Central Region
Dean Longrie, West Region
Jim Peters, Member
Lynn Bahrych, Member
Perry Beale, Dept. of Agriculture
Alan Stromberger, WA Association
of Conservation Districts (WACD)
Kelly Susewind, Department of Ecology (DOE)
Todd Welker, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT

Mark Clark, Executive Director
Debbie Becker, Admin. & Finance Director
Ray Ledgerwood, Program Facilitator
Ron Shultz, Policy Director
Laura Johnson, Communication & Outreach
Lori Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant
Brian Cochrane, CREP Coordinator
Shana Joy, PS Regional Manager

PARTNERS REPRESENTED AT THIS MEETING

Roylene Rides-at-the Door, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Dave Vogel, Executive Director, WA Association of Conservation Districts (WACD)
Tom Eaton, Executive Director, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

GUESTS ATTENDED

Chairwoman Francis Charles, Lower Elwha Indian Tribe, Vice-Chairman Grieg Arnold, Makah Indian Nation, Matt Heins, Clallam CD, Monti Marti, Snohomish CD, George Boggs, Whatcom CD, Robin Slate, NRCS, Joe Holtrop, Clallam CD, Carolyn Kelly, Skagit CD, and Dana Ecelberger, Jefferson CD.

Consent Agenda

Meeting minutes from December 4, 2014 were presented for approval.

Motion by Commissioner Peters to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Longrie. Motion passed.

Roylene Rides at the Door, NRCS State Conservationist, introduced Chairwoman Francis Charles from the Lower Elwha Indian Tribe and Vice Chairman, Grieg Arnold from the Makah Indian Nation. It was an honor for the Commission to listen to both tribes’ history in Port Angeles where we were currently touring and meeting.

Legislative Update/Policy Updates

Ron Shultz, SCC Policy Director briefed Commission members on several legislative and policy related items. The 105 day session began on Monday, January 12th. The Governor's Office had their first Director's meeting of the year on Wednesday. There has not been a meeting between the natural resource agencies since 2011. These meetings are designed for directors of various agencies to discuss bills affecting each other's agencies and any information or concerns that need to be addressed. If any of the concerns cannot be resolved, they are then carried over to the Thursday Legislative Liaisons meetings Ron participates in.

Mr. Shultz developed a memo outlining three options for consideration on how the Commission would like him to keep them informed of the current status of legislation during this legislative session. Commissioners discussed the options and also the importance of keeping ongoing communication and coordination with WACD. The following motion was made:

Motion by Commissioner Longrie to approve the current approach of allowing the Executive Director and Policy Director to determine strategy and approaches during session. The Executive Director would also determine times when a check in with the Executive Committee or the full Commission is necessary. In addition, staff will distribute a weekly status report to Commission members of legislation. Seconded by Commissioner Welker. Motion passed.

New Director at Fish and Wildlife

On January 10, 2015, Dr. Jim Unsworth will be replacing director, Phil Anderson as he retires from the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Dr. Unsworth is currently the Deputy Director of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

Voluntary Stewardship Program Update

Mr. Shultz provided an update on the current funding proposed in Governor Inslee's 2015-2017 operating budget. It currently reads as fully funding VSP plan development of \$7.6 million. Within this funding, it would allow for Department of Ag, Ecology, Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife to engage in the process and provide technical assistance on a local level. The fund source would come from the Public Works Assistance Account. This account is historically used for local construction projects as well as some city planning activities.

Thurston County VSP- Thurston County has been working with their VSP workgroup to implement VSP. Thurston CD has been identified as the lead entity to conduct implementation outreach to landowners once the work plan has been approved by the Conservation Commission.

Chelan County VSP- Chelan County continues to implement their VSP work group by focusing on overlaying the location of existing agricultural activity in the county with the location of critical areas. They are also developing a proposed landowner checklist for use by landowners identifying critical areas on their property.

Recreation Conservation Practice Program (RCPP)

USDA made an announcement earlier this week that Washington State was the recipient of 10% of the National money awarded. Out of nine proposals submitted, five were funded. A total of \$23.9 million dollars will be coming to Washington State for the next five years. This is the most out of any state. Precision Conservation in Puget Sound was one of the projects developed by SCC staff partnering with The Nature Conservancy and American Farmland Trust. Others awards went to Palouse Conservation District and others in WRIA 34 for projects to reduce sediment from agricultural runoff, a project by Colville and a Yakama Nation proposal addressing water quality and salmon habitat. Mr. Shultz states that this is not a direct award of funding but rather a line of credit and proponents still need to get landowners to sign up in EQIP.

Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC) in Clallam County

Joe Holtrop, Clallam CD District Manager discussed the district's involvement in PIC. PIC is program coordination for local agencies and organizations to identify and address pathogen and nutrient pollution from a variety of non-point sources, including onsite sewage systems, farm animals, pets and storm water runoff. PIC programs are also recognized in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Agencies are supporting the use of PIC as an approach for counties and /or tribes to establish or enhance key elements for a sustainable adaptive management program for pathogen and nutrient pollution. Mr. Holtrop explained the grants came with water quality monitoring. Clallam CD board was very supportive doing this plan. Clallam CD went to their county to offer assistance; however, they said they did not have the staff capacity. Clallam CD felt it was important enough and found a way to write the proposal and developed a process. The plan has been done and not yet approved by anyone. The local enforcement will be done by the County as they have the authority to do. Implementation should be starting soon and Clallam CD is very hopeful.

Mr. Holtrop added that while developing the plan, they focused on the tone and emphasis that enforcement would be taken as the very, very, last resort. Clallam CD is there to help anyway they can during the implementation to educate and assist.

Presentation by Taylor Shellfish Farms: Bill Taylor 4th generation shellfish farmer and Diani Taylor, daughter of Bill and 5th generation shellfish farmer.

Budget

Debbie Becker, Budget Director, went over the chart in the members meeting packets on the 2015-2017 Capital Budget.

Commissioner Welker mentioned to the group that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has met their product deliverables for less than anticipated, before the end of the biennium. DNR may have extra funding available that would need to be spent by the end of June. Conservation Districts would need to send in proposals for shovel ready projects and would need to have them done by June 15. It would need to be a very quick turnaround in completing. 50/50 match. DNR has given funding to conservation districts in the past for forest health issues and fire.

Mrs. Becker also provided a financial report to the Commission.

Shellfish Funding

Mr. Shultz provided the status of the shellfish funding. SCC will be funding approximately \$600K this week to more eligible districts and notifying all of them of their current standing in regards to their projects.

Communications Update

Laura Johnson, Communications staff briefed members on the recent efforts of the Communications Partners group. A photo gallery was recently created for photos to be shared and used throughout the state. Andrew Phay, CPO member from Whatcom CD was instrumental in the development of the gallery. The CPO group also hired a consultant to take a look at different tools districts can pull from on key messages. These tools will be available on the SCC website in a 'Tool Kit' for districts to use as a resource while developing materials. The Tool Kit is currently in progress.

Ms. Johnson shared the new logo concept for all conservation districts to use across the state as one unified logo and identity for districts to use on publication materials.

Mission Subcommittee Update

The subcommittee has been working together to reform the mission statement. The following was presented:

Purpose: To conserve natural resources on private lands through voluntary stewardship.

Mission Statement: *To work with conservation districts, the Governor's Office and partners in engaging landowners in voluntary stewardship.*

After much discussion, Commissioners would like this to be a topic at the May Strategic Planning Meeting. The following motion was made:

Motion by Commissioner Brown to move the mission statement discussion to the May Strategic Planning Session. For SCC Communications staff to send out to the Commission members and asking agency representatives to share with their communications staff for input. Seconded by Commissioner Bahrych. Motion passes.

WACD Resolutions

Dave Vogel, Executive Director of WACD, presented the resolutions that passed at their Annual Meeting and highlighted specific resolutions relating to the Conservation Commission.

Motion by Commissioner Stromberger for the Conservation Commission to support and help WACD with this (2014-01) resolution. Commissioner Longrie seconded. Motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Longrie to accept resolutions 2014-02 through 2014-09. Seconded by Commissioner Brown. Motion passed.

Conservation Commission Executive Committee

Members discussed the need of an agency representative to serve on the Commission's Executive Committee.

Commissioner Kelly Susewind, Department of Ecology rep volunteered to fill the vacancy.

Chair O'Keefe adjourned the meeting at 3:26 p.m.

TAB 3



Washington State Conservation Commission

March 6, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Ron Shultz, Policy Director

SUBJECT: Legislative Update

Summary: There are three bills directly impacting the Conservation Commission (SCC) still alive in the 2015 legislative session. Commission staff will continue to track and where appropriate work this legislation.

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

Description:

All bills must be out of their house of origin by 5pm March 11. As of this writing, there are three bills impacting the SCC that have cleared their house of origin and are still alive. The legislation and our position on the bills are described below:

SHB 1685 – Creating the Food Policy Forum at the Conservation Commission.

Status: Passed the House 53 yeas, 45 nays.

SCC Position: Support / Testify

- Establishes the Washington Food Policy Forum (Forum) as a public-private partnership at the SCC for the purposes of creating a forum in which state food policy, food-related programs, and food-related issues can be examined, improved, and better integrated.
- The SCC is required to staff the forum. Our estimated costs for this work (as requested in our fiscal note on the bill) is approximately \$100,000 for the biennium. The composition of the forum is to be selected by the director of the SCC
- Requires the Forum to make recommendations to the Legislature, transmitted through the SCC, by October 31, 2016.

The Forum makes recommendations after considering specific goals. The Forum's goals include:

1. increasing production, sales, and consumption of Washington-grown foods;
2. developing programs that increase purchases of Washington-grown foods for schools, adult care programs, and other state-funded food programs;
3. reviewing and developing programs that support providing proper nutrition and avoid burdens associated with obesity and chronic diet-related diseases;
4. protecting land and water resources needed for sustained local production;
5. examining ways to encourage and allow people to continue farming and providing for the continued economic viability of local food production, processing, and distribution in Washington; and
6. reducing food insecurity and hunger in Washington by ensuring that access to nutritious food is available to families of all income levels.

While making recommendations, the Forum is required to consider how the following things may help achieve the Forum's goals:

1. increased collaboration and communication between state agencies;
2. increased collaboration and communication between local, state, and federal agencies;
3. public-private partnerships that can leverage private and public market influence, like through institutional purchasing and contracting;
4. improvements to laws and regulations relevant to the food system and food security in the Washington;
5. improvements in how state and federal programs are implemented that are relevant to the food system and food security in Washington; and
6. identification of additional federal, state, local, and private investments needed to accomplish the recommendations.

SSB 5322 – Addressing rates and charges for conservation districts.

Status: Passed the Senate 30 yeas, 18 nays, 1 absent.

SCC Position: Support / Testify

Increases the allowable per parcel amount for King CD from \$10 to \$15; and for Snohomish, Pierce, and Spokane CDs the amount is raised from \$5 to \$10.

SSB 5347 – Creating demonstration projects for preserving agricultural land and public infrastructure in flood plains.

Status: Passed the Senate 48 yeas, 1 nay.

SCC Position: Support the role of the SCC as convener / Testify

The SCC and WSDA, DNR, Ecology, and WDFW must jointly identify and assess three demonstration projects that test the effectiveness and costs of river management by using various management strategies and techniques to accomplish specified goals.

The SCC must convene a stakeholder group with the four departments, plus local and statewide agricultural organizations, tribes, land conservation organizations, and local governments to develop and assess three demonstration projects, one located in Whatcom county, one located in Snohomish county, and one located in Grays Harbor county.

The departments must report to the Legislature by December 31, 2015, and annually thereafter on the elements in the bill.

All requirements in the bill are subject to the availability of funds appropriated for the specific purposes described.

The SCC fiscal note requests \$166,716 for our agency activities on this legislation.

ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1685

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By House Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Gregerson, Hudgins, McBride, Peterson, Bergquist, Ortiz-Self, Tarleton, Orwall, Robinson, Farrell, Riccelli, Fitzgibbon, Walkinshaw, Senn, Lytton, Appleton, Ryu, Tharinger, Moscoso, Ormsby, Fey, and Jenkins)

READ FIRST TIME 02/16/15.

1 AN ACT Relating to the establishment of a Washington food policy
2 forum; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

5 (a) Numerous governmental agencies, state programs, and private
6 entities share goals and missions relating to food, nutrition,
7 agriculture, health, education, and economic development through
8 sustained agricultural production and improved access to nutritious
9 foods;

10 (b) The food and agriculture industry generates forty-nine
11 billion dollars annually, employs one hundred sixty thousand people,
12 and contributes thirteen percent to the state's economy;

13 (c) Agriculture is a leading employer in the state, produces over
14 three hundred different crops, and is composed of many diverse types
15 of agricultural endeavors;

16 (d) The state of Washington continues to lose farmland every year
17 to nonfarming uses;

18 (e) Washington is ranked with the bottom half of states for very
19 low food security;

1 (f) According to data average for the years 2004 through 2008,
2 nearly sixty-one percent of Washington adults are either obese or
3 overweight;

4 (g) Obesity contributes substantially to the burden of
5 preventable illnesses and premature death, which are estimated to
6 cost Washington almost two billion dollars annually;

7 (h) There is a known link between food insecurity and housing
8 insecurity;

9 (i) The state's food system is the network of people and
10 activities connecting growing and harvesting, processing,
11 distribution, consumption, and residue utilization, as well as
12 associated government and nongovernment institutions, regulations,
13 and programs.

14 (j) The current food system in the state of Washington is complex
15 and directly affected by the activities and policies of multiple
16 nongovernmental organizations, state agencies, and local governments,
17 and a coordinated, systemic approach is necessary to improve the
18 health of Washington's citizens and improve the economic viability of
19 agriculture; and

20 (k) The work done by the regional food policy councils in the
21 state can serve as a model for statewide efforts to bring together
22 community, government, business, and agricultural interests to work
23 on integrated and sustainable policy recommendations to strengthen
24 the regional food system that works towards a thriving, inclusive,
25 and just local and regional food system that enhances the health of
26 people, diverse communities, economies, and environments.

27 (2) The legislature recognizes the need to understand the impacts
28 of governmental rules and regulations on the viability of the
29 agricultural sector and on the ability of citizens of all backgrounds
30 to obtain sufficient, high quality foods for themselves and their
31 families.

32 (3) The purpose of this act is to provide for the establishment
33 of a forum whereby state food policy, food-related programs, and
34 food-related issues can be examined, improved, and better integrated
35 to accomplish the overarching public goals. It is the intent of the
36 legislature to place the state in a favorable position to qualify for
37 available federal funds, moneys from foundations, and other sources
38 to fund the activities of the forum.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Washington food policy forum is
2 established as a public-private partnership. The purpose of the forum
3 is to develop recommendations to advance the following food system
4 goals:

5 (a) To increase production, sales, and consumption of
6 Washington-grown foods;

7 (b) To develop and promote programs that bring healthy Washington
8 grown foods to Washington residents, including increased state
9 purchasing of local food products for schools, adult care programs,
10 and other state-funded food programs;

11 (c) To review and develop programs that support providing proper
12 nutrition and avoid burdens of obesity and chronic diet-related
13 diseases;

14 (d) To protect the land and water resources needed for sustained
15 local food production;

16 (e) To examine ways to encourage retention of an adequate number
17 of farmers, the educational needs for an adequate agricultural
18 workforce, and to provide for the continued economic viability of
19 local food production, processing, and distribution in the state; and

20 (f) To reduce food insecurity and hunger in the state and ensure
21 that the health and societal benefits of a healthy Washington food
22 system that provides access to nutritionally dense foods are shared
23 with families at all income levels, and particularly with vulnerable
24 children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and communities of
25 color.

26 (2) Recommendations of the food policy forum must consider, but
27 not be limited to, ways in which the following may help achieve each
28 of the six goals identified under subsection (1) of this section:

29 (a) Increased collaboration and communication between local,
30 state, and federal governments and agencies;

31 (b) Innovative public-private partnerships that can leverage
32 private and public market influence, such as through institutional
33 purchasing and contracts;

34 (c) Improvements to state or federal laws or regulations relevant
35 to the food system and food security in the state;

36 (d) Improvements in state or federal program implementation
37 relevant to the food system and food security in the state; and

38 (e) Identification of additional federal, state, local, and
39 private investments needed to accomplish the recommendations.

40 (3) In developing its recommendations, the food policy forum:

1 (a) Shall coordinate with the office of farmland preservation to
2 avoid duplication of effort;

3 (b) Shall solicit public input through public hearings or
4 informational sessions;

5 (c) May conduct research and analysis as needed within financial
6 resources available to the forum;

7 (d) May form an advisory committee or committees to address
8 issues identified by the forum as requiring additional study or
9 particular expertise;

10 (e) Shall coordinate with, and build on the processes already
11 undertaken by the Washington state food system roundtable initiated
12 by executive order No. 10-02; and

13 (f) Shall coordinate with the Washington State University center
14 for sustaining agriculture and natural resources as provided in
15 section 3 of this act.

16 (4) The director of the state conservation commission is
17 responsible for appointing participating members of the food policy
18 forum. In making appointments, the director of the state conservation
19 commission must attempt to ensure a diversity of knowledge,
20 experience, and perspectives by building on the representation
21 established by the food system roundtable initiated by executive
22 order No. 10-02 and from sources such as:

23 (a) State and federal government employees, including academia;

24 (b) Related nonprofit and community organizations; and

25 (c) The food industry, including food production, processing,
26 distribution, marketing, and retail sales.

27 (5) A majority of the participating members appointed by the
28 director of the state conservation commission must appoint an
29 administrative chair for the forum.

30 (6) In addition to members appointed by the director of the state
31 conservation commission, four legislators may serve on the food
32 policy forum in an ex officio capacity. Legislative participants must
33 be appointed as follows:

34 (a) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint one
35 member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of
36 representatives; and

37 (b) The president of the senate shall appoint one member from
38 each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

1 (7) Each member of the food policy forum shall serve without
2 compensation but may be reimbursed for travel expenses as authorized
3 in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

4 (8) Staff for the food policy forum must be provided by the state
5 conservation commission. The state conservation commission is
6 responsible for transmitting the recommendations of the food policy
7 forum to the legislature. All recommendations of the food policy
8 forum must be transmitted to the legislature by the state
9 conservation commission, consistent with RCW 43.01.036, by October
10 31, 2016. The recommendations may include considerations for
11 continuation of the food policy forum beyond the expiration date of
12 this section and any changes to the mission, charge, or structure of
13 the food policy forum should it continue beyond the expiration date.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The food policy forum shall coordinate
15 with the Washington State University center for sustaining
16 agriculture and natural resources and review, consider, and discuss
17 the study described in this section that must be performed by the
18 Washington State University center for sustaining agriculture and
19 natural resources.

20 (2) The study shall build on the work performed by the Washington
21 state food system roundtable initiated by executive order No. 10-02
22 and identify a twenty-five year goal for expansion of the state's
23 food production, processing, and distribution capacity by:

24 (a) Evaluating the geographic distances between local farm
25 production and points of local food consumption within the local food
26 supply chain in order to define what constitutes a local economic
27 impact;

28 (b) Evaluating the state's capacity to produce a variety of food
29 products given the state's environment and climate;

30 (c) Assessing a potential market demand for an increased local
31 food supply, through surveys of processors, distributors, and buyers;

32 (d) Analyzing the Seattle restaurant online resource as a model
33 and potential navigational tool for local food producers as a
34 potential replacement of the Washington state department of
35 agriculture handbook for small and direct marketing farms, to reduce
36 regulatory barriers within the local food supply chain;

37 (e) Identifying infrastructure needs to support the local food
38 industry, including processing capacity and transportation networks;

1 (f) Assessing the relative economic impact of retaining local
2 food supply chain business within the state and local food producers
3 exporting goods out of state;

4 (g) Assessing the institutional capacity of state agencies and
5 organizations to foster economic growth in the food sector;

6 (h) Evaluating changes in state planning, permitting,
7 environmental regulation, and financing to enhance food production,
8 processing, and distribution;

9 (i) Evaluating the economic impact of urban community gardens,
10 including P-patches that are part of the local food supply chain and
11 provide healthy foods for schools and local communities; and

12 (j) Identifying legislative actions needed to implement food
13 system improvements.

14 (3) The recommendations of the study must include short and long-
15 term action plans for the legislature to support and sustain the
16 local food sector in Washington. The recommendations of the study
17 must also include strategies for effective education and awareness
18 programs with school and community groups about the local food supply
19 chain. The recommendations of the study may include specific
20 legislative approaches, such as changes in state law, and
21 nonlegislative approaches, such as action plans for state agencies
22 and local governments.

23 (4) The members of the food policy forum appointed pursuant to
24 section 2 of this act may provide technical information, advice, and
25 assistance to the Washington State University center for sustaining
26 agriculture and natural resources in completing the study.

27 (5) The study, with findings and recommendations, must be
28 reported to the food policy forum by July 1, 2016.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act expires July 1, 2017.

--- END ---

SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5322

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senate Agriculture, Water & Rural Economic Development (originally sponsored by Senators Hatfield, Hobbs, and Honeyford)

READ FIRST TIME 02/04/15.

1 AN ACT Relating to conservation districts' rates and charges; and
2 amending RCW 89.08.405.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 89.08.405 and 2012 c 60 s 1 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 (1) Any county legislative authority may approve by resolution
7 revenues to a conservation district by fixing rates and charges. The
8 county legislative authority may provide for this system of rates and
9 charges as an alternative to, but not in addition to, a special
10 assessment provided by RCW 89.08.400. In fixing rates and charges,
11 the county legislative authority may in its discretion consider the
12 information proposed to the county legislative authority by a
13 conservation district consistent with this section.

14 (2) A conservation district, in proposing a system of rates and
15 charges, may consider:

16 (a) Services furnished, to be furnished, or available to the
17 landowner;

18 (b) Benefits received, to be received, or available to the
19 property;

20 (c) The character and use of land;

1 (d) The nonprofit public benefit status, as defined in RCW
2 24.03.490, of the land user;

3 (e) The income level of persons served or provided benefits under
4 this chapter, including senior citizens and disabled persons; or

5 (f) Any other matters that present a reasonable difference as a
6 ground for distinction, including the natural resource needs within
7 the district and the capacity of the district to provide either
8 services or improvements, or both.

9 (3)(a) The system of rates and charges may include an annual per
10 acre amount, an annual per parcel amount, or an annual per parcel
11 amount plus an annual per acre amount. If included in the system of
12 rates and charges, the maximum annual per acre rate or charge shall
13 not exceed ten cents per acre. The maximum annual per parcel rate
14 shall not exceed five dollars, except that for counties with a
15 population of over (~~one million five~~) four hundred eighty thousand
16 persons, the maximum annual per parcel rate shall not exceed ten
17 dollars, and for counties with a population of over one million five
18 hundred thousand persons, the maximum annual per parcel rate shall
19 not exceed fifteen dollars.

20 (b) Public land, including lands owned or held by the state,
21 shall be subject to rates and charges to the same extent as privately
22 owned lands. The procedures provided in chapter 79.44 RCW shall be
23 followed if lands owned or held by the state are subject to the rates
24 and charges of a conservation district.

25 (c) Forest lands used solely for the planting, growing, or
26 harvesting of trees may be subject to rates and charges if such lands
27 are served by the activities of the conservation district. However,
28 if the system of rates and charges includes an annual per acre amount
29 or an annual per parcel amount plus an annual per acre amount, the
30 per acre rate or charge on such forest lands shall not exceed
31 one-tenth of the weighted average per acre rate or charge on all
32 other lands within the conservation district that are subject to
33 rates and charges. The calculation of the weighted average per acre
34 shall be a ratio calculated as follows: (i) The numerator shall be
35 the total amount of money estimated to be derived from the per acre
36 special rates and charges on the nonforest lands in the conservation
37 district; and (ii) the denominator shall be the total number of
38 nonforest land acres in the conservation district that are served by
39 the activities of the conservation district and that are subject to
40 the rates or charges of the conservation district. No more than ten

1 thousand acres of such forest lands that is both owned by the same
2 person or entity and is located in the same conservation district may
3 be subject to the rates and charges that are imposed for that
4 conservation district in any year. Per parcel charges shall not be
5 imposed on forest land parcels. However, in lieu of a per parcel
6 charge, a charge of up to three dollars per forest landowner may be
7 imposed on each owner of forest lands whose forest lands are subject
8 to a per acre rate or charge.

9 (4) The consideration, development, adoption, and implementation
10 of a system of rates and charges shall follow the same public notice
11 and hearing process and be subject to the same procedure and
12 authority of RCW 89.08.400(2).

13 (5)(a) Following the adoption of a system of rates and charges,
14 the conservation district board of supervisors shall establish by
15 resolution a process providing for landowner appeals of the
16 individual rates and charges as applicable to a parcel or parcels.

17 (b) Any appeal must be filed by the landowner with the
18 conservation district no later than twenty-one days after the date
19 property taxes are due. The decision of the board of supervisors
20 regarding any appeal shall be final and conclusive.

21 (c) Any appeal of the decision of the board shall be to the
22 superior court of the county in which the district is located, and
23 served and filed within twenty-one days of the date of the board's
24 written decision.

25 (6) A conservation district shall prepare a roll that implements
26 the system of rates and charges approved by the county legislative
27 authority. The rates and charges from the roll shall be spread by the
28 county assessor as a separate item on the tax rolls and shall be
29 collected and accounted for with property taxes by the county
30 treasurer. The amount of the rates and charges shall constitute a
31 lien against the land that shall be subject to the same conditions as
32 a tax lien, and collected by the treasurer in the same manner as
33 delinquent real property taxes, and subject to the same interest and
34 penalty as for delinquent property taxes. The county treasurer shall
35 deduct an amount from the collected rates and charges, as established
36 by the county legislative authority, to cover the costs incurred by
37 the county assessor and county treasurer in spreading and collecting
38 the rates and charges, but not to exceed the actual costs of such
39 work. All remaining funds collected under this section shall be

1 transferred to the conservation district and used by the conservation
2 district in accordance with this section.

3 (7) The rates and charges for a conservation district shall not
4 be spread on the tax rolls and shall not be allocated with property
5 tax collections in the following year if, after the system of rates
6 and charges has been approved by the county legislative authority but
7 before the fifteenth day of December in that year, a petition has
8 been filed with the county legislative authority objecting to the
9 imposition of such rates and charges, which petition has been signed
10 by at least twenty percent of the owners of land that would be
11 subject to the rate or charge to be imposed for a conservation
12 district.

--- END ---

ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5347

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hobbs, Hatfield, Warnick, Honeyford, and Pearson)

READ FIRST TIME 02/25/15.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating demonstration projects for preserving
2 agricultural land and public infrastructure in flood plains; and
3 adding a new section to chapter 43.23 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.23
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The legislature intends that the state conservation
8 commission and the departments of ecology, agriculture, fish and
9 wildlife, and natural resources work together cooperatively,
10 efficiently, and productively to facilitate the expeditious
11 construction of three demonstration projects. The legislature expects
12 that the joint and contemporaneous participation of all these state
13 agencies will expedite the permitting of these demonstration
14 projects. The legislature further intends that the collaborative
15 process that the stakeholder group creates, including local
16 stakeholders among others, will be used as a model for river
17 management throughout the state.

18 (2) The legislature finds that floodplain management must address
19 multiple benefits including: Reducing flood hazard to public
20 infrastructure and other land uses caused by sediment accumulation or

1 for other causes; improving fish and wildlife habitat; sustaining
2 viable agriculture; and public access.

3 (3) The state conservation commission and the departments of
4 agriculture, natural resources, fish and wildlife, and ecology must
5 jointly identify and assess three demonstration projects that test
6 the effectiveness and costs of river management by using various
7 management strategies and techniques as applied to accomplish the
8 following goals:

9 (a) Protection of agricultural lands;

10 (b) Restoration or enhancement of fish runs; and

11 (c) Protection of public infrastructure and recreational access.

12 (4)(a) The state conservation commission must convene a
13 stakeholder group consisting of the departments of agriculture,
14 natural resources, fish and wildlife, and ecology, local and
15 statewide agricultural organizations, land conservation
16 organizations, and local governments with interest and experience in
17 floodplain management techniques. The stakeholder group must develop
18 and assess three demonstration projects, one located in Whatcom
19 county, one located in Snohomish county, and one located in Grays
20 Harbor county. The departments must also consult with and obtain the
21 views of the federally recognized tribes that may be affected by each
22 pilot project.

23 (b) In developing and assessing these demonstration projects, the
24 departments must examine sediment management conducted in the Fraser
25 river, British Columbia, Canada and include any potentially
26 applicable practices in the demonstration projects.

27 (c) The departments must: (i) Examine and find whether and how
28 the Fraser river experience applies to the goals of this act; and
29 (ii) set benchmarks and a timetable for progress toward achievement
30 of the goals of this act.

31 (d) The disposition of any gravel resources removed as a result
32 of these pilot projects that are owned by the state must be
33 consistent with chapter 79.140 RCW, otherwise they must be: (i) Used
34 at the departments' discretion in projects related to fish programs
35 in the local area of the project or by property owners adjacent to
36 the project; (ii) made available to a local tribe for its use; or
37 (iii) sold and the proceeds applied to funding the demonstration
38 projects.

39 (5) At a minimum, the pilot projects must examine the following
40 management strategies and techniques:

1 (a) Setting back levees and other measures to accommodate high
2 flow with reduced risk to property, while providing space for river
3 processes that are vital to the creation of fish habitat;

4 (b) Providing deeper, cooler holes for fish life;

5 (c) Removing excess sediment and gravel that causes diversion of
6 water and erosion of river banks and farmland;

7 (d) Providing off-channels for habitat as refuge during high
8 flows;

9 (e) Ensuring that any management activities leave sufficient
10 gravel and sediment for fish spawning and rearing;

11 (f) Providing stable river banks that will allow for long-term
12 growth of riparian enhancement efforts, such as planting shade trees
13 and hedgerows;

14 (g) Protecting existing mature treed riparian zones that cool the
15 waters;

16 (h) Restoring previously existing bank contours that protect the
17 land from erosion caused by more intense and more frequent flooding;
18 and

19 (i) Developing management practices that reduce the amount of
20 gravel, sediment, and woody debris deposited into farm fields.

21 (6) The departments must report to the legislative committees
22 with oversight of agriculture, water, rural economic development,
23 ecology, fish and wildlife, and natural resources by December 31,
24 2015, on: (a) Their examination and findings of the applicability of
25 the Fraser river experience to the goals of this act; (b) their
26 progress toward setting benchmarks and meeting the stakeholder
27 group's timetable; (c) any decisions made in assessing the projects;
28 and (d) agency recommendations for funding of the projects from
29 federal grants, federal loans, state grants and loans, and private
30 donations, or if other funding sources are not available or complete,
31 submitting the three projects for consideration in the biennial
32 capital budget request to the governor and the legislature. The
33 departments must report annually thereafter by December 31st of each
34 year.

35 (7) The stakeholder group must be staffed jointly by the
36 departments.

1 (8) All requirements in this section are subject to the
2 availability of amounts appropriated for the specific purposes
3 described.

--- END ---

March 11, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Ron Shultz, Policy Director

SUBJECT: Policy Update – Drought Preparations

Summary: Ecology is preparing for a potential drought condition this summer. The WSAC has been activated. SCC staff sit on this committee.

Next Steps: The WSAC will continue to meet in the coming weeks and evaluate snowpack reports to prepare for potential drought conditions.

Staff Contacts: Jon Culp, Water Resources Program Manager
(509) 385-7509 jculp@scc.wa.gov

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

Description:

Current and projected snowpack conditions are significantly reduced creating the very real potential for a drought this summer.

As of March 5th, Washington's SNOTEL system is indicating the current Snow Water Equivalent (if you melted the snow, how much water would it turn into) percent of normal is not good around the State:

- Statewide snowpack is 29 percent of normal.
- Lower Yakima - 37 percent of normal
- Upper Yakima - 25 percent of normal
- Lower Columbia - 15 percent of normal
- South Puget Sound - 21 percent of normal
- Central Puget Sound - 9 percent of normal
- Olympic Peninsula at - percent of normal snowpack

For a drought to be declared, the following finding must be made with respect to the water supply conditions in the state, or parts of the state:

1. Water supply is currently, or is expected to be, less than 75 percent of normal; **and**
2. There is an expectation of undue hardship due to the deficit in water supply.

Ecology convenes the Water Supply Availability Committee (WSAC) to make recommendations on whether water supply conditions are likely to be less than 75 percent of normal. If so, the Emergency Water Executive Committee can make a hardship call and recommend to the Governor's Office that a drought be declared.

Summary of Water Supply Conditions from Ecology:

- Snowpack is at record low and near record low conditions in some locations (e.g., Olympics, Lower Columbia, South Puget Sound, Central Puget Sound), and below normal conditions elsewhere.
- Precipitation has been normal or near normal for most of the state. Problem has been much-above-normal temperatures. December and January has record average warm temperatures in the Olympics and much of the Cascades.
- Water supply dependent on surface water likely to be more impacted than water supply dependent on groundwater.
- The Yakima Reservoirs are in near-full condition (93 percent of capacity). In 2005, they were at 65 percent of capacity on March 6. Current back-of-the-envelope calculations of Total Water Supply Availability indicate the situation is not clearly dire. **Whether, and to what extent, pro-rationing of junior users will be required is as yet UNKNOWN.** The situation is dynamic and much depends on what kind of spring we have.
- Columbia River mainstem flows projected to be 89 percent of average at The Dalles. It is very unlikely regulation of users junior to the Columbia River instream flow will be required.
- Climate outlook for this spring and summer calls for continued higher chance of warmer than normal temperatures.

Ecology has requested drought related funding from the legislature. The package includes the following:

In the Yakima Basin

- \$500,000 for permanent water acquisitions to offset long-term flow reductions to TWSA due to emergency well use
- \$500,000 to lease water rights in the Yakima Basin for tributary stream flow improvement and in-time mitigation for SVID to Roza ID transfers – 4,000 acre-feet
- \$4,000,000 for public agricultural irrigation projects – based on 40,000 acre/feet of water to get Roza ID from 55-60% to 70% of their entitlement

- \$183,000 to hire 6 temporary staff for Post 1905 compliance work, minimum flow compliance work in the Wenatchee, Okanogan and Methow Rivers

Statewide (outside of the Yakima basin)

- \$450,000 to lease water rights in other basins across the state to improve flow during critical periods
- \$2,000,000 to fund emergency work to assist public water systems facing water shortages as a result of drought conditions.
- \$120,000 to fund temporary staff for drought assistance in the Eastern, Northwestern and Southwestern Region Offices.
- \$50,000 for public education (workshops, technical guidance, drought condition updates) provided by the Office of State Climatologist and State Conservation Commission.
- \$100,000 to fund stream gauging and stream flow measurement.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife projected expenditures for drought response include actions necessary to provide reliable water to hatchery facilities, conduct emergency salvage operations or channel modifications and take actions to address drought impacts on WDFW lands.

- Total estimated cost for WDFW actions is \$1,083,000.

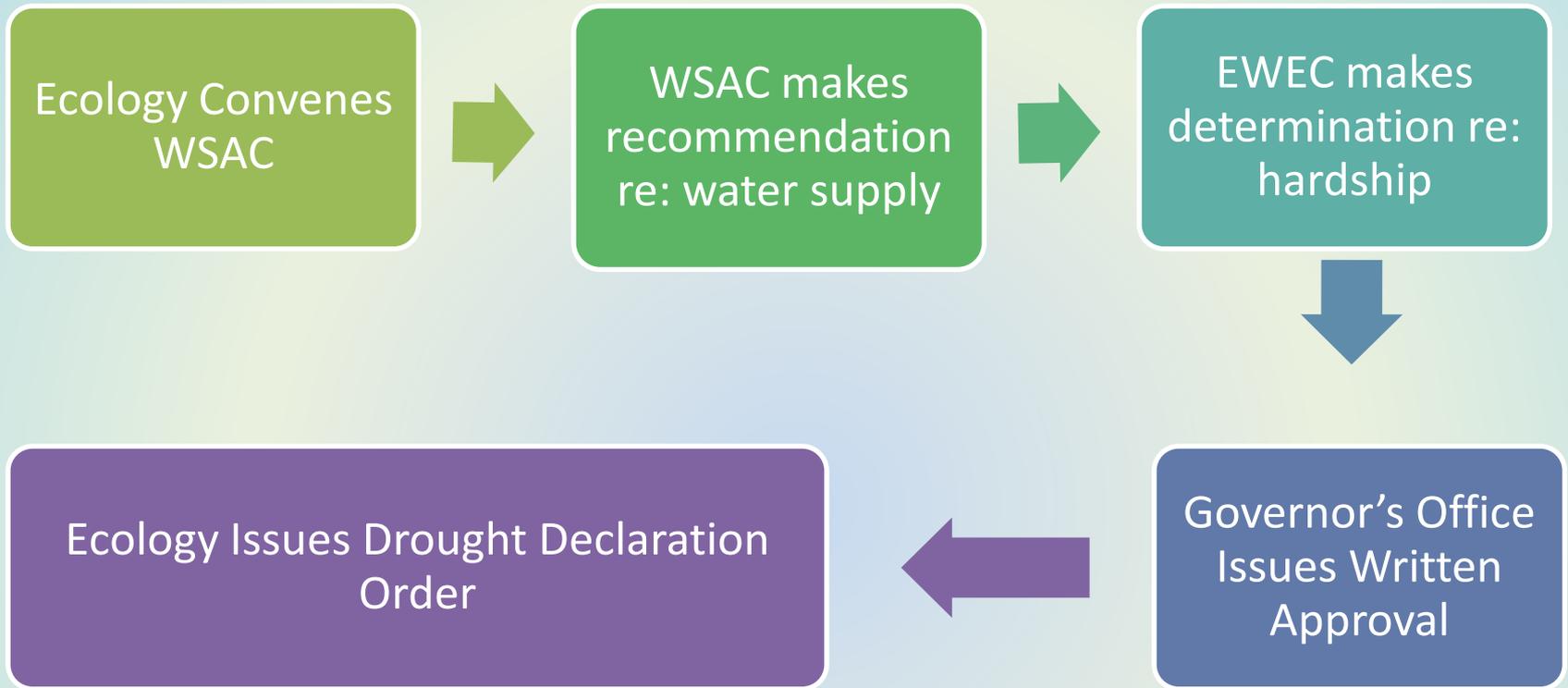
Administrative Drought Trigger

- Water supply conditions where a geographical area or a significant part of a geographical area is receiving, or is projected to receive, *less than seventy-five percent of normal water supply* as the result of natural conditions and *the deficiency causes, or is expected to cause, undue hardship to water users within that area.* [WAC 173-166-030(2)]

Normal Water Supply

- “The average amount of water available to a geographical area on an annual basis, based upon evaluation of precipitation, streamflow, snowpack and other hydrological and meteorological factors”
[WAC 173-166-030(6)]

Process

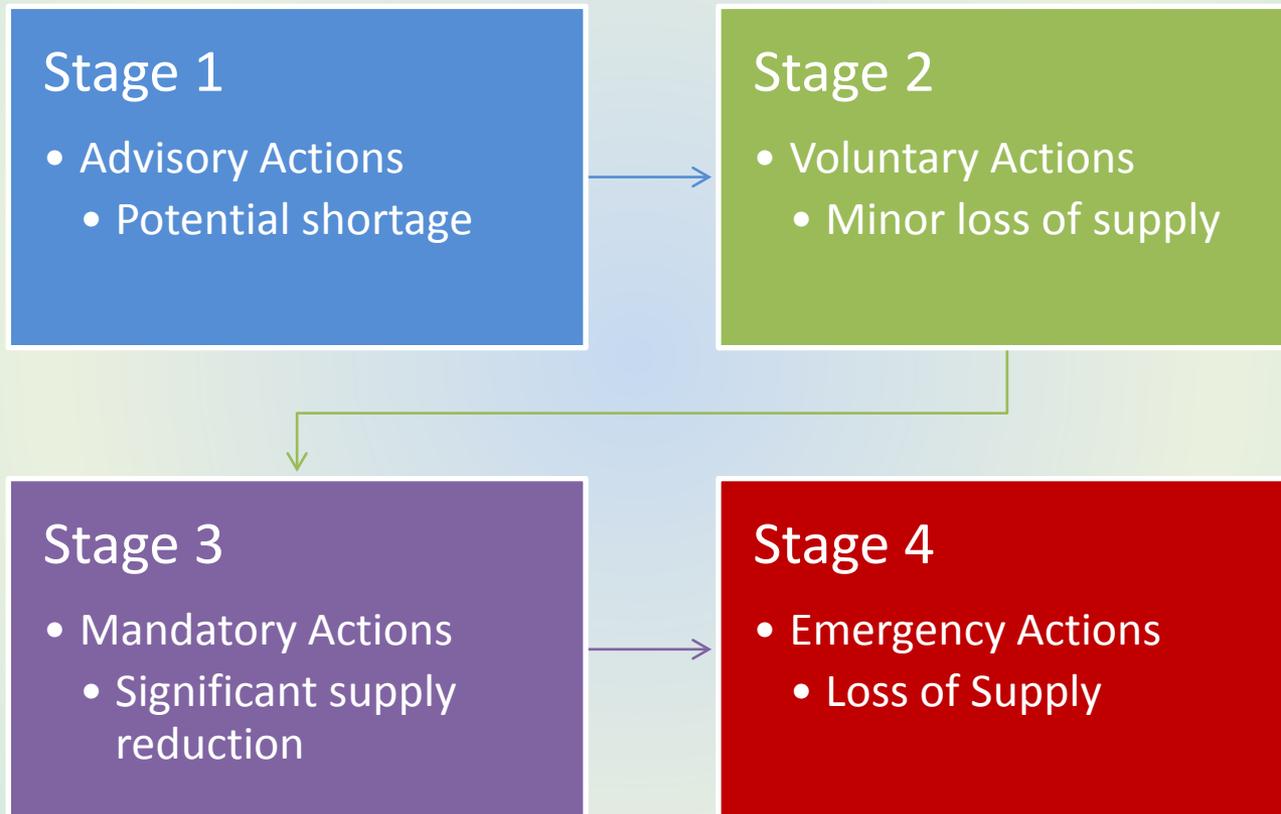


WSAC = Water Supply Availability Committee (Technical)
EWEC = Executive Water Emergency Committee (Policy)

Effect of Drought Order

- Expedited processing for Emergency Drought Permits
- Temporary transfers of water rights
- Funding assistance for public entities (municipalities, irrigation districts, PUDs, etc.)
- Workshops, public education
- Regulation to protect senior water rights

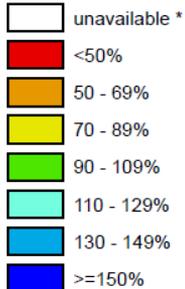
Public Water Systems Water Shortage Response Plans (>1000 connections)



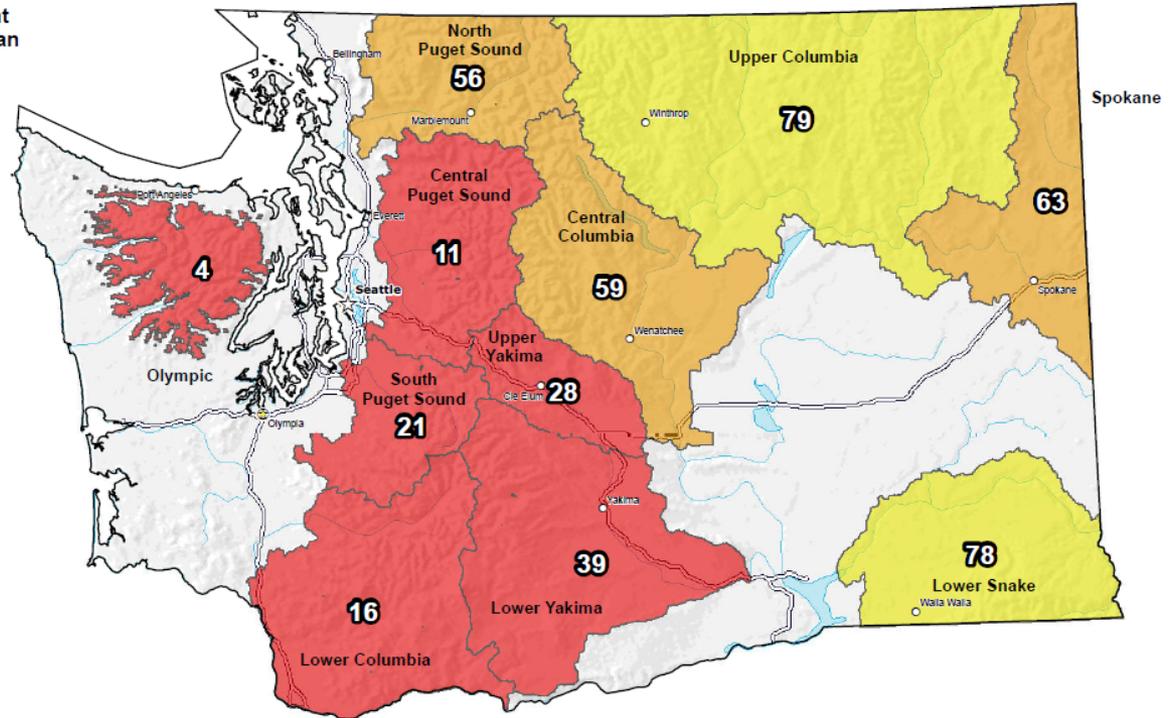
Washington SNOTEL Current Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) % of Normal

Feb 17, 2015

Current Snow Water Equivalent (SWE)
Basin-wide Percent
of 1981-2010 Median



* Data unavailable at time of posting or measurement is not representative at this time of year



Provisional Data
Subject to Revision



The snow water equivalent percent of normal represents the current snow water equivalent found at selected SNOTEL sites in or near the basin compared to the average value for those sites on this day. Data based on the first reading of the day (typically 00:00).

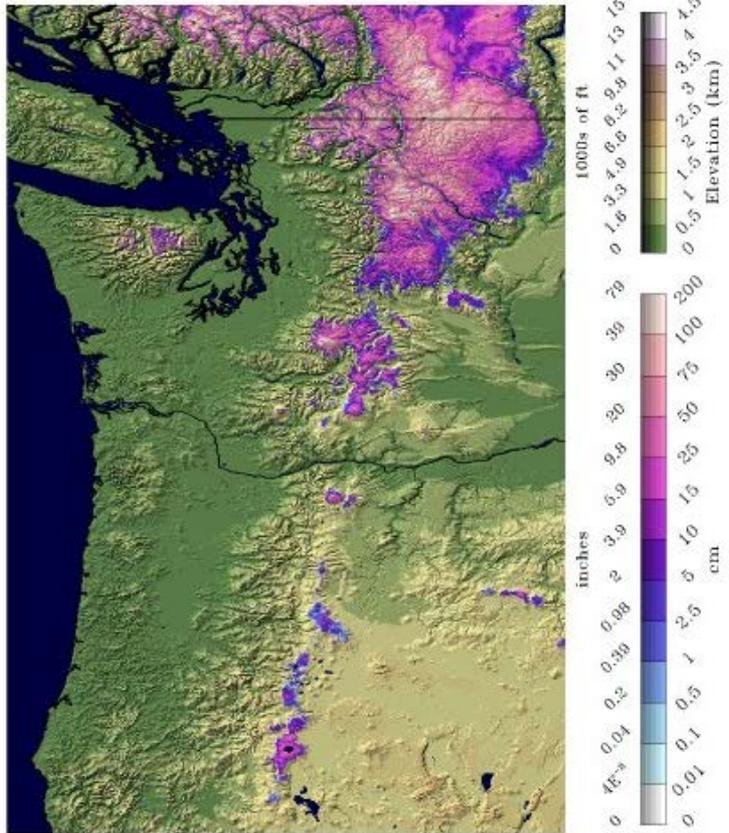


Prepared by:
USDA/NRCS National Water and Climate Center
Portland, Oregon
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>

Snow Analyses: Today vs. Last Year

Snow Water Equivalent

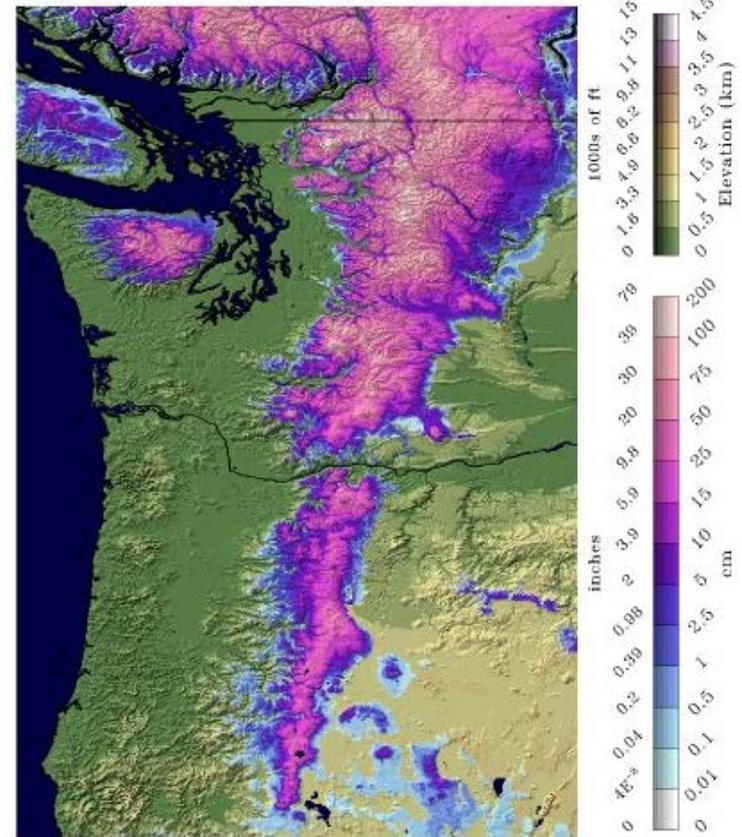
2015-02-17 06 UTC



NOHRSC National Snow 2014-2015 Analysis 2015

Snow Water Equivalent

2014-02-17 06 UTC



NOHRSC National Snow 2013-2014 Analysis 2014



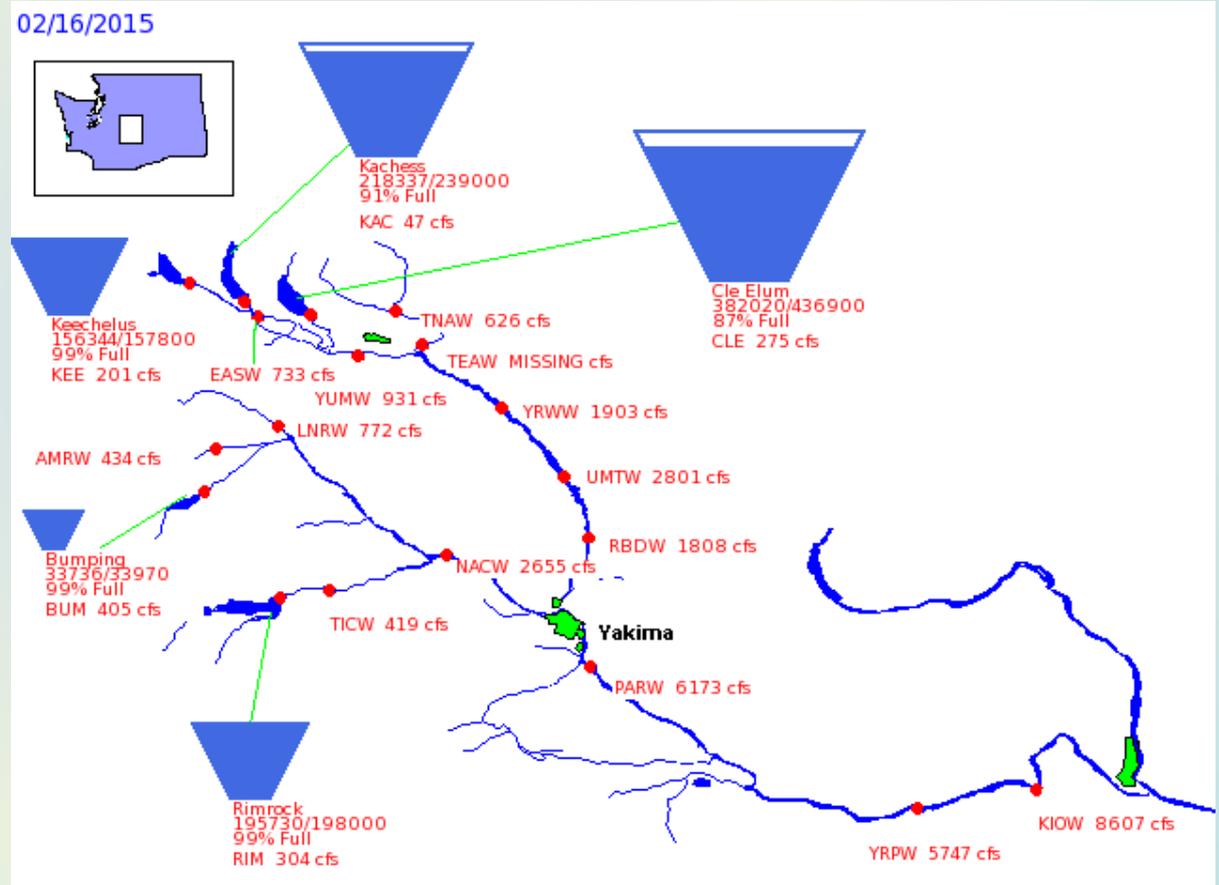
Photo taken of the Olympic Mountain range from Hurricane Ridge on January 27th. Hurricane Ridge snow course reported zero snow which has only happened twice since 1960 (1977 & 2005). Photo by Bill Baccus, Olympic National Park.

Regulating Columbia River Users

- Average runoff at The Dalles is about 93 Million Acre Feet (MAF) between April and September
- On March 1, a forecast of Less than 88 MAF but above 60 MAF triggers voluntary conservation
- If the March 1 forecast is equal to or less than 60 MAF, then users are subject to regulation
- **Current Forecast is for 80.5 MAF (February 24)**

Focus on Yakima Basin

- Five federal reservoirs. Snowpack is the “6th reservoir.”
- Snowpack is currently about 34 percent of normal.
- Reservoir storage is currently 176 percent of average (93 percent of total capacity).
- Bureau of Reclamation will announce March 9st official forecast for water supply.





Washington State Conservation Commission

March 6, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Ron Shultz, Policy Director

SUBJECT: Nonpoint Plan Update

Summary: SCC staff has been working with WACD to develop informational materials for conservation districts on the Ecology update of the state's nonpoint plan.

Next Steps: SCC staff and WACD will continue to work with districts to prepare comments and provide input to Ecology as the agency prepares the final nonpoint plan.

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

Description:

The Commission was briefed at the December meeting by Ecology staff on the agency's plan for revising and updating the state's water quality nonpoint plan. This plan is required by section 319 of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA). The state's current plan was last approved in 2005. Plans are to be revised and updated every 5 years.

Ecology is on a path to have the plan updated this year and is reaching out to a variety of stakeholder groups, agencies, and tribes to gather input. On February 26 SCC staff sent a message to all conservation districts seeking their input on a series of questions developed by Ecology staff. The attached fact sheet includes these questions.

More information will be developed by SCC staff in cooperation with WACD for distribution to conservation districts to allow them to further engage with Ecology in the nonpoint plan revision. The attached fact sheet was developed by SCC staff in coordination with WACD and distributed to all districts.

A draft plan will be developed by spring 2015 after which public meetings and a public comment period will begin. A plan must be submitted to EPA by June 30, 2015.



Washington State Conservation Commission

FEBRUARY 2014

POLICY FACT SHEET – ECOLOGY 319 NONPOINT PLAN UPDATE

Background

Ecology has announced they are beginning the process to review and update the state's nonpoint plan for the control of water pollution. The plan covers all types of nonpoint pollution, is a roadmap for how the state will address nonpoint pollution, and will include goals and clear standards.

A draft plan will be developed by spring 2015 after which public meetings and a public comment period will begin. A plan must be submitted to EPA by June 30, 2015.

The Conservation Commission in partnership with WACD will prepare informational materials for conservation districts and assist districts in engaging with Ecology during the draft plan development process.

WSCC and WACD believe **conservation districts must play a part in building** this nonpoint-source plan update.

How it impacts the SCC and conservation districts:

According to the federal statute, a nonpoint plan must include:

- Identification of nonpoint sources
- Describe the process, including intergovernmental coordination and public participation, for identifying best management practices and measures to control nonpoint pollution
- Identify state and local programs for controlling nonpoint pollution
- Schedule of annual milestones for program implementation and best management practice implementation

In developing and implementing a nonpoint program, the state "is to involve local public and private agencies and organizations which have expertise in control of nonpoint sources of pollution".¹

¹ 33 U.S.C. section 1329(3)
WSCC Meeting Packet

Also, the state is to develop and implement the nonpoint program on a watershed-by-watershed basis.²

The nonpoint plan guides how the state will spend 319 funding received from EPA. Contributing to the building of a plan will provide conservation districts with an opportunity to help outline priorities for 319 and other funding allocated to nonpoint- source pollution management (e.g., practices, outreach, monitoring).

[Details](#)

The state's current nonpoint plan was completed in June 2005. The current update process is the first update since the current plan was completed. Ecology is the lead agency for the development and implementation of the plan by virtue of its delegated water quality authority. The agency is guided in this process by the federal statutes as well as guidance provided by U.S. EPA.

The nonpoint plan must include the following key components as identified by EPA:

1. Explicit short- and long-term goals, objectives and strategies to restore and protect surface water and ground water, as appropriate.
2. Strengthens working partnerships and linkages to appropriate state, interstate, tribal, regional, and local entities (including conservation districts), private sector groups, citizens groups, and federal agencies.
3. Utilization of a combination of statewide programs and on-the-ground projects to achieve water quality benefits; efforts are well-integrated with other relevant state and federal programs.
4. Describes how resources will be allocated between:
 - (a) abating known water quality impairments from NPS pollution and
 - (b) protecting threatened and high quality waters from significant threats caused by present and future NPS impacts.
5. Identifies waters and watersheds impaired by NPS pollution as well as priority unimpaired waters for protection. The plan should establish a process to assign priority to and progressively address identified

² 33 U.S.C. section 1329(4)

watersheds by conducting more detailed watershed assessments, developing watershed-based plans and implementing the plans.

6. Describe how all program components will be implemented as required by section 319(b) of the Clean Water Act, and establish strategic approaches and adaptive management to achieve and maintain water quality standards as expeditiously as practicable. The program should include a mix of regulatory, non-regulatory, financial and technical assistance, as needed. In addition, the plan should incorporate existing baseline requirements established by other applicable federal or state laws to the extent that they are relevant.
7. Describe how the state will manage and implement its NPS management program efficiently and effectively, including necessary financial management.
8. Describe how the state will review and evaluate its NPS management program using environmental and functional measures of success, and revise its NPS management program at least every five years.

Points of Impact

Several elements of the nonpoint plan have a direct impact on the work of conservation districts:

- Explicit strategies to restore and protect surface water and ground water.
- Working partnerships – with the EPA guidance specifically identifying conservation districts in this category.
- Utilization of statewide programs and on-the-ground projects to achieve water quality benefits.
- How to allocate resources between known impairments and protecting from threats.
- A process for identifying priority watersheds.
- Description of how non-regulatory programs would work with other program components to accomplish nonpoint water quality objectives.
- How monitoring will be conducted and what will be done with the monitoring results.

Conservation district engagement with Ecology on the update to the nonpoint plan should focus on these key areas of the plan and provide input and direction on how the plan could accomplish these objectives, taking advantage of contribution from conservation districts.

In addition to these plan elements, Ecology is interested in hearing from conservation districts on the following questions:

- What is important for your district to see reflected in the Nonpoint Plan?
- What are the top three nonpoint sources of pollution in your district?
- Who are the key partners and cooperators that you work with to address nonpoint pollution in your district?
- What sources of funding do you use to address nonpoint pollution in your district?
- Are additional tools needed to better address nonpoint source pollutions? If so, what are they?
- Is your district currently conducting any monitoring efforts? If so, can you provide a description?
- Do you have suggestions about language/phrasing that is helpful and/or harmful to advancing nonpoint efforts?
- How much of your work is devoted to “protection” projects vs. correcting identified resource impacts. Does your district have examples of a “protection” project that has been implemented in your district? If so, can you provide a description?

The above questions are meant to serve as a guide; the goal is to understand what the priority nonpoint pollution issues are in your district and what information your district thinks is important to be included in the nonpoint plan.

For more information contact:

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

Dave Vogel
Executive Director WACD
(360) 754-3588 x125
dvogel@wadistricts.org



March 19, 2015

To: Mark Clark, Executive Director

From: Bill Eller, Election Officer / Regional Manager

Re: Conservation District Elections Status Update

Summary

The 2015 conservation district election cycle is almost finished. Districts hold their election by March 31, and they are supposed to send the election materials, paperwork, and documents to the Commission by the end of April. Listed below is a status update on elections.

Action

None – informational only.

Election Status

As of March 3, 2015, out of the 45 conservation districts,

- A. 29 districts have or will have automatically re-elected incumbent candidates (64%) pursuant to WAC 135-110-370.
- B. 16 districts have or will have contested elections (36%). Of those sixteen, nine are still set to go in March (King, Thurston, Spokane, Whatcom, Benton, Pend Oreille, Skagit, Cowlitz and Ferry).
- C. Three districts have notified the Commission of the unofficial results of their elections.
- D. One district election has been observed, with nine more set to be observed. If the remaining elections are observed, Commission staff will have observed ten of sixteen contested elections (63%).
- E. There have been thirty-three declared candidates so far.
- F. 214 election forms have been processed by the Election Officer.
- G. Approximately 135 emailed election questions have been answered by the Election Officer (~90 hours of Election Officer staff time spent (40 minutes per question x 129 questions = 5400 / 60 minutes = 90 hours). This does not include time processing election forms.
- H. We are working with a few districts on some election issues. Below are four, listed for illustrative purposes: Thurston (general issues), Whatcom (absentee ballot issues), Pend Oreille (staffing issues), Ferry (staffing issues). A brief discussion of each follows.

District: Whatcom Conservation District

Election Supervisor: Dawn Bekenyi

Election Date: March 10, 2015

Issue(s): Whatcom CD staff has brought to the Commission Elections Officer issues surrounding absentee ballots. Specifically, the District has inquired about policy and procedure surrounding voter's requests for absentee ballots, the returning of those ballots and the verification and tallying of those ballots by the District. There are a host of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) sections that could be involved and apply. A summary of the on-going discussion included the following: a district must comply with WAC 135-110-550 and WAC 135-110-560, and voters must follow the directions in WAC 135-110-560 (and any guidance the District provides with regards to filling out absentee ballots (for example, Appendix A in the Election Manual). Voters must supply enough information for the District to comply with WAC 135-110-550, WAC 135-110-610, and WAC 135-110-700(2) (for absentee ballots), among other WAC provisions, so that the vote can be properly counted. Commission staff continues to monitor their election closely.

District: Pend Oreille Conservation District

Election Supervisor: John Floyd / Andy Huddleston

Election Date: March 11, 2015

Issue(s): Pend Oreille CD's district manager, Terry Holloway, recently passed away. The District's chairman resigned soon afterwards. These events caused some disruption in District operations and services. The District currently has just one part-time staff person to run the election on behalf of the District. This has put strain on the District capabilities in many areas. Commission staff continues to monitor their election closely.

District: Ferry Conservation District

Election Supervisor: Candy Lammon

Election Date: March 25, 2015

Issue(s): A long-time staffer at Ferry CD resigned in November 2014. When that staffer left, there was no transition or hand-off of information, direction, or other communication between the staffer who left and new staff. As a result, new staff has minimal information on district procedures and has had little training other than on-the-job training on how to conduct the District's election. The district manager has been working with the new staff member to bring her up-to-speed on election rules, policies

and procedures. Specific problems involve errors in the public notice that informs the voter of the election time and day. These errors were subsequently corrected by additional notice publications to the public. Commission staff continues to monitor their election closely.

District: Thurston Conservation District

Election Supervisor: Kathleen Whalen

Election Date: March 7, 2015

Issue(s): Numerous issues were brought to the Commission Election Officers attention by Thurston CD staff, supervisors, and a candidate in the election. Those issues include (but are not limited to): candidate statements, absentee ballots, District election policy, Commission election policy and procedure, District governance, District powers and duties, Commission powers and duties, Conservation District elections in general). Please see the attached for some of the details.

From: [Eller, Bill \(SCC\)](mailto:Eller_Bill(SCC))
To: davidhall1970@netzero.com; [Kathleen Whalen](mailto:Kathleen.Whalen)
Cc: [Clark, Mark \(SCC\)](mailto:Clark_Mark(SCC)); [Shultz, Ron \(SCC\)](mailto:Shultz_Ron(SCC)); [Joy, Shana \(SCC\)](mailto:Joy_Shana(SCC)); [Ledgerwood, Ray \(SCC\)](mailto:Ledgerwood_Ray(SCC))
Subject: FW: IMPORTANT - RE: Thurston CD Elections Request
Date: Monday, February 23, 2015 12:06:25 PM
Attachments: [200010032211.pdf](#)
[Thurston CD response to 12.12.15 election complaint memo.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Chairman Hall – please see the attached memo and supporting documents. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Bill Eller † Southcentral Regional Manager † 509.385.7512 † beller@scc.wa.gov

From: Sarah Moorehead [<mailto:SMoorehead@thurstoncd.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2015 3:22 PM
To: Eller, Bill (SCC); Dave Vogel; Joy, Shana (SCC); Shultz, Ron (SCC)
Cc: David Hall
Subject: IMPORTANT - RE: Thurston CD Elections Request
Importance: High

Attn: Bill Eller, Ron Schultz, Shana Joy and Dave Vogel,

At the request of Thurston CD Board Chair, David Hall, please review the attached letter received today regarding our district election.

District staff can be reached at: 360-754-3588

David Hall can be reached directly at: 360-438-2074

Sarah Moorehead
Agricultural Outreach Specialist
Thurston Conservation District
2918 Ferguson St. SW, Ste A
Tumwater, WA 98512
(360) 754-3588 ext. 136
www.thurstoncd.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Ricoh@thurstoncd.com [<mailto:Ricoh@thurstoncd.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 10:11 PM
To: Sarah Moorehead
Subject: Message from "RNP0026735B2B83"

This E-mail was sent from "RNP0026735B2B83" (Aficio MP 4002).

2402 Capitol Way South
Olympia, Washington 98501

February 12, 2015

FEB 12 2015
1:50 pm 

David Hall
Chair
Thurston Conservation District Board of Supervisors
c/o Thurston Conservation District
2918 Ferguson Street SW, Suite A
Tumwater, WA 98512

Re: Request for Board action re election

Dear Dave,

I am writing to you and the Thurston Conservation District (TCD) Board to raise several concerns regarding the District's conduct of its election for board supervisor currently underway and, based on the statement of facts and assignments of error discussed below, to ask the Board to reschedule and restart the election later this year. I am currently serving as the incumbent in the position that's being elected and one of two candidates standing for election.

I am directing this letter to the Board with the understanding that it is the entity that is responsible for conducting this election fairly and within the requirements of law. (see Chap. 135-110 WAC, et. al.) I am recusing myself as a member of the board in matters pertaining to this election.

PREAMBLE

For the record, I am a strong supporter of county conservation districts, the Washington Association of Conservation Districts, and the Washington Conservation Commission. The system that they form promotes conservation of natural resources and support for agriculture statewide. The districts' role as a non-regulatory local government agency provides technical and financial assistance to local landowners and works with the public to encourage voluntary efforts to protect the environment and promote local food production.

I believe that the public service role of the conservation districts and the Conservation Commission will grow in the future and the benefit that they provide to the public will increase. One current example of this is through the State's Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) and the pivotal role that TCD is playing in Thurston County's VSP pilot program. Supporting TCD in general and especially as a part of the VSP program is why I accepted appointment to the TCD Board of Supervisors last fall.

I would add that I also support the notion of an independent Conservation Commission and local conservation districts. The Commission as a distinct state agency serves the public and acts as a bridge between conservation and agricultural interest which would not be possible if it were merely a

department within the Department of Agriculture or the Department of Ecology.

Conservation districts serve a similar purpose at the local level and benefit the public as both a partner to county government in protecting critical areas and supporting agriculture and as a non-regulatory alternative to the county's regulatory enforcement activities. For these reasons therefore, it is important that conservation districts continue to be independent agencies and be run by elected boards of supervisors.

Finally, in my six months as a conservation district supervisor, I have been privileged to work with talented, dedicated folks at both the state and local levels. I have been honored to serve on the Board with my fellow supervisors, impressed with the enthusiasm that TCD staffers have for their work, and appreciative of the support that Commission staff have provided to the District. In attending the WACD state convention in December, I was impressed by the wealth of knowledge there and the can-do attitude of the supervisors and staff from all around the state.

In short, I believe that the conservation districts and Conservation Commission are essential parts of governance in Washington State and an important resource for environmentalists, farmers, foodies, landowners, other local governments and frankly everyone else.

However, in order to maintain the conservation district system and its governance by elected supervisors, the system must have an election process that follows accepted election practices and assures the fair treatment of both candidates and the voting public. If conservation districts are to be local democratic institutions, the election of supervisors has to be conducted based on clear rules and in a manner which is impartial, transparent and free of bias or the appearance of bias. This brings me to the point of this letter.

The filing period for the supervisor's position currently up for election closed on February 2 and the election became a contested race with a last minute filing by Ms. Samantha Fleischner. Since then a series of events has occurred which individually and combined together raise serious questions about the election.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

A summary of the events as I understand them are as follows.

- On Feb. 3, TCD District Administrator Kathleen Whalen solicited candidate statements from Ms. Fleischner and me. In doing so, she did not provide guidelines for their form or content as the County Auditor does for other similar elections. Aside from the Election Resolution that was drafted and presented to the Board by Ms. Whalen, I am not aware of other rules adopted by the Board governing the conduct of elections.
- Ms. Fleischner submitted a candidate statement that represents herself to be a former TCD employee and current friend of TCD staff. Her first stated goal as a candidate is to "support staff" and she mentions Kathleen Whalen by name. Ms. Whalen is presently serving as both TCD District Manager and the Election Supervisor appointed by the Board to oversee this election.
- Ms. Fleischner's candidate statement included a photo of herself with TCD staff Dave Nygard and a narrative suggesting that they are shown working together at a TCD function.
- The use of the photo suggests that Mr. Nygard has either agreed to the use of his photo in this

campaign literature or is acquiescing to this use. Mr. Nygard has filed no protest of Ms. Fleischner's action so far as I know.

- Ms. Whalen, as Mr. Nygard's supervisor, apparently did not protest Ms. Fleischner's use of photos of TCD staff or TCD activities in campaign literature. She did not invoke Section 1.10 of the TCD Policy & Procedure Manual which governs "employee participation and political activities".
- Ms. Whalen, as Election Supervisor, similarly made no protest under Chapter 135.110 WAC nor did she apparently remind Ms. Fleischner that the District is required by law to run a fair election which is free of bias or the appearance of bias.
- To compound matters, Ms. Whalen then published Ms. Fleischner's campaign literature on the TCD website. This makes the material, including Mr. Nygard's photo, available to the general public and gives the impression that the use of staff photos and photographic representation of District activities for political purposes is officially acceptable to the District.
- Thereafter, Ms. Whalen left town. She is presently traveling out of state for a family vacation and "delegated" her election responsibilities to her administrative assistant. According to WAC 135-110-210, only the Board can appoint an Election Supervisor and must do so by Resolution after sufficient notice to the public.
- When I raised a concern about this before the fact, Ms. Whalen did attempt to convene an emergency session of the Board but was unable to obtain a quorum. As a result, she left the state in the middle of an election without the Board's permission and without the Board's appointment of another Election supervisor.
- Ms. Whalen has indicated that she will remain available by phone during her time away but this still leaves on-site administrative duties, safe-guarding of ballots, and the decision when to contact her to TCD staff.
- Since Ms. Fleischner has made a campaign issue of the fact that TCD staff are her friends and her first stated priority is to "support" them if elected, this appears to create a conflict of interest for staff who are involved in election activities. It also makes the lack of on-site supervision of staff by the appointed Election Supervisor a critical issue. These things raise the question of whether the election now meets the requirements of law, policy, or notions of fundamental fairness to the candidates and to the public.

ASSIGNMENT OF ERRORS

Given the foregoing, the assignment of errors are as follows:

- 1. The TCD Board has not adopted rules to govern elections, guide its Election Administrator, and protect the public.** Most elections in Washington State are conducted pursuant to state law passed by the Legislature (see Chap 29A.32 RCW) and administrative rules developed by the Secretary of State and the local county auditors. The Thurston County Auditor, for example, has developed a comprehensive Candidate Guide with administrative rules that govern voter pamphlets and other election matters. (see www.co.thurston.wa.us/auditor/Elections/candidate/candidate_guide.pdf). These rules help to keep elections fair and transparent. They provide uniformity in election administration for the candidates and the public alike. They also assign clear responsibility to election administrators to oversee the election process and to refuse election materials which may be illegal or otherwise improper.

Conservation District elections however do not use the State's general election laws and instead rely

on Chap. 89.08 RCW and the administrative rules enacted by the State Conservation Commission. Recent efforts to reform the District election process have met with limited success and conservation districts continue to use rules that are not based on general election laws or do not necessarily follow all of the customary election practices deemed important in other elections. As a result, voter participation in district elections is usually very low (sometimes in the tens of voters), election oversight is lacking, and decisions about election practices may be made without legally adopted rules to base them on. As one might imagine, the District voting process has been the subject of public criticism and a fair summary of its history, compiled by the League of Women Voters in 2011, may be found at

http://www.lwwva.org/pdfs/studies/LWVWA_WAConservationDistrictsStudy_May2011.pdf

The Conservation Commission rules make the District's Board of Supervisors responsible for conducting district election and appointing an Election Supervisor. The Conservation Commission also plays a part in the election process and after the voting is complete, the Commission is responsible for canvassing and certifying/not certifying the election. (see Chap 135.110 WAC and Chap 89.08 RCW).

So far as I am aware, except for the Election Resolution that the Board adopts before each election, TCD has not created written rules for conducting its elections or for guiding the Election Supervisor which it appoints. Therefore, election administration is left largely to the discretion of its Election Supervisor. TCD has customarily appointed its District Manager to serve as Election Supervisor but the District has had few contested elections in the last 10 years and so the current District Manager has apparently not had the opportunity to run many elections.

- 2. Candidate Statement submitted by Ms. Fleischner raises ethical and legal issues and serves to taint the election.** When the District Administrator/Election Supervisor asked that I submit "*a candidate statement that explains a bit about yourself and your interests to provide to voters*", I included several photos of our farm and family but was careful not to use pictures that included others. My concern was that doing so would draw those people into the campaign without their knowledge and imply that they were helping me with the election. I was doubly concern about using photos of conservation district staff or conservation district activities because of the requirements of Chapter 135.110 WAC and Sec. 1-10 of the TCD Policy & Procedure Manual.

Unfortunately, Ms. Fleischner did not have similar concerns and the candidate statement that she submitted prominently features her with Dave Nygard apparently engaged in a conservation district activity. Mr. Nygard is a long-time employee of TCD and is well-known as such around Thurston County. This raises several issues:

- A. Conservation Districts must remain impartial in conducting election.** No conservation district supervisors, municipal officers or employees may adopt or state an official position about any candidate that promotes, or is prejudicial to, a candidate. (WAC 135.110.150)
- B. District Employees must refrain from political activity in certain instances.** No District employee or elective official of the District may use, directly or indirectly, the facilities of the District for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition. (TCD Policy & Procedure Manual, Sec. 1.10)
- C. Implication of the District.** Ms. Fleischner's use of Mr. Nygard's image in her campaign literature implies his support of her campaign and suggests that a conservation employee has taken an official position in support of one candidate over another.
- D. Implication of the Employee.** Mr. Nygard's permission to use his image in Ms. Fleischner's

campaign literature, or his acquiescence of same, constitutes a second violation of this rule on the part of a TCD employee. So far as I am aware, Mr. Nygard has not protested the use of his photo and asked that it be removed.

E. Unauthorized claim of endorsement. In the event that Mr. Nygard eventually disclaims his support of Ms. Fleischner's candidacy, Ms. Fleischner will then be responsible for making an unauthorized use of his image in her campaign literature.

3. Publication of Ms. Fleischner's candidate statement on the official Thurston Conservation District website compounds the impropriety of the situation. The Election Supervisor solicited candidate statements from both candidates but provided no guidelines for creating them. She then posted the statements on the TCD website without challenging the use of Mr. Nygard's photo or the photographic representation of a District activity.

A. Official Publication. TCD's publication of Ms. Fleischner's candidate statement using Mr. Nygard's photo is a third assignment of error. The District's action serves to validate the candidate's use of district employee photographs and portrayals of district activity in campaign literature. TCD's publication this material on-line puts it before the Thurston County electorate and creates the appearance of "official status" for the content. This constitutes "state action" in the context of both the State and Federal Constitutions and raises both substantive and appearance of fairness issues regarding the conduct of this election.

B. Failure to Control Candidate Materials. The TCD's Election Supervisor failed to question Ms. Fleischner's use of Mr. Nygard's photo and did not reject the material or ask that the photo be deleted from the candidate statement prior to posting it on the TCD website. The Election Administrator did not consider the prejudice which this may create for the candidates or the electoral process.

C. Failure to Supervise District Staff. The TCD Election Supervisor also serves as the TCD District Administrator and therefore as Mr. Nygard's supervisor. As TCD staff supervisor then, the District Administrator should have protested Ms. Fleischner's actions and demanded that Mr. Nygard's photo be deleted from her campaign materials.

4. The Election Supervisor is not satisfactorily supervising the election. According to WAC 135-110-230, the election supervisor (a) serves as the primary point of contact between the conservation district and the conservation commission for the conservation district election; (b) organizes, coordinates, and facilitates election-related activities of the conservation district; (c) assures that required election procedures are properly conducted; and (d) assures that required information is properly transmitted to the conservation commission.

A. Election Supervisor has left town in the middle of an election. The Election Supervisor is presently not available on site. She is away on an out-of-state family vacation and will be away for a week or so which represents approximately 25% of the election period.

1) Inability to Supervise. The election supervisor is not available to oversee the election or supervise staff who are now responsible for sending out ballots and responding to public inquiries.

2) Improper Delegation of Duties. The election supervisor has apparently delegated her duties to an administrative assistant working for the District while she is away. WAC 135-110-230

provides that the Board of Supervisors appoints an election supervisor but contains no language authorizing that person to thereafter transfer his/her duties to another person.

3) Lack of Formal Election Rules. The election is now apparently being run on informal instructions left by the Election Supervisor for District staff. It appears that these instructions have not been published for the public, the candidates, or the Board.

4) Security. Without on-site supervision by the Election Supervision, security of ballots and election materials is a concern

5) Failure to Assure Proper Conduct. Without published election rules and on-site supervision by the designated Election supervisor, neither the candidates nor the public have reasonable assurances that the election can be properly conducted.

5. TCD Staff has a potential conflict of interest in serving as election supervisors. The Thurston Conservation District is using District staff to run the election but has directed that ballots be returned to and counted by the County Auditor. While this saves a good deal of money in election costs, it also asks District staff to administer an election process which they may have little training for or few rules to guide them.

In addition, District staff face potential conflicts of interest when they actively support, or appear to support, one candidate over the other and then must act as neutral election administrators. The potential for this conflict increases when one candidate declares that she has close personal friendships with staff and publically announce that "supporting staff" is a primary feature of her campaign.

Therefore, in future elections the Board should consider relieving District staff of election responsibilities and appointing an Election Supervisor who has training and experience in elections administration.

At the same time, the Board should also consider extending its election period from the current 35 days in order to give candidates time to prepare a campaign. It should also take steps to better publicize the election and increase voter participation.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

The assignments of error detailed above raise significant questions about the fundamental fairness of the election, the transparency of the election process, and the neutrality of the District in conducting the election. Given the very short time allowed for this election (33 days) and the fact that we are approaching the middle of that period, there is insufficient time to correct the problems and address the prejudice that has occurred. These difficulties are compounded by the absence of the District's Election Administrator.

In election matters, appearance of fairness is of equal importance to substantive and procedural fairness.

Therefore, I am asking that the TCD Board reschedule and restart this election for later this year. I am further asking that during the interim the District address the concerns expressed above.

While recent amendments to the election rules provide that a District must hold an election during January, February, or March in the year a three-year term of an elected supervisor will expire (WAC 130-110-200), the law does contemplate that elections may be held later in the year for good cause shown.

For example, the Conservation District has the power to change the date(s) or location(s) or times for poll sites when it declares an emergency (WAC 130-110-800).

In addition, the Conservation Commission may refuse to certify an election if it determines that the election was not properly conducted according to the requirements of its procedures. (WAC 135-110-760). "Significant noncompliance" is defined by the Commission as the failure to follow the requirements of the Commission Rules in a manner that may affect the outcome of an election or deny voters their right of privacy in voting. (WAC 134-110-120(2))

The "may affect" standard creates a very low threshold for nullifying an election. The law does not require a showing of actual damage but only a possibility that non-compliance may create some effect on the election.

The circumstance of this situation and the assignments of errors detailed above establish a strong case of non-compliance with both the spirit and letter of the Conservation Commission's election rules.

They also represent potential violations of the District's Policy & Procedures.

Finally, they raise questions of whether the District's conduct of the election runs counter to established election principles which are contained in the State's general election laws.

Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that these things will have a substantial effect on the outcome of the election and the public's confidence in the integrity of the electoral system.

They may also serve to dissuade members of public for running for the office of District Supervisor in the future. The non-compensated office requires a substantial commitment of time and effort from the incumbents and history shows that the districts often have a difficult time finding people to serve.

There is no foreseeable prejudice in rescheduling the election and doing so should not interrupt District operations. Nor is it likely that the other candidate in the race can identify a basis for a reasonable protest.

After the District addresses the assignment of errors above, a rescheduled election should result in better public knowledge and increased voter turnout. It should also result in a better, more equitable and transparent election process.

Time is of the essence in these things and I ask that the TCD Board act on the issues presented in an expeditious manner.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



James Goche'



To: David Hall, Chair, Thurston Conservation District
From: Bill Eller, Election Officer / Regional Manager, Washington State Conservation Commission
Date: February 23, 2015
Re: Response to Thurston Conservation District election complaint

On February 12, 2014, the Conservation Commission (Commission) received an email forwarded to us from staff at the Thurston Conservation District (TCD). The email contained a letter dated February 12, 2015, from current TCD board member and current candidate for an elected seat on the board, James Goche.

In the letter Mr. Goche listed a number of his concerns / complaints about the pending March 7, 2015 Thurston CD election. Based on these concerns, Mr. Goche requested the Thurston CD Board reschedule and restart the election later this year.

As Commission Election Officer, I was asked by the executive director of the Commission to investigate the issues raised in the letter and provide my recommendation as to Mr. Goche's request. Based on an analysis of the complaint as submitted and ancillary investigation, I do not find any violations of TCD election policy or Commission election policy and procedure. As a result, I find no significant noncompliance with the election rules and procedures. While there were issues subject to varying interpretations, I find no issue of noncompliance which rose to the level of significant noncompliance.

Therefore, I recommend the Thurston Conservation District election continue as scheduled.

A more detailed analysis is attached. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Bill Eller
Election Officer / Regional Manager
Washington State Conservation Commission
beller@scc.wa.gov
509-385-7512
POB 47721
Olympia, WA 98504-7721



To: Mark Clark, Executive Director
From: Bill Eller, Election Officer / Regional Manager
Date: February 23, 2015
Re: Response to Thurston Conservation District election complaint

On February 12, 2014, the Conservation Commission (Commission) received an email forwarded to us from staff at the Thurston Conservation District (TCD). The email contained a letter dated February 12, 2015, from current TCD board member and current candidate for an elected seat on the board, James Goche. In the letter Mr. Goche (the Complainant) listed a number of his concerns / complaints about the pending March 7, 2015 Thurston CD election.

The issues from the February 12, 2015 letter are summarized and/or paraphrased below, along with responses.

1. ***"On Feb. 3, TCD District Administrator Kathleen Whalen solicited candidate statements from Ms. Fleischner and me. In doing so, she did not provide guidelines for their form or content as the County Auditor does for other similar elections. Aside from the Election Resolution that was drafted and presented to the Board by Ms. Whalen, I am not aware of other rules adopted by the Board governing the conduct of elections."***

Response: Ms. Kathleen Whalen (Ms. Whalen), TCD District Administrator, has been appointed by the TCD board as their election supervisor for the 2015 election cycle (as per TCD board Resolution #12-2014, dated November 25, 2014). In speaking with Ms. Whalen on February 19, 2015, she does confirm that she sent both declared, nominated candidates (Mr. James Goche and Ms. Samantha Fleischner) an email on or about February 3, 2015 soliciting statements from both candidates. The substantive portion of the email is as follows:

We would like to have a candidate statement that explains a bit about yourself and your interests to provide to voters. The district will begin mailing absentee ballots, as requested by qualified electors, on Thursday. If you can email your candidate statement to me by Thursday at noon, we can provide that information with the initial mailing of any absentees, and post the same on our website.

Email from TCD District Administrator Ms. Whalen to candidate James Goche, February 3, 2015. Responses from both candidates were received by TCD staff on February 5, 2015, and, without editing the, both statements were posted on the TCD web site that same day. The candidate statements were also provided to voters who requested absentee ballots. There is no TCD policy, written or otherwise, that addresses the form or content of candidate statements, nor is TCD required to have such a policy under the conservation district election code (Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 135-110). The possible adoption of such a policy has been discussed subsequent to this event with Ms. Whalen.

Regardless, we believe the WAC and Commission election manual (EM) sections govern this situation, as explained below.

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Title 29A generally governs elections in Washington and includes the duties of county auditors and county elections departments. Specifically, RCW 29A.04.216 sets out the duties of county auditors and also sets out the exception to those duties. One of the exceptions applies to conservation district elections. That exception is listed here:

...This section does not apply to general or special elections for any city, town, or district that is not subject to RCW 29A.04.321 and 29A.04.330, but all such elections must be held and conducted at the time, in the manner, and by the officials (with such notice, requirements for filing for office, and certifications by local officers) as provided and required by the laws governing such elections.

RCW 29A.04.216. The duties of the county auditor apply to all elections except "general or special elections for any ... district that is not subject to... RCW 29A.04.330." RCW 29A.04.216.

A review of RCW 29A.04.330(1)(b) indicates that the general provisions of RCW 29A.04.330 do not apply to "... conservation districts, or district elections at which the ownership of property within those districts is a prerequisite to voting, all of which elections shall be held at the times prescribed in the laws specifically applicable thereto...[.]" RCW 29A.04.330(1)(b).

So, therefore, while RCW Chapter 29A governs general elections in Washington State, it does not govern conservation district elections. Conservation District elections are governed by RCW Chapter 89.08, WAC Chapter 135-110, and elections policy and procedures as determined by the Commission, the state agency charged with establishing procedures for elections.

The Commission is authorized in RCW 89.08.190 to establish conservation district election procedures: "The Commission shall establish procedures for elections, canvass the returns and announce the official results thereof."

The Commission has adopted election rules in WAC Chapter 135-110, effective November 19, 2010. District elections are to be conducted annually, and must comply with election rules and procedures.

The election procedures exist to assist conservation districts and conservation district supervisors in the election, appointment, and replacement of supervisors in the State of Washington, and to assure fair treatment of all parties involved in such proceedings, and to provide guidance for compliance with WAC Chapter 135-110.

In the event the rules, procedures, or both are not substantially followed, the Commission may make a determination of significant noncompliance. Significant noncompliance consists of failures to follow these procedures that, in the sole judgment of the Commission, may (1) affect the outcome of an election; (2) affect the appointment of a supervisor; or (3) deny voters their right of privacy in voting. If a determination of significant noncompliance is made, the Conservation Commission may choose not to certify the election. WAC 135-110-120.

WAC 135-110-430 allows a district to publish candidate-provided information. To assist voters in the selection of a candidate during voting, a conservation district may publish information provide by a nominated or declared write-in candidate. Further, if the district chooses to publish information about candidates, it must provide equal opportunity for publication and equivalent space to each candidate. WAC 135-110-430. The full text of WAC 135-110-430 is below:

Conservation district may publish candidate-provided information.

(1) To assist voters in the selection of a candidate during voting, a conservation district may publish information provided by nominated and declared write-in candidates.

(2) If a conservation district chooses to publish information about candidates, it must provide equal opportunity for publication and equivalent space to each nominated and declared write-in candidate.

(3) Candidate information provided by candidates and published by the conservation district may be mailed or delivered to voters before election day, but may not be provided to voters at poll sites on election day.

WAC 135-110-430. Similarly, the EM mirrors WAC 135-110-430 on pg 22, Section D(2)J(i) "*Conservation District Duties - Before an Election,*" and on pg 32, Section G(1)e "*Candidate Duties - Before an Election*". Section G(1)e provides further that "*[i]t is the responsibility of a candidate to inform voters of the candidate's desire and qualifications to be elected to the office of conservation district supervisor. A conservation district may provide equal opportunity and equivalent space to candidates for this purpose but are not required to do so.*"

So, in analyzing both the WAC and EM related to this question, if the district chooses to publish information provided by the candidate, it must provide equal opportunity for publication and equivalent space to each candidate. It would appear that this was done in this case. Both candidates were provided equal opportunity and equivalent space for their candidate statements. Mr. Goche's statement consists of one page of text with photos, numbering 564 words. Ms. Fleischner's statement consists of one page of text with photos, numbering 915 words. Images of the statements appear below:

James Goche' - Candidate for Thurston Conservation District Board of Supervisors

I have been associated with the Thurston Conservation District for over a decade as a local farmer and more recently as a member of its Board of Supervisors. I support the District's good work and service to local landowners in helping them voluntarily protect natural resources and support agriculture.

I accepted appointment to TCD's Board of Supervisors last year to help increase the District's involvement with local agriculture and to help with its participation in Thurston County's Voluntary Stewardship Program. Since then, I have been working with the Board and staff to increase the District's visibility in our community and to promote partnerships with other agencies.

My family has lived in Thurston County for many years and we have a small family farm just north of Olympia where we raise row crops, tree and vine fruit, and chestnuts commercially. We also teamed up with Kiwanis several years ago to host one of its garden projects and since then have been working with Kiwanis volunteers to grow fresh food for the Thurston County Food Bank. In running the farm, we use organic methods and observe good conservation practices.



Apple picking at Friendly Grove Farm



We also support diversity in local fauna and have a special affinity for Corgis

I have also been active over the years in a variety of projects which helped to conserve natural resources and protect the environment. One of these involved a seven year position with the Commencement Bay Clean Action Committee, working with local governments, environmental groups, and private industry to meet the requirements of state/federal cleanup and restoration laws in the Commencement Bay Superfund site. CBCAC was an outstanding success and some of its accomplishments include restoring eel grass beds in the lower Bay, helping to set PCB clean-up levels in the Hylebos Waterway, and reestablishing one of the first urban anadromous fish run in Western Washington (Puget Creek). CBCAC also successfully lobbied EPA to change its regulations to allow for partial delisting of the Superfund site so the remediated land could be returned to productive use and put back on the tax rolls.

Another project closer to home involved working with the Port of Olympia, first as a program manager and later as a consultant, to help it create a formal strategic and business planning process. This has helped the Port significantly improve its finances, create jobs, and meet community needs. Deliverables from this project include the cleanup and remediation of the Cascade Pole site on the Port Peninsula, development of the Port Plaza where local events, like *Sand And The City* take place, and saving the Olympia Farmers' Market by moving it to its present location at the north end of Capitol Way.



Two primary goals for the future are 1) to actively promote the economic and environmental health of our community and (2) to help reestablish the link in public policy between agriculture and natural resource conservation.

To be successful in this, we have to respect differing needs and points of view, focus on our common interest, and then work together effectively to make our community a prosperous and sustainable place to live. (Feb.5, 2015)



SAMANTHA FLEISCHNER

Thurston CD Board of Supervisors Candidate

360.446.7645 x102 samanthah@wcnx.org Rainier, WA

My particular interest in the conservation district stems from my longstanding relationship with organization, which began when I was offered the **Natural Resource Technician internship position with Thurston CD** by current District Administrator, Kathleen Whalen nearly a decade ago. Working under Senior Natural Resource Specialist, David Nygard, I learned the unique needs of landowners in our community through my work writing Conservation Plans and **became infatuated with providing resources to farmers** large and small. I support the district's current efforts to preserve farmland and provide assistance to beginning farmers through their South Sound FarmLink program. **Preserving agricultural land in the South Sound is a priority to strengthening our local food system, local economy and supporting new and generational farmers!**



I had the pleasure of working alongside some of the most passionate and experienced staff and I feel now it is my turn to support them by providing my expertise and leadership to further strengthen the mission of the organization and provide voluntary natural resource conservation to landowners in Thurston County. I believe bringing multiple generations and diverse stakeholders to the table will lay the foundation for creative solutions and collective impact for a sustainable future.

I graduated with a **BA in Natural Resource Management and BS in Biological Sciences** from **The Evergreen State College**. I have a diverse background of experiences including spending time studying rotational grazing, soil health, and the impacts of limited resources on agricultural operations in water deficient Southeast Oregon. Seeing firsthand the hardships these farming families faced solidified the **importance of working with the community** to conserve these precious shared resources **so that our children and grandchildren can live healthy, sustainable lives.**



David Nygard and myself hosting the Regional Envirothon and supporting youth Environmental Education!

I spent some time **working with the Nature Conservancy**, promoting the symbiotic and beneficial relationship between wildlife habitats and working agricultural lands. I also had the opportunity to aid in many **habitat restoration and invasive species removal projects first-hand**. I enjoyed my many years of experience getting my hands dirty and working in the field, including my time working with the **Silver Springs Cattle Ranch in Tenino**, learning the ins and outs of all natural beef production and putting my soil science background to good use **assisting with the construction of a new local composting facility.**



Girl Dog in her safety gear - ready for a day on the job!

Now, I am the **Site Manager for Silver Springs Organics** where I oversee the compost facility and staff along with my partner-in-crime PJ (or Girl Dog as she likes to be called), and work to educate the community on the **importance of soil health and sustainable land management, along with the connection of human impacts to all of our natural resources.**

My journey into conservation began as a child, growing up between the beaches and the mountains of California. I have always had a love for the outdoors and a passion for taking care of those special places I visited in my youth. Naturally, I was eager to visit the Pacific Northwest and behold its natural beauty. Once I landed in this ecologically diverse region I decided to make it my home and have happily lived in the rural community of Rainier ever since. Not only have I resided in Thurston County for some 13 years now, but I have dedicated my life to supporting the growth and enrichment of my community.

I have been an **active board member with the Washington Organics Recycling Council** since 2008. I have been involved in writing revisions to the Solid Waste Handling Standards for Washington State and continue to offer guidance and expertise on policy revisions in regards to compost and soil health. Part of my involvement with WORC is to **bring compost into the Ag market and promote soil health through reintroducing organic matter.**

My biggest passion is spending time with my family. We enjoy riding quads, camping, and sharing good meals with friends. I am a budding confectionary artist (or so I'm told) and enjoy cooking elaborate meals and making decadent desserts for my family and friends. In addition I enthusiastically support my partner and children in their flat track racing careers! In my down time I take pleasure in traveling and reading as many books as possible.

I believe in the unique ability Thurston Conservation District has to serve the entire Thurston County community, urban and rural. I will always be passionate about **sustainable resource management, voluntary conservation and being involved in my community.**

My main goals are to:

- Provide **more educational and economic resources to our rural communities;**
- **Support local agricultural production;**
- **Educate every citizen about their role in improving the health of Puget Sound and our local watersheds!**

My positive and hardworking attitude, dedication to our community and experience working in natural resources management provide me with the necessary tools to help guide and serve the conservation district. I am ready to work together to provide a bright future for our land, our families and this beautiful world we live in!



Getting my hands dirty prepping the family garden and pruning our small orchard!

In conclusion, it appears from our investigation that TCD has followed current election procedures with regard to candidate statements. However, though RCW Chapter 29A does not govern conservation district elections, policies and procedures used in general elections can be relevant if applied to conservation district elections. In the instant case, we recommended to the TCD that it adopt a policy on the form and content of candidate statements. We also recommend providing clear guidance to districts with a revision to the EM that addresses this issue. A template for candidate statements to districts should be included in the EM to promote uniformity among conservation districts, and decrease the likelihood of future issues involving candidate statements.

The Commission actively promotes the sovereignty of local government by allowing for procedural variations, whenever possible, among conservation districts related to how they conduct elections. Illustrations of this can be found in all aspects of elections procedures (choosing an election date, picking the type of election, and advertising methods are examples). Regardless of which variation they choose, all conservation districts place great value in the integrity of the election process.

In the present case, for the aforementioned reasons, we find no significant noncompliance with the election rules and procedures. Ultimately, the WAC and EM put the responsibility on the candidate to inform voters of the candidate's desire and qualifications to be elected to the office of conservation district supervisor. Candidates are free to run campaigns as they see fit and can provide voters with any information they choose, so long as the information provided is lawful and otherwise complies with the RCW, WAC, EM, and Commission election procedures. Here, while the instructions for candidate statements were clear, they were also open-ended and therefore could have been more precise. Still, we find no issue of noncompliance which rose to the level of significant noncompliance. Therefore, we recommend no action at this time.

- 2. "Ms. Fleischner submitted a candidate statement that represents herself to be a former TCD employee and current friend of TCD staff. Her first stated goal as a candidate is to "support staff" and she mentions Kathleen Whalen by name. Ms. Whalen is presently serving as both TCD District Manager and the Election Supervisor appointed by the Board to oversee this election."***

Response: Ms. Fleischner did submit a candidate statement in which she identifies herself as having a "Natural Resource Technician internship..." with TCD "...nearly a decade ago". See Ms. Fleischner's candidate statement contained in the response to Issue #1 above. In speaking to Ms. Whalen, she was able to confirm that Ms. Fleischner was an intern with TCD in approximately the year 2005. Ms. Whalen believes it was an unpaid internship. Ms. Fleischner does mention TCD employees in her candidate statement, specifically Ms. Whalen and David Nygard, her internship supervisor. Both Ms. Whalen and Mr. Nygard still work for TCD. As previously indicated in the response to Issue #1 above, Ms. Fleischner complied with TCD's instructions to her with regard to form and content of her candidate statement. There are presently no prohibitions on candidate statement content that would prohibit this content.

- 3. *"Ms. Fleischner's candidate statement included a photo of herself with TCD staff Dave Nygard and a narrative suggesting that they are shown working together at a TCD function."***

Response: We spoke with Mr. David Nygard, TCD Resource Specialist, on February 19, 2015. Both he and Ms. Whalen believe the picture was taken in 2005. Mr. Nygard believes the photo shows TCD hosting the regional Envirothon competition. Mr. Nygard recalls being the coordinator of the local Envirothon at that time, and vice-chair of state chair of the Envirothon committee. While Mr. Nygard is not sure of the location where the photograph was taken, he believes was likely taken at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge visitor center meeting room as the Envirothon was held there that year. While he doesn't recall the photo in particular, doesn't have any reason to dispute the photo's caption. He says he saw the photo in the candidate statement for the first time on February 19, 2015. Since 2005, he believes his next contact with Ms. Fleischner was in 2010 during a tour of her property. While no permission was sought from him by Ms. Fleischner, none was needed as he is alright with her use of the photo in the statement. He believes the photo's caption is a statement of fact.

"No conservation district supervisors, municipal officers or employees may adopt or state an official position about any candidate that promotes, or is prejudicial to, a candidate." WAC 135-110-150 (see also EM, Section E(8) on pg 3). In the case at hand, the appearance of Ms. Fleischner in a photograph with a TCD employee while she was a TCD intern, *taken ten years before the election at issue*, does not invoke the prohibition of WAC 135-110-150, nor does it jeopardize the appearance of fairness in the TCD election. The photo was not taken during the current election cycle or even during the current campaign, but ten years ago. While seeking Mr. Nygard's permission to use the photo would typically be the appropriate format for Ms. Fleischner if she wanted to include his likeness in her statement, Mr. Nygard's acquiescence to its use in no way creates any prejudice to the election process. Further, we spoke with Ms. Whalen about WAC 135-110-150 and the applicable EM section, and she relayed to us that she has repeatedly admonished her staff to not promote any candidate during the election. The Commission strives for factual and accurate dissemination of information about conservation district activities, events, and functions, and we do not find any factual inaccuracies here. We do not find any evidence of a violation of WAC 135-110-150.

- 4. *"The use of the photo suggests that Mr. Nygard has either agreed to the use of his photo in this campaign literature or is acquiescing to this use. Mr. Nygard has filed no protest of Ms. Fleischner's action so far as I know."***

Response: See response to Issue #3 above.

- 5. *"Ms. Whalen, as Mr. Nygard's supervisor, apparently did not protest Ms. Fleischner's use of photos of TCD staff or TCD activities in campaign literature. She did not invoke Section 1.10 of the TCD Policy & Procedure Manual which governs "employee participation and political activities"."***

Response: See response to Issue #3 above. Further, we believe the Complainant is referring to TCD Policies and Procedures 1.10 Employee Participation and Political Activities, Effective Date: June 9, 2000, reproduced below:

THURSTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Policies & Procedures

1.10 Employee Participation and Political Activities

Effective Date: June 9, 2000

Background: Pursuant to RCW 42.17.30, no elective official or employee of any public Agency "may use or authorize the use of any of the facilities of a public office or agency, directly, or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion or opposition to any ballot proposition."

Purpose: To establish parameters for employee participation in political activities.

Policy: No District employee or elective official of the District may use, directly or indirectly, the facilities of the District for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion or opposition to any ballot proposition. This includes the wearing or displaying of political paraphernalia while conducting District business. This policy does not purport to regulate District employees or elective officials while they are not conducting District business.

District employees may express opinions on political subjects and candidates, take an active part in political campaigns, and wear political campaign badges and buttons when not serving in an official capacity or meeting the public. In addition, District Employees may not:

1. Use their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the results of an election or nomination for office.
2. Coerce, command, or advise another District employee to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency or person for political purposes.
3. Use Thurston Conservation District equipment, time, supplies, staff or facilities for any political purposes or when assisting or opposing any candidate for partisan or nonpartisan offices or on any ballot proposition.

The TCD Policies and Procedures 1.10 Employee Participation and Political Activities (TCD Politics Policy) is taken from RCW 42.17.30, which has since been recodified as RCW 42,17A.550. While this policy likely needs updating by TCD to reflect the current statutory reference, it is still effective. The Commission encourages the adoption and use of such policies in furtherance of the goals of fairness and honest in district elections. In the present case, there is no allegation that any employee used any TCD facility to assist or promote an election. Therefore, the TCD Politics Policy is not relevant to this issue.

6. ***“Ms. Whalen, as Election Supervisor, similarly made no protest under Chapter 135.110 WAC nor did she apparently remind Ms. Fleischner that the District is required by law to run a fair election which is free of bias or the appearance of bias.”***

Response: See responses to Issues #3-5 above.

7. ***“To compound matters, Ms. Whalen then published Ms. Fleischner's campaign literature on the TCD website. This makes the material, including Mr. Nygard's photo, available to the general public and gives the impression that the use of staff photos and photographic representation of District activities for political purposes is officially acceptable to the District.”***

Response: See responses to Issues #3-6 above.

8. ***“Thereafter, Ms. Whalen left town. She is presently traveling out of state for a family vacation and “delegated” her election responsibilities to her administrative assistant. According to WAC 135-110-210, only the Board can appoint an Election Supervisor and must do so by Resolution after sufficient notice to the public.”***

Response: As part of its duties to adopt an election resolution, each district must appoint an individual “to fulfill the duties of election supervisor.” Here, TCD’s board did so on November 25, 2014 with the adoption of Resolution #12-2014. TCD identified Ms. Whalen as the Election Supervisor for the 2015 election cycle. As such, the TCD board delegated its authority to conduct the election at issue to Ms. Whalen. Under RCW 89.08.210, a conservation district board of supervisors

may employ a secretary, treasurer, technical experts, and such other officers, agents, and employees, permanent and temporary, as they may require, and determine their qualifications, duties, and compensation. It may call upon the attorney general for legal services, or may employ its own counsel and legal staff. The supervisors may delegate to their chair, to one or more supervisors, or to one or more agents or employees such powers and duties as it deems proper.

RCW 89.08.210 allows the TCD to delegate its ability to conduct its election to “one or more agents or employees.... as it deems proper.” Kathy sent a memo to the board about how things

were going to be handled in her absence. Ms. Whalen had a previously scheduled vacation that encompassed four business days (February 11-13, and 17, 2015). On February 10, 2015, after a failed attempt by Ms. Whalen to convene the TCD board for a special meeting, Ms. Whalen sent an email to all TCD board members informing them of her absence from the TCD office for four business days (February 11, 12, 13, and 17, 2015). The TCD office was closed on February 16th, in observance of President's Day. In that email, Ms. Whalen informed the TCD board that during her absence, she delegated responsibility for processing absentee ballots to TCD's administrative assistant, Ms. Ashley McBee. Ms. Whalen indicated to the TCD board that Ms. McBee has been fully trained on the proper procedures for the handling and distribution of the absentee ballots, and has had the opportunity to process a few absentee ballot requests already during the current election cycle. Ms. Whalen further indicated that she instructed Ms. McBee to pass to Ms. Whalen any messages or questions regarding TCD's election to Ms. Whalen, and she would answer those questions in due course even while she was on vacation and out of the office for those four days.

We find that the TCD board has properly delegated election oversight, powers and duties to Ms. Whalen and the TCD staff in general, as allowed under RCW 89.08.210. Further, we find Ms. Whalen's efforts to address her pre-planned vacation time away from the TCD office as more than adequate to address election inquires during her absence.

9. ***"When I raised a concern about this before the fact, Ms. Whalen did attempt to convene an emergency session of the Board but was unable to obtain a quorum. As a result, she left the state in the middle of an election without the Board's permission and without the Board's appointment of another Election supervisor."***

Response: See response to Issue #8 above.

10. ***"Ms. Whalen has indicated that she will remain available by phone during her time away but this still leaves on-site administrative duties, safe-guarding of ballots, and the decision when to contact her to TCD staff."***

Response: See responses to Issues #8 and #9. Further, Ms. Whalen indicates that absentee ballots received at TCD are locked in her office. Absentee ballots returned to the Thurston County Auditor (Auditor), who handles a substantial portion of the administration of TCD's election (and have been doing so since 2002, according to TCD board minutes from November 26, 2002), are retained by the Auditor in a secure location. The Auditor brings them on Election Day to TCD in a secure fashion and they are counted using a ballot counting machine after the signatures are verified.

11. ***"Since Ms. Fleischner has made a campaign issue of the fact that TCD staff are her friends and her first stated priority is to "support" them if elected, this appears to create a conflict of interest for staff who are involved in election activities. It also makes the lack of on-site supervision of staff by the appointed Election Supervisor a critical issue. These things raise the question***

of whether the election now meets the requirements of law, policy, or notions of fundamental fairness to the candidates and to the public.”

Response: See responses to Issues #1-#9.

12. *“The TCD Board has not adopted rules to govern elections, guide its Election Administrator, and protect the public. Most elections in Washington State are conducted pursuant to state law passed by the Legislature (see Chap 29A.32 RCW) and administrative rules developed by the Secretary of State and the local county auditors. The Thurston County Auditor, for example, has developed a comprehensive Candidate Guide with administrative rules that govern voter pamphlets and other election matters. (see www.co.thurston.wa.us/auditor/Elections/candidate/candidate_guide.pdf). These rules help to keep elections fair and transparent. They provide uniformity in election administration for the candidates and the public alike. They also assign clear responsibility to election administrators to oversee the election process and to refuse election materials which may be illegal or otherwise improper.”*

Response: See responses to Issues #1-#9, in particular #1-#3, #5, and #8. RCW 89.08 and WAC Chapter 135-110 govern conservation district election procedure. RCW Chapter 29A can provide insight and guidance in instances where RCW 89.08 and WAC Chapter 135-110 are silent. In the case at hand, the Commission will review its election procedures in light of the complaints raised herein, and seek to enhance them where applicable.

13. *“Conservation District elections however do not use the State's general election laws and instead rely on Chap. 89.08 RCW and the administrative rules enacted by the State Conservation Commission. Recent efforts to reform the District election process have met with limited success and conservation districts continue to use rules that are not based on general election laws or do not necessarily follow all of the customary election practices deemed important in other elections. As a result, voter participation in district elections is usually very low (sometimes in the tens of voters), election oversight is lacking, and decisions about election practices may be made without legally adopted rules to base them on. As one might imagine, the District voting process has been the subject of public criticism and a fair summary of its history, compiled by the League of Women Voters in 2011, may be found at*

http://www.lwvwa.org/pdfs/studies/LWVWA_WAConservationDistrictsStudyMay2011.pdf

The Conservation Commission rules make the District's Board of Supervisors responsible for conducting district election and appointing an Election Supervisor. The Conservation Commission also plays a part in the election process and after the voting is complete, the Commission is responsible for canvassing and certifying/not certifying the election. (see Chap 135.110 WAC and Chap 89.08 RCW).

So far as I am aware, except for the Election Resolution that the Board adopts before each election, TCD has not created written rules for conducting its elections or for guiding the Election Supervisor which it appoints. Therefore, election administration is left largely to the discretion of its Election Supervisor. TCD has customarily appointed its District Manager to serve as Election Supervisor but the District has had few contested elections in the last 10 years and so the current District Manager has apparently not had the opportunity to run many elections."

Response: See responses to Issues #1-#9, in particular #1-#3, #5, and #8. In addition, the Commission provides yearly webinar training on election procedure, policy and new developments in August / September. Conservation districts are encouraged to attend or to view the webinar at a later date if they cannot attend it live. Ms. Whalen has informed us that she has regularly attended or viewed the annual election webinar. The Commission also provides an election "Boot-camp" consisting of an in-depth, half-day, in person training for conservation district personnel new to election procedure and responsibilities. Election boot-camps serve to inform conservation district personnel in detail on all aspects of election procedure and policy. All election materials, policies, procedures, forms, and the annual webinar are posted on the Commission's web site, and available to all conservation district, the public, candidates, and voters.

14. "Candidate Statement submitted by Ms. Fleischner raises ethical and legal issues and serves to taint the election. When the District Administrator/Election Supervisor asked that I submit "a candidate statement that explains a bit about yourself and your interests to provide to voters", I included several photos of our farm and family but was careful not to use pictures that included others. My concern was that doing so would draw those people into the campaign without their knowledge and imply that they were helping me with the election. I was doubly concern about using photos of conservation district staff or conservation district activities because of the requirements of Chapter 135.110 WAC and Sec. 1-10 of the TCD Policy & Procedure Manual.

Unfortunately, Ms. Fleischner did not have similar concerns and the candidate statement that she submitted prominently features her with Dave Nygard apparently engaged in a conservation district activity. Mr. Nygard is a long-time employee of TCD and is well-known as such around Thurston County. This raises several issues:

A. Conservation Districts must remain impartial in conducting election. No conservation district supervisors, municipal officers or employees may adopt or state an official position about any candidate that promotes, or is prejudicial to, a candidate. (WAC 135.110.150)

B. District Employees must refrain from political activity in certain instances. No District employee or elective official of the District may use, directly or indirectly, the facilities of the District for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of

any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition. (TCD Policy & Procedure Manual, Sec. 1.10)

C. Implication of the District. Ms. Fleischner's use of Mr. Nygard's image in her campaign literature implies his support of her campaign and suggests that a conservation employee has taken an official position in support of one candidate over another.

D. Implication of the Employee. Mr. Nygard's permission to use his image in Ms. Fleischner's campaign literature, or his acquiescence of same, constitutes a second violation of this rule on the part of a TCD employee. So far as I am aware, Mr. Nygard has not protested the use of his photo and asked that it be removed.

E. Unauthorized claim of endorsement. In the event that Mr. Nygard eventually disclaims his support of Ms. Fleischner's candidacy, Ms. Fleischner will then be responsible for making an unauthorized use of his image in her campaign literature."

Response: See responses to Issues #1-#3, #5, and #8.

15. *"Publication of Ms. Fleischner's candidate statement on the official Thurston Conservation District website compounds the impropriety of the situation. The Election Supervisor solicited candidate statements from both candidates but provided no guidelines for creating them. She then posted the statements on the TCD website without challenging the use of Mr. Nygard's photo or the photographic representation of a District activity.*

A. Official Publication. TCD's publication of Ms. Fleischner's candidate statement using Mr. Nygard's photo is a third assignment of error. The District's action serves to validate the candidate's use of district employee photographs and portrayals of district activity in campaign literature. TCD's publication this material on-line puts it before the Thurston County electorate and creates the appearance of "official status" for the content. This constitutes "state action" in the context of both the State and Federal Constitutions and raises both substantive and appearance of fairness issues regarding the conduct of this election.

B. Failure to Control Candidate Materials. The TCD's Election Supervisor failed to question Ms. Fleischner's use of Mr. Nygard's photo and did not reject the material or ask that the photo be deleted from the candidate statement prior to posting it on the TCD website. The Election Administrator did not consider the prejudice which this may create for the candidates or the electoral process.

C. Failure to Supervise District Staff. The TCD Election Supervisor also serves as the TCD District Administrator and therefore as Mr. Nygard's supervisor. As TCD staff supervisor then, the District Administrator should have protested Ms. Fleischner's actions and demanded that Mr. Nygard's photo be deleted from her campaign materials."

Response: See responses to Issues #1-#12.

16. "The Election Supervisor is not satisfactorily supervising the election. According to WAC 135-110-230, the election supervisor (a) serves as the primary point of contact between the conservation district and the conservation commission for the conservation district election; (b) organizes, coordinates, and facilitates election-related activities of the conservation district; (c) assures that required election procedures are properly conducted; and (d) assures that required information is properly transmitted to the conservation commission.

A. Election Supervisor has left town in the middle of an election. The Election Supervisor is presently not available on site. She is away on an out-of-state family vacation and will be away for a week or so which represents approximately 25% of the election period.

1) Inability to Supervise. The election supervisor is not available to oversee the election or supervise staff who are now responsible for sending out ballots and responding to public inquiries.

2) Improper Delegation of Duties. The election supervisor has apparently delegated her duties to an administrative assistant working for the District while she is away. WAC 135-110-230 provides that the Board of Supervisors appoints an election supervisor but contains no language authorizing that person to thereafter transfer his/her duties to another person.

3) Lack of Formal Election Rules. The election is now apparently being run on informal instructions left by the Election Supervisor for District staff. It appears that these instructions have not been published for the public, the candidates, or the Board.

4) Security. Without on-site supervision by the Election Supervisor, security of ballots and election materials is a concern.

5) Failure to Assure Proper Conduct. Without published election rules and on-site supervision by the designated Election supervisor, neither the candidates nor the public have reasonable assurances that the election can be properly conducted."

Response: See responses to Issues #1-#15. Further, the TCD passed Resolution #12-2014 on November 25, 2014. Before that, the TCD published its Notice of Intent to Adopt and Election Resolution on November 11, 2014. TCD's election is set for March 7, 2015. One could argue that the election season for TCD actually started on November 11, 2014, when the Commission requires the first notice to the public about the 2015 election cycle, and ends on March 7, 2015 – a period of 76 business days. In that case, Ms. Whalen's absence for four business days would end up being .05% of the election cycle.

The TCD's past practice, from at least 2002, was to delegate a substantial portion of its election activities to the Auditor. As such, it was working within delegation parameters established by RCW 89.08.210 and Commission election policy and procedures. TCD also maintains a detailed

web page devoted to its elections, available to the public, candidates, and voters. It provides sufficient instruction to its staff on election procedure and policy.

17. *"TCD Staff has a potential conflict of interest in serving as election supervisors. The Thurston Conservation District is using District staff to run the election but has directed that ballots be returned to and counted by the County Auditor. While this saves a good deal of money in election costs, it also asks District staff to administer an election process which they may have little training for or few rules to guide them.*

In addition, District staff face potential conflicts of interest when they actively support, or appear to support, one candidate over the other and then must act as neutral election administrators. The potential for this conflict increases when one candidate declares that she has close personal friendships with staff and publically announce that "supporting staff" is a primary feature of her campaign.

Therefore, in future elections the Board should consider relieving District staff of election responsibilities and appointing an Election Supervisor who has training and experience in elections administration.

At the same time, the Board should also consider extending its election period from the current 35 days in order to give candidates time to prepare a campaign. It should also take steps to better publicize the election and increase voter participation."

Response: See responses to Issues #1-#16. The Commission provides for and encourages training to district staff on election policy and procedure. It also encourages districts to develop policies and procedures in those areas that RCW Chapter 89.08 and WAC Chapter 135-110 leave available to local options and interpretation. The Commission also encourages districts to expand the minimum times and public notices established in the election procedures to ensure as wide a range of participation by candidates and voters as possible. We have reiterated these principals to TCD's staff, and will encourage them to further examine their election procedure and policy.

18. *"The assignments of error detailed above raise significant questions about the fundamental fairness of the election, the transparency of the election process, and the neutrality of the District in conducting the election. Given the very short time allowed for this election {33 days} and the fact that we are approaching the middle of that period, there is insufficient time to correct the problems and address the prejudice that has occurred. These difficulties are compound by the absence of the District's Election Administrator.*

In election matters, appearance of fairness is of equal importance to substantive and procedural fairness.

Therefore, I am asking that the TCD Board reschedule and restart this election for later this year. I am further asking that during the interim the District address the concerns expressed above.

While recent amendments to the election rules provide that a District must hold an election during January, February, or March in the year a three-year term of an elected supervisor will expire (WAC 130-110-200), the law does contemplate that elections may be held later in the year for good cause shown.

For example, the Conservation District has the power to change the date(s) or location(s) or times for poll sites when it declares an emergency (WAC 130-110-800).

In addition, the Conservation Commission may refuse to certify an election if it determines that the election was not properly conducted according to the requirements of its procedures. (WAC 135-110-760). "Significant noncompliance" is defined by the Commission as the failure to follow the requirements of the Commission Rules in a manner that may affect the outcome of an election or deny voters their right of privacy in voting. (WAC 134-110-120{2})

The "may affect" standard creates a very low threshold for nullifying an election. The law does not require a showing of actual damage but only a possibility that non-compliance may create some effect on the election.

The circumstance of this situation and the assignments of errors detailed above establish a strong case of non-compliance with both the spirit and letter of the Conservation Commission's election rules.

They also represent potential violations of the District's Policy & Procedures.

Finally, they raise questions of whether the District's conduct of the election runs counter to established election principles which are contained in the State's general election laws.

Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that these things will have a substantial effect on the outcome of the election and the public's confidence in the integrity of the electoral system.

They may also serve to dissuade members of public for running for the office of District Supervisor in the future. The non-compensated office requires a substantial commitment of time and effort from the incumbents and history shows that the districts often have a difficult time finding people to serve.

There is no foreseeable prejudice in rescheduling the election and doing so should not interrupt District operations. Nor is it likely that the other candidate in the race can identify a basis for a reasonable protest."

Response: See responses #1-#17. Also, conservation district elections must occur during the first quarter of the calendar year (January, February or March). WAC 135-110-200; RCW 89.08.190. If the TCD were to seek to reschedule the election, it would have to pursue the rescheduling in superior court, as there is no other way for the district to reschedule the election and still comply with the directive in WAC 135-110-200 or RCW 89.08.190, and the other general notice requirements in WAC Chapter 135-110. WAC 135-110-800 would not apply in this situation, as an emergency during an election, allowing for the date of the election to be changed, could only come after the election supervisor determines that "adverse conditions may negatively affect the health or safety of voters or the timely return of absentee ballots." Neither the health, safety, nor the timely return of absentee ballots is at issue here, therefore WAC 135-110-800 couldn't properly be used to change the election date.

The pursuit of a new election date in superior court pursuant to Wash. Constitution Art. IV, sections 1 and 6, RCW 7.24.010 and RCW 2.08.010 would allow for a new election to occur. However, this would necessitate the filing of a court case in Thurston County Superior Court, requiring TCD to incur the costs incident to such a pursuit. Furthermore, TCD would have to redo each aspect of the election process, further increasing its costs. TCD, as a division of local government, has a duty to safeguard the use of taxpayer funds. The pursuit of a new election in superior court is not warranted under these conditions, nor warranted under these issues.

Conclusion

The Washington State Conservation Commission is authorized in Chapter 89.08.190 Revised Code of Washington to establish conservation district election procedures: "The Commission shall establish procedures for elections, canvass the returns and announce the official results thereof."

The Commission has adopted election rules in WAC Chapter 135-110, effective November 19, 2010. District elections are to be conducted annually, and must comply with election rules and procedures.

The election procedures exist to assist conservation districts and conservation district supervisors in the election, appointment, and replacement of supervisors in the State of Washington, and to assure fair treatment of all parties involved in such proceedings, and to provide guidance for compliance with WAC Chapter 135-110.

In the event the rules, procedures, or both are not substantially followed, the Conservation Commission may make a determination of significant noncompliance. Significant noncompliance consists of failures to follow these procedures that, in the sole judgment of the Conservation Commission, may (1) affect the outcome of an election; (2) affect the appointment of a supervisor; or (3) deny voters their right of privacy in voting. If a determination of significant noncompliance is made, the Conservation Commission may choose not to certify the election.

It appears from our investigation that TCD properly complied with all of the relevant election procedures and policies, as discussed above.

The Commission actively promotes the sovereignty of local government by allowing for procedural variations, whenever possible, among conservation districts related to how they conduct elections. Illustrations of this can be found in all aspects of elections procedures (choosing an election date, picking the type of election, and advertising methods are examples). Regardless of which variation they choose, all conservation districts place great value in the integrity of the election process.

In the present case, for the aforementioned reasons, we find no significant noncompliance with the election rules and procedures. While there were issues that arose that were subject to varying interpretations, we find no issue of noncompliance which rose to the level of significant noncompliance. Therefore, we recommend the Thurston Conservation District election continue as scheduled.



Washington State Conservation Commission

March 6, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Mark Clark, Executive Director

FROM: Ron Shultz, Policy Director

SUBJECT: Ag & Water Quality Guidance Document

Summary: The Ecology Ag and Water Quality advisory group is currently discussing a guidance document for landowners. It would be a tool for producers, Ecology, and partners to integrate risk management concepts into land management.

Action Requested: Information Only

Staff Contacts: Kelly Susewind, Special Assistant to Director, Ecology
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Ron Shultz, WSCC Policy Director
rshultz@scc.wa.gov (360) 407-7507

Description:

The Conservation Commission has been briefed before on the ongoing activities of the Ecology Ag and Water Quality advisory group. Formed by Ecology Director Maia Bellon in December 2013, the group has been discussing a number of topics, including the development of a risk management tool for landowners.

The general idea is to develop a transparent approach to identifying the conditions of land that may give rise to water quality or other resource concerns. With this information it's hoped landowners can make informed decisions as to conditions that need immediate attention, those needing fixing, and conditions the landowner should keep an eye on so they don't get worse. It also provides guidance on positive conditions so the landowner can maintain good sites and know what the targets are for improvement.

The attached presentation provides more information as to the development of the guidance document and the general approach the document takes.

Agriculture and Water Quality Advisory Committee

Meeting #7

*Kelly Susewind
Department of Ecology*

Intent

- Transparency
- Tool for Producers, Ecology, and Partners
- Integration of Risk Management Concepts

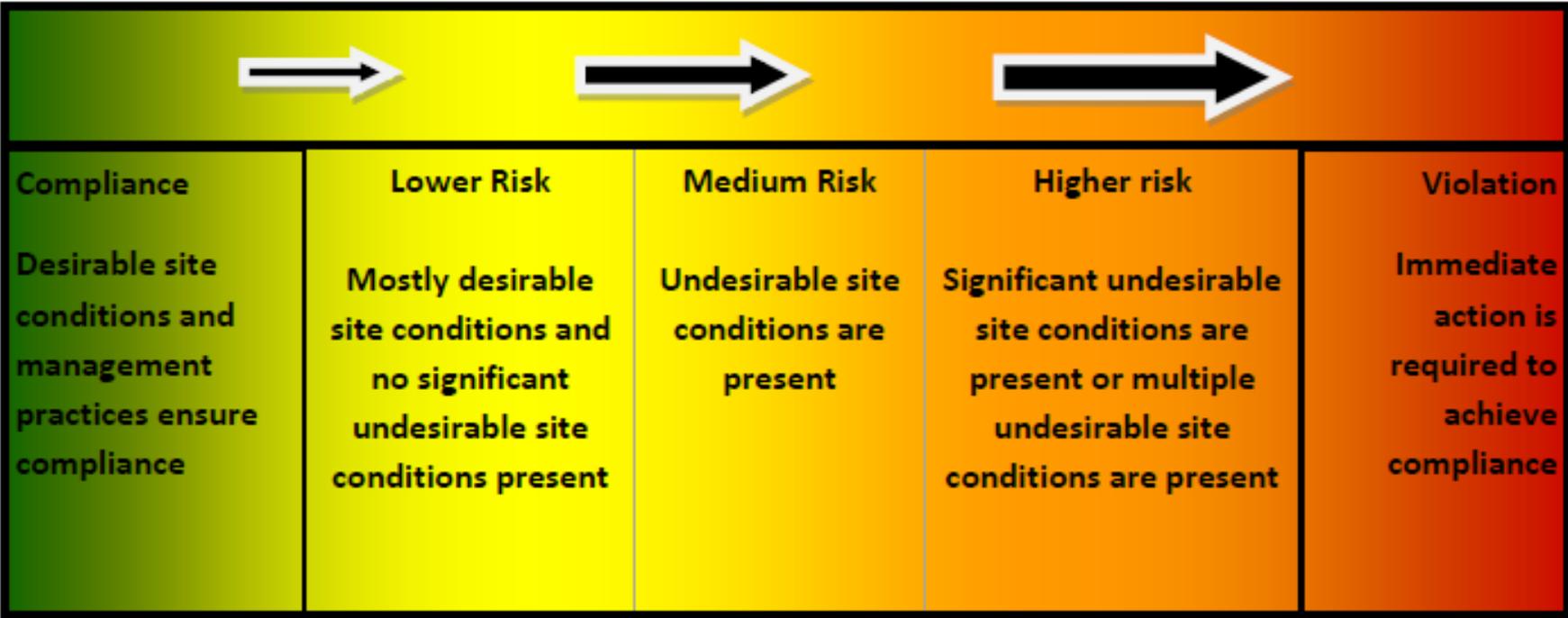
Key Principles

- Improve compliance with state and federal law and the water quality standards.
- Recognize the importance of the livestock industry to Washington State.
- Clearly articulate examples of good and bad site conditions. Enable landowners to make informed decisions about their operations related to protecting water quality.

Document Outline

- **Introduction**
 - **Recognize importance of livestock production.**
 - **Recognize importance of clean water.**
 - **Livestock related pollution concerns.**
- **Risk Management Concepts**
- **Site Conditions**
 - **Riparian Areas, Confinement Areas, Upland Pasture Areas, Manure Storage.**
- **Conclusion**
 - **Water Quality Law.**
 - **Recognize the range of actions available to address WQ problems.**

Risk Continuum



Key Questions

- Are there sources of nonpoint pollution?
- Is surface water present at the site or in proximity to the site? Are there ground water concerns?
- Are there pathways for pollution to get to state waters?
- Is there evidence that pollutants have left the site and entered state waters?
- Are management practices in place for identified sources of nonpoint pollution to prevent the delivery of pollution to state waters?

Watershed & Other Environmental Considerations

- Soil conditions and characteristics (runoff class, permeability, leaching potential, saturation, etc.)
- Slope of the land surface
- Precipitation and climate
- Anticipated flooding/flooding frequency
- Depth to groundwater-shallow groundwater is more vulnerable to pollution

Site Conditions-General Format

➤ Introduction

Healthy Riparian Area



*Indications that livestock may be affecting stream health.
Any one or combination could be a violation, or lead to a violation.*



Clear Violation



Riparian Areas

- Protecting stream corridors is often a key to keeping waters of the state from being polluted
- Site conditions can indicate if it is a healthy stream corridor or if there are indications that stream health is being impacted.
- Examples:
 - Manure accumulations
 - Bare ground
 - Trails
 - Slumping banks
 - Erosion
 - Streamside vegetation sufficient to filter out pollutants

Confinement Areas

- Confinement and winter feeding areas if properly sited and maintained can help prevent pollutants from reaching surface water.
- Are there pathways to surface waters?
- Are there signs that pollution is moving to surface water?
- Is water diverted around confinement areas?
- Are there stockpiles of manure?

Upland Pasture Areas

- Recognize that upland practices can affect water quality.
- Well managed upland areas can ensure that riparian areas and water quality are protected from pollution.
- Poorly managed upland areas can overwhelm a well protected riparian area.
- Are there pathways to surface waters and indications that those areas are affecting stream health?

Manure Storage

- Proper collection, disposal, storage, and use of manure is key to protecting water quality.
- Can affect surface and groundwater.
- Are there pathways to surface waters and indications that those areas are affecting stream health?
- Distance to surface water or vulnerable ground water.
- Sufficient size and design considering the number of animals.



Discussion

TAB 4



March 13, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members
FROM: Debbie Becker
SUBJECT: Proposed SCC Grant & Contract Procedures

Background summary:

SCC publishes grant and contract guidelines for conservation districts and partners when funding is received through SCC appropriations. The guidelines are necessary in describing the role of the contract, reimbursable expenses, expected contract compliance, getting paid, as well as a number of other components.

The current set of guidelines for grants and contracts was issued in 07-09. This version is a re-organization and re-write of the document for the purposes of addressing updated requirements of SCC, state and federal law, and any new or unique situations impacting conservation districts since the 07-09 version.

The manual will be provided at the meeting on March 18, 2015, with any proposed changes in policy and procedure identified.

Action requested:

The following action by the Conservation Commission members is requested:

Authorize the proposed Grant & Contract Procedure Manual follow the Commission members adopted Policy on Policies, and be sent to conservation districts for the 45-day review period. All comments and concerns would be presented to Commission members during the May 2015 meeting, with the anticipated adoption date of July 1, 2015.

In addition, SCC staff will send the manual to the AAG, Phyllis Barney for review and comment during the 45-day comment period.

Staff Contact: Debbie Becker, 360.470.6211 or dbecker@scc.wa.gov

Policy #	Proposed Update to SCC Grant & Contract Procedures
Applies to:	All Grants & Contracts Issued by SCC
Effective Date:	July 1, 2015

PURPOSE

SCC publishes grant and contract guidelines for conservation districts and partners when funding is received through SCC appropriations. The guidelines are necessary in describing the role of the contract, reimbursable expenses, expected contract compliance, getting paid, as well as a number of other components.

BACKGROUND

The current set of guidelines for grants and contracts was issued in 07-09. This version is a re-organization and re-write of the document for the purposes of addressing updated requirements of SCC, state and federal law, and any new or unique situations impacting conservation districts since the 07-09 version.

POLICY

This manual would become the official procedures of funding awarded by SCC and available to partners on SCC's website.



March 16, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members

FROM: Debbie Becker

SUBJECT: End of Biennium Needs for Conservation Districts

Background summary:

Each biennium, SCC evaluates the level of funds available in all grants and accounts, including SCC operations, to determine what funds would be available to distribute to conservation districts.

In previous end of biennium funding allocations, it has been done 1st come-1st serve, lottery, or by defining specific eligible items.

This biennium, we have asked districts to submit their 3 highest priorities, within a pre-defined list of topic areas. Districts were sent the application to complete on February 10th, and asked to have it returned by end of day on March 16th. The information contained in this packet is current as of March 15, preliminary, and will update them on the morning of March 17th.

All funding awards expire on June 30, 2015; any projects funded are required to be completed by June 30, 2015; and any equipment authorized, is to be in hand by close of business, June 30, 2015.

Action requested:

Commission members have several options available in determining how to authorize allocations. In consideration of these requests, there is an early prediction of approximately \$450,000 available. The amount will likely increase the end of April early May approaches, and actual budget expenses through June 30, becomes tighter.

Option 1:

Appoint a subcommittee to evaluate the requests.

Option 2:

Award based upon available funds fulfilling Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3, needs.

Option 3:

Rate the Topics, and fund in order of the ranking.

Option 4:

Other

Funding could be allocated as soon as decisions are made.

Staff Contact: Debbie Becker, 360.470.6211 or dbecker@scc.wa.gov

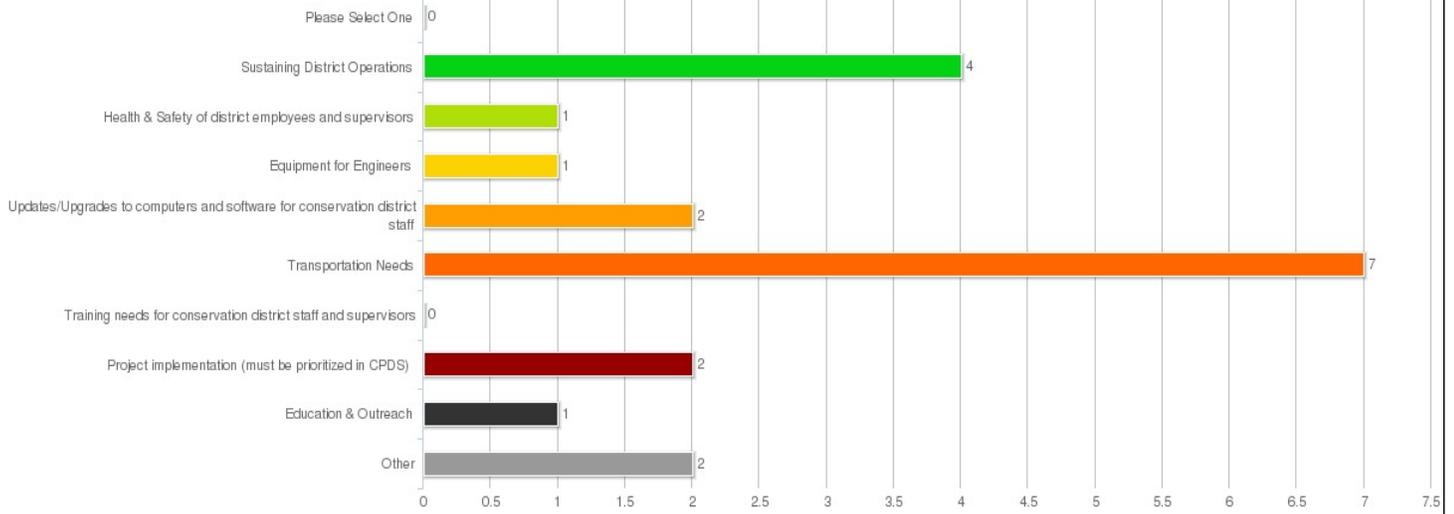
Conservation District Request by Priority and Element

- Sustaining District Operations
- Health and safety of district employees and supervisors
- Equipment for Engineers
- Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff
- Transportation needs
- Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors
- Project implementation (must be currently prioritized within CPDS)
- Education & Outreach Services
- Other - Requires description and why.

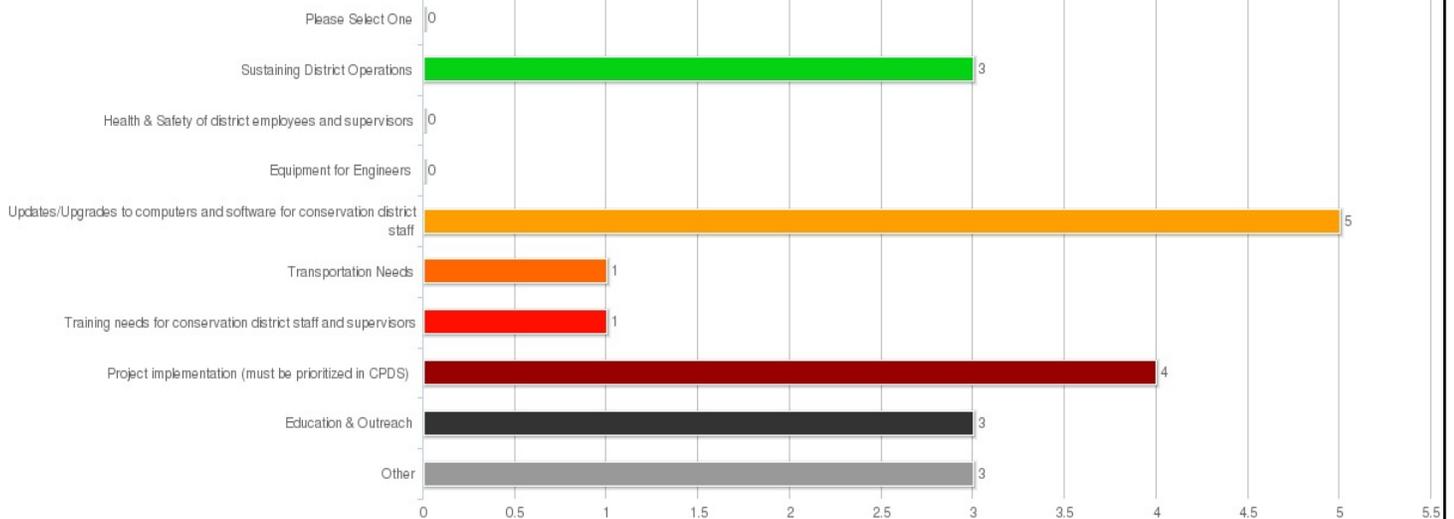


# of requests	Totals By Topic Area (P1-P3)	Request by Topic
8	Sustaining District Operations	175,110
2	Health & Safety of district employees & supervisors	3,400
2	Equipment for Engineers	28,085
9	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software	71,126
10	Transportation	202,500
3	Training Needs	7,950
10	Project Implementation	283,407
6	Education & Outreach	20,900
7	Other	95,300

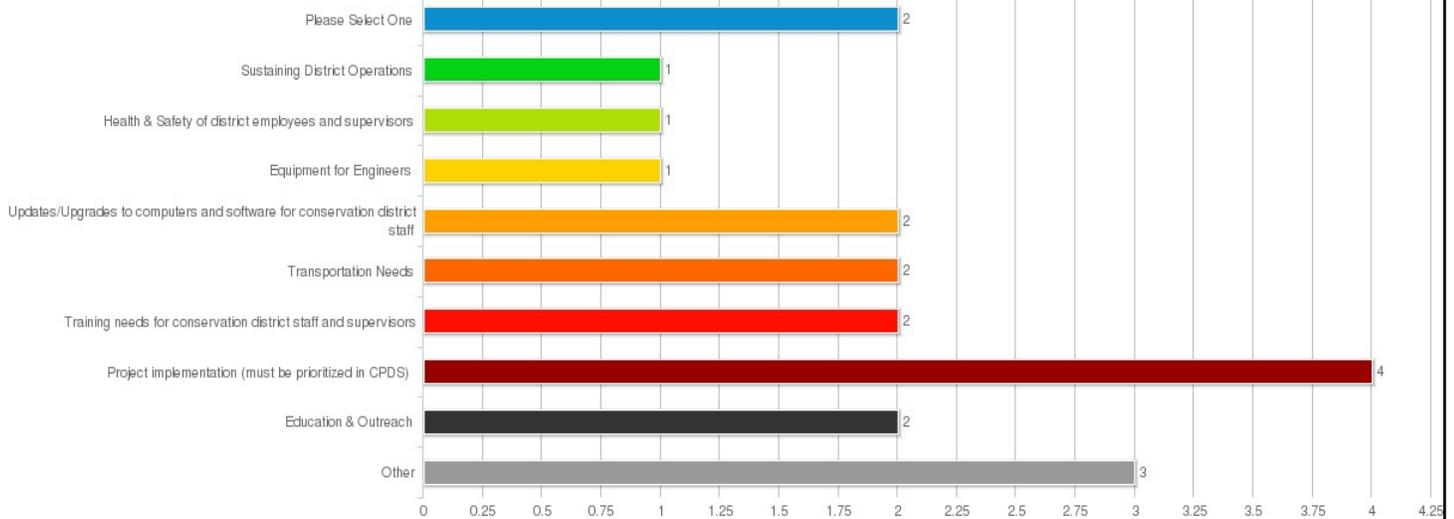
P1 Funding Element



P2 Funding Element



P3 Funding Element



Priority 1

Priority 1			
P1 Funding Element	P1 Please describe the element needed.	\$ Value Priority #1	
1	Sustaining District Operations	Keeping current work progress and infrastructure in place until long term grant funding is received on July 1st 2015.	20,000
2	Sustaining District Operations	Audit costs. We have changed financial staff, and I am very sure that we will be audited in the coming year. It is difficult to pay for an audit out of operations funding. We woul save this money to pay the audit costss. The cost figure is very close to what we paid in 2013.	8,000
3	Sustaining District Operations	Fire proof locking file cabinet (\$2500). We do not have a secure, locking cabinet for financial and sensitive documents. We also need a variety of office supplies: a flat screen monitor for farm planning (\$200), report binding system (\$150), laminator (\$150), and a projector (\$300).	3,000
4	Sustaining District Operations	The Palouse River Watershed (WRIA 34) Implementation Partnership was funded through the NRCS RCPP. The RCPP award includes landowner FA and partner TA but does not include funding for employee workstations or vehicles.	61,000
Sustaining District Operations			92,000
1	Health & Safety of district employees and supervisors	Light weight 6 foot folding tables, to be used at youth education and competition events, Land Judging, Forestry Contest state local, fair display, tree packing and outside events. Tables we currently use are wil over 20 years old very heavy staff and volunteers complain about weight. request for 10 tables	900
Health & Safety of district employees and supervisors			900
1	Equipment for Engineers	TDS Ranger data collector; Geneq SX Pads data collector & SX Blue GPS	10,200
Equipment for Engineers			10,200
1	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Lack of cost Some District computers are over 10 years old and are in serious need of updating. Computer software upgrades are also out of date and needed.	5,000
2	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Upgrade to GIS workstation laptop computer, docking station, Latest MS office software	3,300
Computers/Software			8,300
1	Transportation Needs	We have been looking for a 1/2 ton 4 door pickup for use by our water quality technician. Her current vehicle is a 2000 Chevy Blazer. The wheel fell off this fall.	36,000
2	Transportation Needs	This request would replace the Green Explorer with a field vehicle, potentially a F150 Crew Cab Short Bed with a canopy. It would purchase a 7000lbs capacity dump trailer for cost share projects (primarily Rain Garden projects for now). It would pay for replacement of the Fusion's tires, and pay for this quarter's vehicle maintenance. Purchase first aid kits and road safety kits for all of the vehicles and finish putting logos on the car doors.	45,000
3	Transportation Needs	A small Commuter car. We have staff that travel between districts and we only have one vehicle. We understand that this is a large request, however this would save district money because we are paying out too much to employees for their vehicle use. We would like to keep the money in the district.	14,000
4	Transportation Needs	New 4X4 Truck to complete field work	23,000
5	Transportation Needs	Need to replace one aging vehicle and add another due to unanticipated staff growth due to disaster recovery and additional grants all happening at once. District will match funds provided by WSCC 1:1.	15,000

6	Transportation Needs	Underwood Conservation District has two aging vehicles that need to be replaced. Our truck was in a head-on collision years ago, and while it runs reliably well, it's frame alignment has never been the same. This is our primary work vehicle. We also have a small passenger vehicle that is not very reliable, and the staff are not comfortable driving it. We are in extreme need of an updated, safe, reliable work truck or passenger car.	20,000
7	Transportation Needs	The district needs a truck for transportation of materials, conducting site visits, and hauling our equipment. We have a manure spreader on a trailer and poultry processing equipment that we take to workshops and landowners. We have a 1983 Dodge Ram that we purchased from another district that they didn't want (and they purchased from DNR surplus) that is no longer safe for employees to drive. Staff has to use their personal truck for district activities.	27,000
Transportation Needs			180,000
1	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	The PRLCD has the need to fund three spring direct seed projects for the following cooperators: Elloom (Stuart Elliot), Mike Glorfield and Joanne Bailey. These cooperators are in the unique position and need.	4,380
2	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	Our current # 1 priority project where the landowner can complete the project by June 30, 2015 is a riparian restoration project for approximately 1 mile along Spangle Creek. ff creek watering facility.	10,000
Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)			14,380
1	Education & Outreach	This request is for Education/outreach associated with a KCCD hosted "Wildfire Community Preparedness Day" event that will include speakers from DNR, NRCS, The Nature Conservancy for Fire Adapted Communities (FAC), the county Fire Marshal, an Insurance agency and 3 landowners. The request is for \$2,000 for supplies and staff time for the event.	2,000
Education & Outreach			2,000
1	Other	Laser TruPulse 200 Laser Rangefinder	800
2	Other	Lidar and Orthophotography completed on Alpowa, George, Tenmile and Couse Creeks (completed and final product will be delivered prior to June 30) and Sediment Budget Analysis (Phase 1) completed for Alpowa, Asotin, George, Tenmile and Couse Creeks.	50,000
Other			50,800
TOTAL PRIORITY #1			358,580

Priority 2

P2 Funding Element		P2 Please describe the element needed.	Dollar Value Priority #2
1	Sustaining District Operations	This is for district operations, which includes DO (\$5,000) Irrigation efficiency upgrade cost share (Agidius in CPDS \$5,000) & engineering computers (\$10,000)	20,000
2	Sustaining District Operations	We use part of our Implementation funds for District Operations. The Implementation grant covers about half of the cost for these activities, while the other half is funded by our Special Assessment. In the last year, we moved from a co-located office with low overhead to an office where we pay rent & utilities. It would be very helpful to have additional funds to assist with District operations, in order to utilize our Assessment funds for projects and leveraging of other funds.	8,510
3	Sustaining District Operations	We are in need of upgrades for current staff workstations, laptops, field tablets, GIS, and field equipment to continue to offer quality services and programs to our clients.	19,600
Sustaining District Operations			48,110
1	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	This request includes replacing older computers for 6 staff, iPads for new staff, upgrading network infrastructure for increased stability, upgrading database software technology, and improving disaster resilience (i.e. protection of data in case of fire). This request will purchase equipment and software for the engineers and equipment for outreach content development; cameras and accessories to help document projects.	45,000
2	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Need to replace computers that stop running periodically, production software that are different versions and don't communicate with others very well, and provide computers and productivity software to new employees added by unexpected growth in staff numbers.	7,500
3	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	These requested funds will allow us to replace three computers, two laptops and a desk-top. We could also buy "notebooks" for our field staff. Our current computers are three to five years old, and in need of replacement.	4,800
4	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Our Engineering Technician's computer was purchased in 2008 and is not performing well. He runs AutoCad software as well as GIS and needs a high performance computer to be able to use the software effectively.	2,500
5	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Small printer to be connected to bookkeeper computer for printing checks. Current printer in other room and have to insert checks occasionally someone hits print when checks in drawer causing problems	226
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff			60,026
1	Transportation Needs	The district needs a larger equipment trailer to transport the ATV and Mower to riparian locations. Our current trailer is too small to safely load the mower without the assistance of a wheel tractor with a loader; an Americorp team or if by yourself an unsafe use of a come along which creates unsafe working conditions.	2,500
Transportation Needs			2,500
1	Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors	WADE Training for district staff and/or Supervisors	4,300
Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors			4,300
1	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	Cost Share dollars for Bio Controls (bugs)	40,000

2	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	Dry Stack for Hornby beef operation	37,748
3	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	Lack of cost share funding has limited the District's ability to offer cost share on projects. This money would allow for 3 livestock watering facilities to be implemented.	11,000
4	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	Our second priority for projects that can be completed before June 30th, 2015 is a project that will restore 1.4 miles of riparian corridor on three different streams/ivers (Spokane river, Hangman Crek, and Bear Creek).ly 1.4 miles of streams	15,000
Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)			103,748
1	Education & Outreach	Projector and screen	1,400
2	Education & Outreach	This year is Underwood CD's 75th Year Anniversary! We are celebrating in several different ways, but we need funding to support our efforts. Funds will help pay for outreach and display material showing UCD's history and current work. Funds will help pay for staff time preparing materials and planning anniversary events. Finally, funding will pay for a "Dream District" planning retreat for staff and supervisors.	5,000
3	Education & Outreach	We need a printed banner for events, signage, wildlife cameras for live feed of beaver device areas to monitor beaver activity in CREP and to post on website as educational outreach, jackets with JCCD insignia for site visits and being in field and new District signage for our truck for a more professional district image.	2,000
Education & Outreach			8,400
1	Other	Digital Camera with GPS and GIS Layer creation.	700
2	Other	Complete between 5 and 8 Certified Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) for livestock producers with winter feeding areas that will install manure management practices.	25,000
3	Other	This request is for a combination of on-line ESRI training to migrate from arcgis 9.2 to 10.2 and then to complete the upgrade and then to organize GIS databases. In total, it is for 60 staff hours with overhead to complete this task.	3,000
Other			28,700
TOTAL PRIORITY #2			255,784

Priority 3

P3 Funding Element		P3 Please describe the element needed.	Dollar Value Priority #3
1	Sustaining District Operations	This request will provide funding farm planning (site visits) and content development for Better Ground. Additionally it will pay for staff time and conference fees for the 2015 WADE conference.	35,000
Sustaining District Operations			35,000
1	Health & Safety of district employees and supervisors	Staff should be certified in CPR. There is no one currently with CPR training on staff. Amount includes staff time and cost of training.	2,500
Health & Safety of district employees and supervisors			2,500
1	Equipment for Engineers	This request is to establish a mobile workstation for our engineer consisting of a laptop and an upgrade to his total station. The laptop is a Dell Precision M3800 Mobile Workstation (\$4,000). The total station upgrade is to a Topcon ES 105 Reflectorless Total Station (\$8990), a Topcon FC-2600 Field Controller (\$2995), 2 new tripods (\$300), Seco Optical Plummet Twist Focus (\$200), and a Survey Pro software update (\$1400).	17,885
Equipment for Engineers			17,885
1	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	2 computer monitors	300
2	Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	the expansion of the district due to the acceptance of the RCPP will predicate the need for additional computer hardware such as laptop, printers and the software to accompany it.	2,500
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff			2,800
1	Transportation Needs	We need a box trailer to house our new poultry processing equipment. We recently received a grant to purchase poultry processing equipment to loan to landowners but the grant was not enough to purchase the trailer we need for the equipment.	3,000
2	Transportation Needs	We are in need of a reliable 4WD pickup for landowner site visits and project implementation	17,000
Transportation Needs			20,000
1	Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors	Four people to attend WADE. We have budgeted to send three people (two staff and one supervisor) to WADE. We have the option for an additional attendee through a WADE scholarship. However, I would like to be able to send three more people to WADE training. I have an inexperienced Board, whose members could benefit from the experience. We could also use some assistance with travel expenses.	1,650
2	Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors	The District has new employees and would benefit from attending the WADE training.	2,000
Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors			3,650
1	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	This funding will purchase Agricultural Conservation Easements on approximately 6,000 acres of Western Pacific Timber property. This is for grazing rights only. The actual acreage will be determined after an appraisal is completed.	60,000
2	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	Provide cost-share for a manure management project (Highest priority project for landowner that has not previously received cost-share limitation for current fiscal year for WSCC funded projects)	50,000
3	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	Dry Stack for Woods dairy	45,279

4	Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)	Our third priority for projects that can be completed by June 30th, 2015 is an irrigation efficiency project at the Mt. Hope Cemetery. This will result in significant water and energy savings. The project will retrofit the existing antiquated system.	10,000
Project implementation (must be prioritized in CPDS)			165,279
1	Education & Outreach	Need funding to replace depleted Firewise Education funding.	3,500
2	Education & Outreach	Landowner outreach, event and workshop display equipment, social media plan and implementation	7,000
Education & Outreach			10,500
1	Other	GPS Garmin unit.	350
2	Other	We would like to purchase a mid-sized manure spreader (http://www.millcreekmfg.com/products/manure-spreaders/mid-size-spreaders.php) that allows producers to utilize manure waste and other materials, like wood chips, on their farms and dairies. This item would be rented out to cooperators to help pay for maintenance and storage. UCD will host demonstration events to educate users about the benefits of wise-waste management. Budget includes a trailer. We feel this tool will be highly desirable.	15,000
3	Other	2 soil testing probes, one high quality for district staff and one that can be loaned out to landowners, currently beg borrow from NRCS, old probes poor shape.	450
Other			15,800
TOTAL PRIORITY #3			273,414

Your Conservation District	Dollar Value Needed for Priority #1	Dollar Value Needed for Priority #2	Dollar Value Needed for Priority #3	Total Requested
Asotin County	50,000	25,000	50,000	125,000
Central Klickitat	36,000	20,000	60,000	116,000
Clark	27,000	2,500	3,000	32,500
Ferry	8,000	4,800	1,650	14,450
Foster Creek	20,000	40,000		60,000
Grays Harbor	800	700	350	1,850
Jefferson County	3,000	2,000	2,500	7,500
Kittitas County	2,000	8,510	17,885	28,395
Lewis County	23,000	37,748	45,279	106,027
Lincoln County	5,000	11,000	2,000	18,000
Mason	10,200	4,300	7,000	21,500
Okanogan	15,000	7,500	3,500	26,000
Pacific	14,000	1,400	300	15,700
Palouse	61,000	19,600	17,000	97,600
Palouse Rock Lake	4,380	2,500	2,500	9,380
Pine Creek	3,300	3,000		6,300
Snohomish	45,000	45,000	35,000	125,000
Spokane	10,000	15,000	10,000	35,000
Stevens County	900	226	450	1,576
Underwood	20,000	5,000	15,000	40,000

Totals By Topic Area (P1-P3)

Sustaining District Operations	Keeping current work progress and infrastructure in place until long term grant funding is received on July 1st 2015.	20,000
Sustaining District Operations	Audit costs. We have changed financial staff, and I am very sure that we will be audited in the coming year. It is difficult to pay for an audit out of operations funding. We woul save this money to pay the audit costss. The cost figure is very close to what we paid in 2013.	8,000
Sustaining District Operations	Fire proof locking file cabinet (\$2500). We do not have a secure, locking cabinet for financial and sensitive documents. We also need a variety of office supplies: a flat screen monitor for farm planning (\$200), report binding system (\$150), laminator (\$150), and a projector (\$300).	3,000
Sustaining District Operations	The Palouse River Watershed (WRIA 34) Implementation Partnership was funded through the NRCS RCPP. The RCPP award includes landowner FA and partner TA but does not include funding for employee workstations or vehicles.	61,000
Sustaining District Operations	This is for district operations, which includes DO (\$5,000) Irrigation efficiency upgrade cost share (Agidius in CPDS \$5,000) & engineering computers (\$10,000)	20,000
Sustaining District Operations	We use part of our Implementation funds for District Operations. The Implementation grant covers about half of the cost for these activities, while the other half is funded by our Special Assessment. In the last year, we moved from a co-located office with low overhead to an office where we pay rent & utilities. It would be very helpful to have additional funds to assist with District operations, in order to utilize our Assessment funds for projects and leveraging of other funds.	8,510
Sustaining District Operations	We are in need of upgrades for current staff workstations, laptops, field tablets, GIS, and field equipment to continue to offer quality services and programs to our clients.	19,600
Sustaining District Operations	This request will provide funding farm planning (site visits) and content development for Better Ground. Additionally it will pay for staff time and conference fees for the 2015 WADE conference.	35,000
Sustaining District Operations		175,110
Health & Safety of district employees and supervisors	Light weight 6 foot folding tables, to be used at youth education and competition events, Land Judging, Forestry Contest state local, fair display, tree packing and outside events. Tables we currently use are wil over 20 years old very heavy staff and volunteers complain about weight. request for 10 tables	900
Health & Safety of district employees and supervisors	Staff should be certified in CPR. There is noone currently with CPR training on staff. Amount includes staff time and cost of training.	2,500
Health & Safety of district employees & supervisors		3,400
Equipment for Engineers	TDS Ranger data collector; Geneq SX Pads data collector & SX Blue GPS	10,200
Equipment for Engineers	This request is to establish a mobile workstation for our engineer consisting of a laptop and an upgrade to his total station. The laptop is a Dell Precision M3800 Mobile Workstation (\$4,000). The total station upgrade is to a Topcon ES 105 Reflectorless Total Station (\$8990), a Topcon FC-2600 Field Controller (\$2995), 2 new tripods (\$300), Seco Optical Plummet Twist Focus (\$200), and a Survey Pro software update (\$1400).	17,885
Equipment for Engineers		28,085
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Lack of cost Some District computers are over 10 years old and are in serious need of updating. Computer software upgrades are also out of date and needed.	5,000
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Upgrade to GIS workstation laptop computer, docking station, Latest MS office software	3,300
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	This request includes replacing older computers for 6 staff, iPads for new staff, upgrading network infrastructure for increased stability, upgrading database software technology, and improving disaster resilience (i.e. protection of data in case of fire). This request will purchase equipment and software for the engineers and equipment for outreach content development; cameras and accessories to help document projects.	45,000

Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Need to replace computers that stop running periodically, production software that are different versions and don't communication with others very well, and provide computers and productivity software to new employees added by unexpected growth in staff numbers.	7,500
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	These requested funds will allow us to replace three computers, two laptops and a desktop. We could also buy "notebooks" for our field staff. Our current computers are three to five years old, and in need of replacement.	4,800
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Our Engineering Technician's computer was purchased in 2008 and is not performing well. He runs AutoCad software as well as GIS and needs a high performance computer to be able to use the software effectively.	2,500
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	Small printer to be connected to bookkeeper computer for printing checks. Current printer in other room and have to insert checks occasionally someone hits print when checks in drawer causing problems	226
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	2 computer monitors	300
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software for conservation district staff	the expansion of the district due to the acceptance of the RCPP will predicate the need for additional computer hardware such as laptop, printers and the software to accompany it.	2,500
Updates/Upgrades to computers and software		71,126
Transportation Needs	We have been looking for a 1/2 ton 4 door pickup for use by our water quality technician. Her current vehicle is a 2000 Chevy Blazer. The wheel fell off this fall.	36,000
Transportation Needs	This request would replace the Green Explorer with a field vehicle, potentially a F150 Crew Cab Short Bed with a canopy. It would purchase a 7000lbs capacity dump trailer for cost share projects (primarily Rain Garden projects for now). It would pay for replacement of the Fusion's tires, and pay for this quarter's vehicle maintenance. Purchase first aid kits and road safety kits for all of the vehicles and finish putting logos on the car doors.	45,000
Transportation Needs	A small Commuter car. We have staff that travel between districts and we only have one vehicle. We understand that this is a large request, however this would save district money because we are paying out too much to employees for their vehicle use. We would like to keep the money in the district.	14,000
Transportation Needs	New 4X4 Truck to complete field work	23,000
Transportation Needs	Need to replace one aging vehicle and add another due to unanticipated staff growth due to disaster recovery and additional grants all happening at once. District will match funds provided by WSCC 1:1.	15,000
Transportation Needs	Underwood Conservation District has two aging vehicles that need to be replaced. Our truck was in a head-on collision years ago, and while it runs reliably well, it's frame alignment has never been the same. This is our primary work vehicle. We also have a small passenger vehicle that is not very reliable, and the staff are not comfortable driving it. We are in extreme need of an updated, safe, reliable work truck or passenger car.	20,000
Transportation Needs	The district needs a truck for transportation of materials, conducting site visits, and hauling our equipment. We have a manure spreader on a trailer and poultry processing equipment that we take to workshops and landowners. We have a 1983 Dodge Ram that we purchased from another district that they didn't want (and they purchased from DNR surplus) that is no longer safe for employees to drive. Staff has to use their personal truck for district activities.	27,000
Transportation Needs	The district needs a larger equipment trailer to transport the ATV and Mower to riparian locations. Our current trailer is too small to safely load the mower without the assistance of a wheel tractor with a loader; an Americorp team or if by yourself an unsafe use of a come along which creates unsafe working conditions.	2,500
Transportation Needs	We need a box trailer to house our new poultry processing equipment. We recently received a grant to purchase poultry processing equipment to loan to landowners but the grant was not enough to purchase the trailer we need for the equipment.	3,000

Transportation Needs	We are in need of a reliable 4WD pickup for landowner site visits and project implementation	17,000
Transportation		202,500
Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors	WADE Training for district staff and/or Supervisors	4,300
Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors	Four people to attend WADE. We have budgeted to send three people (two staff and one supervisor) to WADE. We have the option for an additional attendee through a WADE scholarship. However, I would like to be able to send three more people to WADE training. I have an inexperienced Board, whose members could benefit from the experience. We could also use some assistance with travel expenses.	1,650
Training needs for conservation district staff and supervisors	The District has new employees and would benefit from attending the WADE training.	2,000
Training Needs		7,950
Project implementation	The PRLCD has the need to fund three spring direct seed projects for the following cooperators: Elloom (Stuart Elliot), Mike Glorfield and Joanne Bailey. These cooperators are in the unique position and need.	4,380
Project implementation	Our current # 1 priority project where the landowner can complete the project by June 30, 2015 is a riparian restoration project for approximately 1 mile along Spangle Creek. ff creek watering facility.	10,000
Project implementation	Cost Share dollars for Bio Controls (bugs)	40,000
Project implementation	Dry Stack for Hornby beef operation	37,748
Project implementation	Lack of cost share funding has limited the District's ability to offer cost share on projects. This money would allow for 3 livestock watering facilities to be implemented.	11,000
Project implementation	Our second priority for projects that can be completed before June 30th, 2015 is a project that will restore 1.4 miles of riparian corridor on three different streams/ rivers (Spokane river, Hangman Creek, and Bear Creek).ly 1.4 miles of streams	15,000
Project implementation	This funding will purchase Agricultural Conservation Easements on approximately 6,000 acres of Western Pacific Timber property. This is for grazing rights only. The actual acreage will be determined after an appraisal is completed.	60,000
Project implementation	Provide cost-share for a manure management project (Highest priority project for landowner that has not previously received cost-share limitation for current fiscal year for WSCC funded projects)	50,000
Project implementation	Dry Stack for Woods dairy	45,279
Project implementation	Our third priority for projects that can be completed by June 30th, 2015 is an irrigation efficiency project at the Mt. Hope Cemetery. This will result in significant water and energy savings. The project will retrofit the existing antiquated system.	10,000
Project Implementation		283,407
Education & Outreach	This request is for Education/outreach associated with a KCCD hosted "Wildfire Community Preparedness Day" event that will include speakers from DNR, NRCS, The Nature Conservancy for Fire Adapted Communities (FAC), the county Fire Marshal, an Insurance agency and 3 landowners. The request is for \$2,000 for supplies and staff time for the event.	2,000
Education & Outreach	Projector and screen	1,400
Education & Outreach	This year is Underwood CD's 75th Year Anniversary! We are celebrating in several different ways, but we need funding to support our efforts. Funds will help pay for outreach and display material showing UCD's history and current work. Funds will help pay for staff time preparing materials and planning anniversary events. Finally, funding will pay for a "Dream District" planning retreat for staff and supervisors.	5,000
Education & Outreach	We need a printed banner for events, signage, wildlife cameras for live feed of beaver device areas to monitor beaver activity in CREP and to post on website as educational outreach, jackets with JCCD insignia for site visits and being in field and new District signage for our truck for a more professional district image.	2,000
Education & Outreach	Need funding to replace depleted Firewise Education funding.	3,500

Education & Outreach	Landowner outreach, event and workshop display equipment, social media plan and implementation	7,000
Education & Outreach		20,900
Other	Laser TruPulse 200 Laser Rangefinder	800
Other	Lidar and Orthophotography completed on Alpowa, George, Tenmile and Couse Creeks (completed and final product will be delivered prior to June 30) and Sediment Budget Analysis (Phase 1) completed for Alpowa, Asotin, George, Tenmile and Couse Creeks.	50,000
Other	Digital Camera with GPS and GIS Layer creation.	700
Other	Complete between 5 and 8 Certified Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) for livestock producers with winter feeding areas that will install manure management practices.	25000
Other	This request is for a combination of on-line ESRI training to migrate from arcgis 9.2 to 10.2 and then to complete the upgrade and then to organize GIS databases. In total, it is for 60 staff hours with overhead to complete this task.	3000
Other	GPS Garmin unit.	350
Other	We would like to purchase a mid-sized manure spreader (http://www.millcreekmfg.com/products/manure-spreaders/mid-size-spreaders.php) that allows producers to utilize manure waste and other materials, like wood chips, on their farms and dairies. This item would be rented out to cooperators to help pay for maintenance and storage. UCD will host demonstration events to educate users about the benefits of wise-waste management. Budget includes a trailer. We feel this tool will be highly desirable.	15,000
Other	2 soil testing probes, one high quality for district staff and one that can be loaned out to landowners, currently beg borrow from NRCS, old probes poor shape.	450
Other		95,300

March 13, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members

FROM: Debbie Becker

SUBJECT: Proposed Cash Advance Policy

Background summary:

SCC proposes the addition of a Cash Advance Policy for capital project funds awarded to conservation districts. In the last biennium, we have seen several impacts to conservation districts financial health, which may be impacting their ability to comply with state law, and SCC's contract.

This proposed policy mirrors a similar policy in place at RCO (Recreation and Conservation Office).

This policy has been previously reviewed by SCC's AAG Phyllis Barney for review and comment.

Action requested:

Two separate actions are requested.

1. SCC staff proposes Commission members authorize this policy follow the Commission members adopted Policy on Policies, and be sent to conservation districts for the 45-day review period. All comments and concerns would be presented to Commission members during the May 2015 meeting, with the anticipated adoption date of July 1, 2015.

In addition, SCC staff is concerned about conservation districts ability to follow state law, and SCC's contract between now and June 30, 2015 due to the dollar level and number of projects not yet completed.

2. For the period between now and July 1, 2015, using the attached draft policy, SCC staff requests the executive director be granted the authority to make advance allocations outside of the Policy on Policies procedure for the Shellfish and Non-Shellfish grant programs.

Staff Contact: Debbie Becker, 360.470.6211 or dbecker@scc.wa.gov

Policy #	Proposed Advance Policy For Capital Grants
Applies to:	Conservation Districts
Effective Date:	July 1, 2015

PURPOSE

To address the financial shortfall facing conservation districts when reimbursing landowners for approved project implementation.

BACKGROUND

Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) recognizes conservation districts may not have the cash flow needed to reimburse landowners for expenditures related to the implementation of approved projects. SCC is proposing a capital funds advance policy allowing for short-term cash advances of capital funds.

The gravity of this situation has been building for the last few years. SCC is concerned whether or not conservation districts will have the means to comply with state law, and SCC's contract, by ensuring all expenditures are paid by the conservation district prior to seeking reimbursement.

The financial health of conservations has been impacted by a number of factors, and in some cases, multiples of these factors. They include:

- reduced or no grant awards outside of SCC funds;
- increased requirements for rental payments for office space;
- delays of reimbursements from other granting agencies beyond a 30 day period;
- the increase of the landowner maximum financial assistance from \$25,000 to \$50,000; and,
- an increase in capital funding received by SCC to fund project implementation, increasing landowner project implementation ten-fold.

SCC procedures currently allows for advances for grants awarded from general fund dollars. This proposal would extend the policy to include to capital funded grants.

POLICY

For all conservation districts requesting an advance under this policy, the following shall apply:

- Advances may not exceed 50 percent of the balance of the SCC share of the awarded funds in the grant agreement and may be restricted to less than that amount, determined by SCC financial staff.
- SCC financial staff will evaluate the financial management activity and financial standing of the conservation district in determining the maximum amount eligible.
- Advances are not automatically granted. SCC may decline any request it deems necessary to ensure the integrity of the program.
- SCC reserves the right to inspect the conservation district records on any advance, at any time.

To apply for funds

- The conservation district must send SCC a request that includes the SCC Capital Funds Advance Agreement. (Attachment A)
- The request for an Advance shall be signed by the district manager or chair.
- Requests for the Advance shall be approved for periods to cover only expenses anticipated over the immediate 90-day period.
- Requests for the Advance must be eligible to be fully and properly expended within 90 calendar days of receipt.

Reconciling the Advance

- Advances are considered satisfied after an approved SCC financial staff review of the Invoice Voucher and appropriate documents. The invoice must reflect the full amount of expenditures and amount of any match required to receive the advance. All necessary and required documentation must be provided.
- A complete billing must be submitted within 110 calendar days of the SCC payment date of the advance, or
- Be reconciled within 10 days of the end of each fiscal year, to include the end of the biennium.
- A conservation district may only have one active advance request per capital grant at any one time.

If SCC staff has follow-up questions or further inquiries about the advance documentation submitted by a conservation district, the conservation district shall have five business days from the date of contact by SCC to fully respond to the request for additional or clarifying information. An incomplete response to an SCC request may result in a finding of noncompliance.

Noncompliance with Advance Policy

Failure to comply with the SCC capital funds advance policy and requirements shall result in the following:

- A first noncompliance offense shall result in suspension of all advances for three months for the conservation district.
- A second noncompliance offense shall result in suspension of all advances for six months for the conservation district.
- A third noncompliance offense shall result in suspension of all advances for one year or more for the conservation district.
- For any noncompliance, and at the discretion of the Conservation Commission members, future grant awards may be impacted through delay or reduction.

Additionally, SCC may:

Make a referral to the Attorney General or State Auditor if expenditures cannot be properly accounted for.

The SCC Executive Director or Conservation Commission Members may authorize changes to this policy for individual projects or situations.

SCC Capital Funds Advance Agreement

Please fill out the following information in order to request a payment. We will follow up with you within two weeks after you have submitted this form.

Date

Mar ▼ 11 ▼ 2015 ▼ 

Dropdown List

Select Your Conservation District ▼

Name*

First Name

Last Name

Email*

Which grant program are you requesting an advance?*

- Shellfish
- NonShellfish
- CREP
- Other:

Start Date Requested*

▼ ▼ ▼ 

Total Value of Projects Currently Under Contract in this grant?*

\$

Maximum Authorized*

\$ 0.00

Requested Amount*

\$

Remember, this amount is only for 90 days. Please ensure the landowner(s) have the ability to complete the projects within this timeframe.

Has the Board approved this request?*

- Yes No

Signature



[\[clear\]](#)

Use your mouse or finger to draw your signature above

You will receive a copy of this request with your data in an email after submitted. SCC financial staff will respond within 2 weeks.

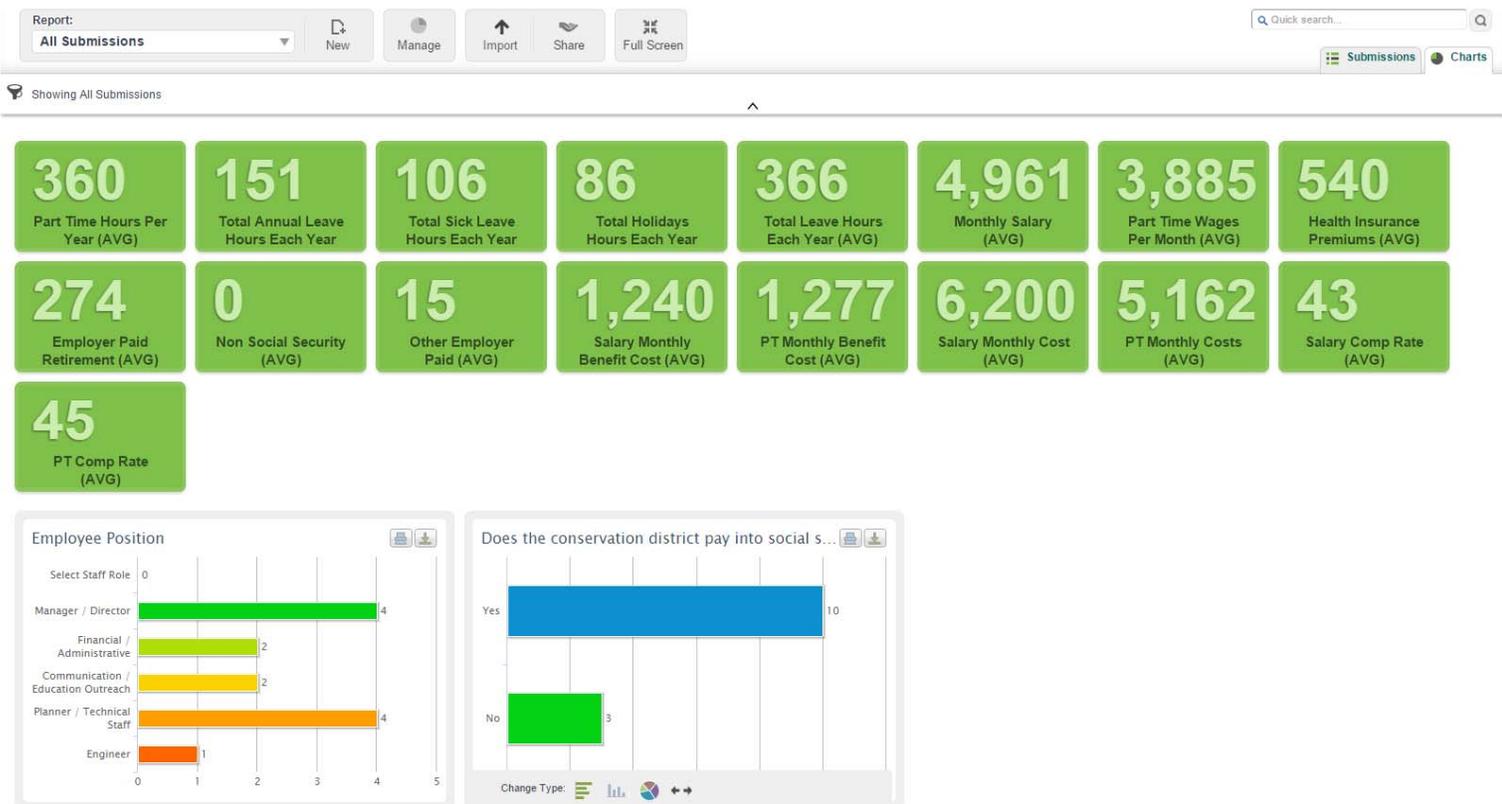
Submit Form

SCC Compensation Rate Data Rollup

Data can be exported into EXCEL for additional evaluation and reporting, different fields graphed and included in analysis from this page. Each of the green data areas allows you to view the following results: Sum, Average, Minimum, Maximum. For all rates submitted by districts, it save about 4 steps at the district and 4 steps at SCC.

Steps saved in this process at district level:		Steps Saved at SCC:	
Current	New	Current	New
1. Working in Excel format	1. Complete Online Form	1. Print from district email	1. Save file from district email
2. Conducting math & checking entries	2. Will receive email to print and file	2. Check math	
3. Save		3. Scan	
4. Print		4. Save into System	
5. Scan		5. File hard copy in notebook	
6. Email to SCC			

In addition, if a request of data is to evaluate compensation rates in a particular region, and by staff type, it will be easy to generate the report. And the confidence of knowing the math is correct.



See page 3 for a copy of the fillable form, and page 2 for a copy of the current form.

Composite-Rate-Worksheet

Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Developer Add-Ins Acrobat

Cut Copy Paste Format Painter Clipboard

Arial 12 Font

Alignment Merge & Center

General Number

A1 (FOR GRANT BILLING PURPOSES ONLY)

(FOR GRANT BILLING PURPOSES ONLY)

CONSERVATION COMMISSION "COMPOSITE HOURLY RATE" WORKSHEET

Use this sheet for FULL TIME EMPLOYEES ONLY

Complete a New Composite Rate Worksheet for Each Employee Every January 1st

This worksheet can be used for all full-time employees. Calculated on a monthly cost, the "Composite Hourly Rate" is an *estimated* rate that includes all payroll costs paid by the employer for the return of services provided by the employee. See the explanation form for more information.

District _____

Employee: _____ Effective Date: _____

Employee is: Exempt from overtime pay -- Depending on district policy, employee may accumulate exchange time at a rate of 1 hr exchange time for every 1 hr worked over 40 hrs in any work week.

Non-Exempt from overtime pay -- Depending on district policy, employee may either be paid for, or offered compensation time for, overtime hours at a rate of 1½ times the hourly pay rate for every 1 hr worked over 40 hrs in any work week.

Were Cells Altered? _____

What Was Altered? _____

1. GRANT REIMBURSABLE HOURS IN A YEAR - **New comp rate must be calculated each time the paid leave hours change**

a. Paid Hours in a Year = (52 wks/yr X 5 work days/wk = 260 days) X 8 hrs/day 1a. 2080.00 hrs

b. Total hours of Paid Leave Hours Per Year

Annual Leave: _____ hrs/mo X 12 mos = 0 hrs

Sick Leave: _____ hrs/mo X 12 mos = 0 hrs

Holidays: _____ days/yr X 8.00 hours = 0 hrs

1b. 0.00 hrs

Average # of hours worked: 1. 2080.00
(Subtract line 1b from line 1a)

2. Enter the amount of monthly gross salary - **New comp rate must be calculated each time the salary ch.** 2. _____

3. a. Social Security Rate: 6.2% X Line 2 (wages) = 3a. \$ _____

b. Medicare Rate: 1.45% X Line 2 (wages) = 3b. \$ _____

Total 7.65% 3. \$ _____
(Total 3a + 3b)

4. L & I Benefit - Employer's Portion - (Based on an average of the number of office hrs and field hrs per month).
The total number of hours may not exceed 160 hrs/mo

a. Office Code _____ Rate \$: _____ X _____ hrs = 4a. \$ _____
(average # office hrs worked/mo) (Office Benefit)

b. Field Code _____ Rate \$: _____ X _____ hrs = 4b. \$ _____
(average # field hrs worked/mo) (Field Benefit)

4. \$ _____
(Total 4a + 4b)

5. Unemployment Insurance -
New comp rate must be calculated after each employee has met the wage base of \$41,300 annually AND if the rate changes

Rate: 0.0000 X LINE 2 (wages up to \$41,300) 5. \$ _____

6. Medical Benefits, per month - **EMPLOYER PAID PORTION ONLY. Do not include what is deducted from wages** 6. _____
New comp rate must be calculated if this amount changes

7. Retirement contribution, per month - **EMPLOYER PAID PORTION ONLY! Do not include what is deducted from wages** 7. _____
New comp rate must be calculated if this amount changes

8. Other - **EMPLOYER PAID PORTION ONLY! Do not include what is deducted from wages**
New comp rate must be calculated if this amount changes

8. \$ _____

9. TOTAL MONTHLY COSTS (add lines 2 through 8) 9. \$ _____

10. TOTAL YEARLY COST (Multiply line 9 X 12 months) 10. \$ _____

11. **COMPOSITE HOURLY RATE** (Divide line 10 by line 1) 11. \$ _____

12. **NON-EXEMPT OVERTIME COMPOSITE HOURLY RATE** (Step 1: add lines 2 through 5; Step 2: multiply Step 1 answer by 12; Step 3: divide Step 2 answer by line 1a; Step 4: multiply Step 3 answer by 1.5) 12. \$ _____

Workbook A - Full Time Workbook B - PT Explanation

Ready

Compensation Rate Form. Includes form logic, meaning how you answer certain questions determines how some fields are completed.



Grant and Billing Composite Rate Form

Complete one form and submit for each employee.

A new form must be updated and submitted any time rates, wages, and/or benefit numbers change.

Your Conservation District*

Current Date

Your Email*

Effective Date*

Employee Name*
 First Name
 Last Name

Employee Position*

Is this employee Overtime Eligible?*
 Yes No

Is this employee Part Time?*
 Yes No

Does the conservation district pay into social security?*

Leave Hours (old lines 1b)

Annual Leave Hours Each Month <input type="text"/>	Sick Leave Hours Each Month <input type="text"/>	Holiday Days Per Year <input type="text"/>	Total Part Time Leave Hours <input type="text" value="0.0"/>
Total Annual Leave Hours Each Year <input type="text" value="0.0"/>	Total Sick Leave Hours Each Year <input type="text" value="0.0"/>	Total Holidays Hours Each Year <input type="text" value="0.0"/>	Total Leave Hours Each Year <input type="text" value="0.0"/>
Average Hours Worked Each Year <input type="text" value="2080.0"/>	Average Hours Worked Each Month <input type="text" value="173.3"/>	Total Part Time Hours Each Year <input type="text" value="0.0"/>	Total Part Time Hours Each Month <input type="text" value="0.0"/>

Wages - (old line 2)

Monthly Salary* \$ <input type="text" value="0"/>	Salary Base Hourly Rate \$ 0.00	Part Time Hourly Wage \$ <input type="text"/>	Part Time Wages Per Month \$ 0.00
--	------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------------

Employer Paid Benefits

Social Security - Wage Cap \$113,700 (old line 3a) <input type="text"/>	Salary Social Security* \$ 0.00	Hourly Social Security \$ 0.00
Medicare - No Wage Cap (old line 3b) <input type="text"/>	Salary Medicare \$ 0.00	Hourly Medicare \$ 0.00
Unemployment Insurance - Rate (old line 5) \$ <input type="text"/> <small>Wage Base \$42,100</small>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Health Insurance Premiums - (old line 6) <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	
Employer Paid Retirement - (old line 7) <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	

Labor & Industries - Employer Paid Share Only - total hours may not exceed 160 hours. (old line 4)

Office Hours <input type="text"/>	LI Office Rate \$ <input type="text"/>	LI Office Benefit \$ 0.00
Field Hours <input type="text"/>	LI Field Rate \$ <input type="text"/>	LI Field Benefit \$ 0.00
Total Labor & Industries \$ 0.00		
Other Emp Paid Benefits (define) (old line 8) <input type="text"/>	Other Employer Paid \$ <input type="text"/>	
Subtotal Employer Paid Benefits - per month	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00

Monthly Employee Costs

Total Monthly Cost to Employer - (old line 9)	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Annual Cost to Employer - (old line 10)	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Hourly Composite Rate - (old line 11)	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Overtime Hourly Composite - (old line 12)	\$ 0.00	

[Submit Form \(you will receive an email in a few minutes with a printable copy of all the data\).](#)

March 13, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members

FROM: Debbie Becker

SUBJECT: Financial Report

Background summary:

The financial report through month 20 reviews the current fund balances, not reflected in this report are the obligations of the funds.

Page 1 covers SCC operations.

- Salaries & Benefits – within acceptable limits, likely under budget do to vacancies in last fiscal year.
- Contracts – slightly over, will be covered by savings with Salaries & Benefits
- Goods & Services – this will definitely be in excess of budget by the end of the fiscal year. Will be covered with savings in salaries.
- Travel – this too, will ultimately be over by end of fiscal year. Additional vehicles from motor pool, new staff costs, additional travel across all levels.
- Equipment – currently unspent, only because ECY purchased the necessary laptops and desktops for staff, and we have not yet been invoiced. This will be fully expended by fiscal year end.
- Retro – labor and industries self insurance premium rebate. Used for sit/stands, health and safety, wellness, etc. This amount is fully expended through this fiscal year.

Pages 2 & 3 cover the individual Grants & Contracts

- Not reflected in the balances remaining are any obligations of these funds.
- Conservation districts have been notified if balances look abnormally high, to let us know by the end of March if funding is expected to be unspent.

Pages 4 & 5 provide an analysis of each conservation district's current balance of operating and capital funds.

- Districts with higher than normal balances are in contact with staff regarding the likelihood of spending by June 30.

Page 6 is a graphical representation of the data identified on pages 4 & 5.

- The orange dotted line indicates the time remaining in the biennium (conservation district balances represent through a January 2015 period).
- The solid black line is showing the mean/average, providing a visual of the over/under spending to date.

Action requested:

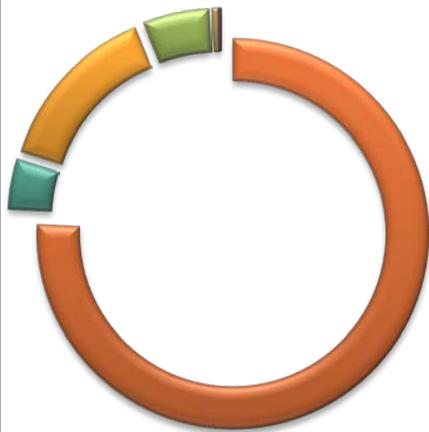
None

Staff Contact: Debbie Becker, 360.470.6211 or dbecker@scc.wa.gov

SCC Operations

Total \$2,448,567.00

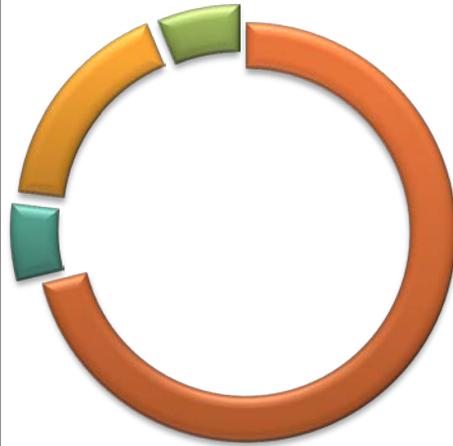
- Salaries & Benefits
- Contracts
- Goods & Services
- Travel
- Equipment
- Retro



Expenses To Date

Total \$1,768,861.08

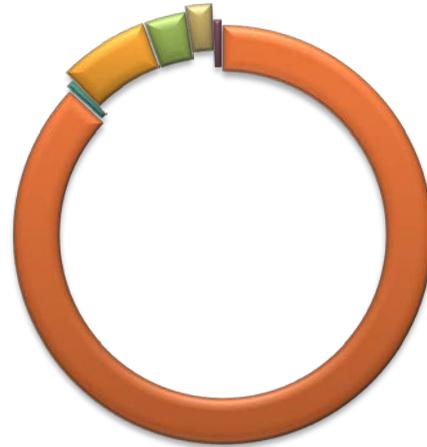
- Salaries & Benefits
- Contracts
- Goods & Services
- Travel
- Equipment
- Retro



Balance Remaining

Total \$679,705.92

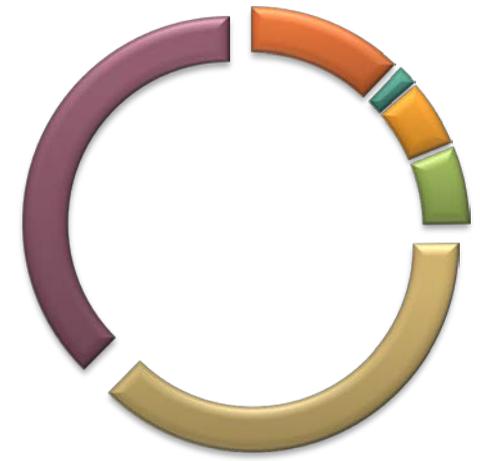
- Salaries & Benefits
- Contracts
- Goods & Services
- Travel
- Equipment
- Retro



Percentages By Object Remaining

Total 27.76%

- Salaries & Benefits
- Contracts
- Goods & Services
- Travel
- Equipment
- Retro



Allotment Detail	Total
Salaries & Benefits	\$1,855,763
Contracts	\$99,500
Goods & Services	\$343,785
Travel	\$132,000
Equipment	\$13,500
Retro	\$4,019
Total	\$2,448,567

Expenses To Date	Total
Salaries & Benefits	\$1,257,814
Contracts	\$103,510
Goods & Services	\$296,658
Travel	\$110,878
Equipment	\$0
Retro	\$0
Total	\$1,768,861

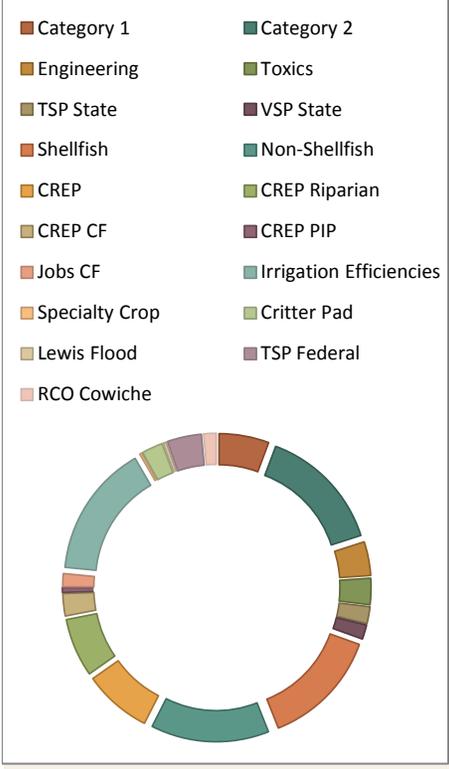
Balance Remaining	Total
Salaries & Benefits	\$597,949
Contracts	(\$4,010)
Goods & Services	\$47,127
Travel	\$21,122
Equipment	\$13,500
Retro	\$4,019
Total	\$679,706

Percentage Remaining	Annual
Salaries & Benefits	32.22%
Contracts	-4.03%
Goods & Services	13.71%
Travel	16.00%
Equipment	100.00%
Retro	100.00%

NOTES:
8 months (66%) completed.

Programs

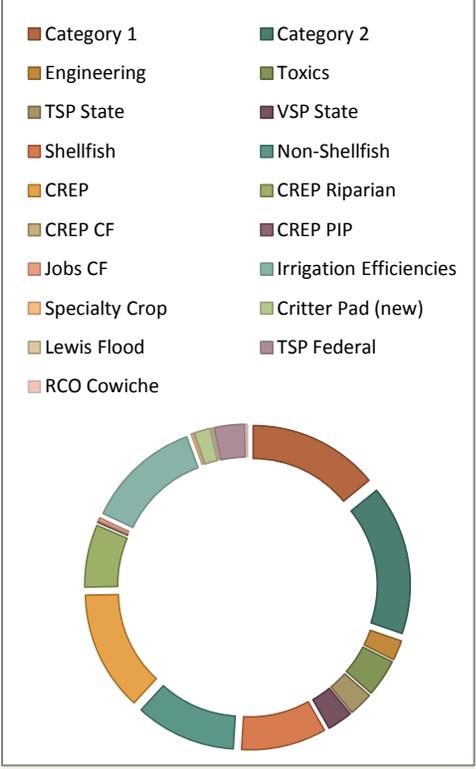
Total \$33,349,318.89



Biennial Appropriation	Total
Category 1	1,900,000
Category 2	4,782,500
Engineering	1,290,000
Toxics	1,000,000
TSP State	650,000
VSP State	546,000
Shellfish	4,500,000
Non-Shellfish	4,500,000
CREP	2,590,000
CREP Riparian	2,231,000
CREP CF	850,000
CREP PIP	180,000
Jobs CF	500,000
Irrigation Efficiencies	1,362,362

Expenses To Date

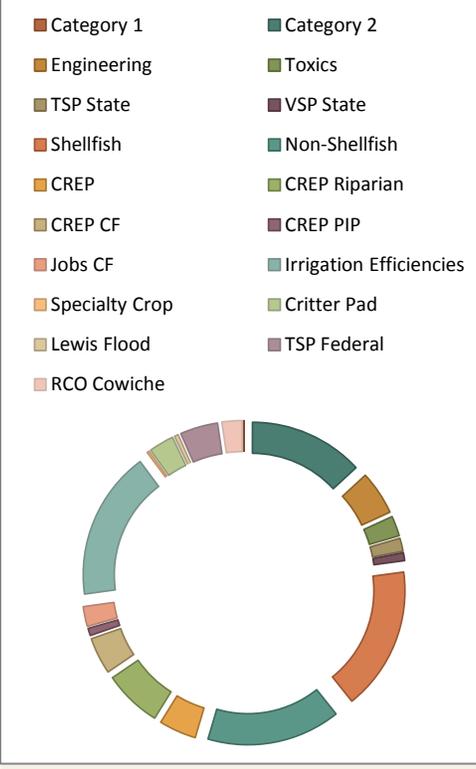
Total \$13,448,817.68



FY 15 Expenses To Date	Total
Category 1	1,895,727
Category 2	2,175,766
Engineering	289,948
Toxics	541,027
TSP State	349,558
VSP State	366,275
Shellfish	1,233,346
Non-Shellfish	1,458,381
CREP	1,739,341
CREP Riparian	908,787
CREP CF	12,265
CREP PIP	11,845
Jobs CF	46,133
Irrigation Efficiencies	1,664,671

Balance Remaining

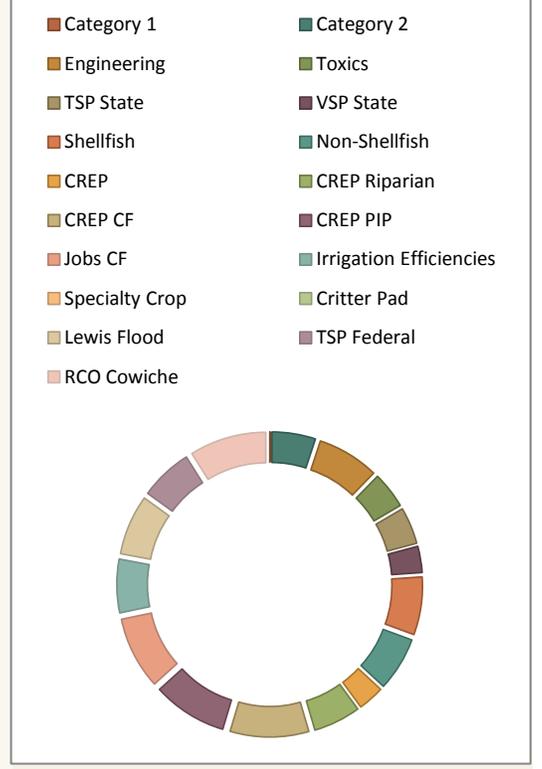
Total \$19,900,501.21



Balance Remaining	Total
Category 1	\$4,273
Category 2	\$2,606,734
Engineering	\$1,000,052
Toxics	\$458,973
TSP State	\$300,442
VSP State	\$179,726
Shellfish	\$3,266,654
Non-Shellfish	\$3,041,619
CREP	\$850,659
CREP Riparian	\$1,322,213
CREP CF	\$837,735
CREP PIP	\$168,155
Jobs CF	\$453,867
Irrigation Efficiencies	\$3,382,691

Percentages By Program Remaining

Total 59.67%



Percentage Remaining	Annual
Category 1	0.22%
Category 2	54.51%
Engineering	77.52%
Toxics	45.90%
TSP State	46.22%
VSP State	32.92%
Shellfish	72.59%
Non-Shellfish	67.59%
CREP	32.84%
CREP Riparian	59.27%
CREP CF	98.56%
CREP PIP	93.42%
Jobs CF	90.77%
Irrigation Efficiencies	67.60%

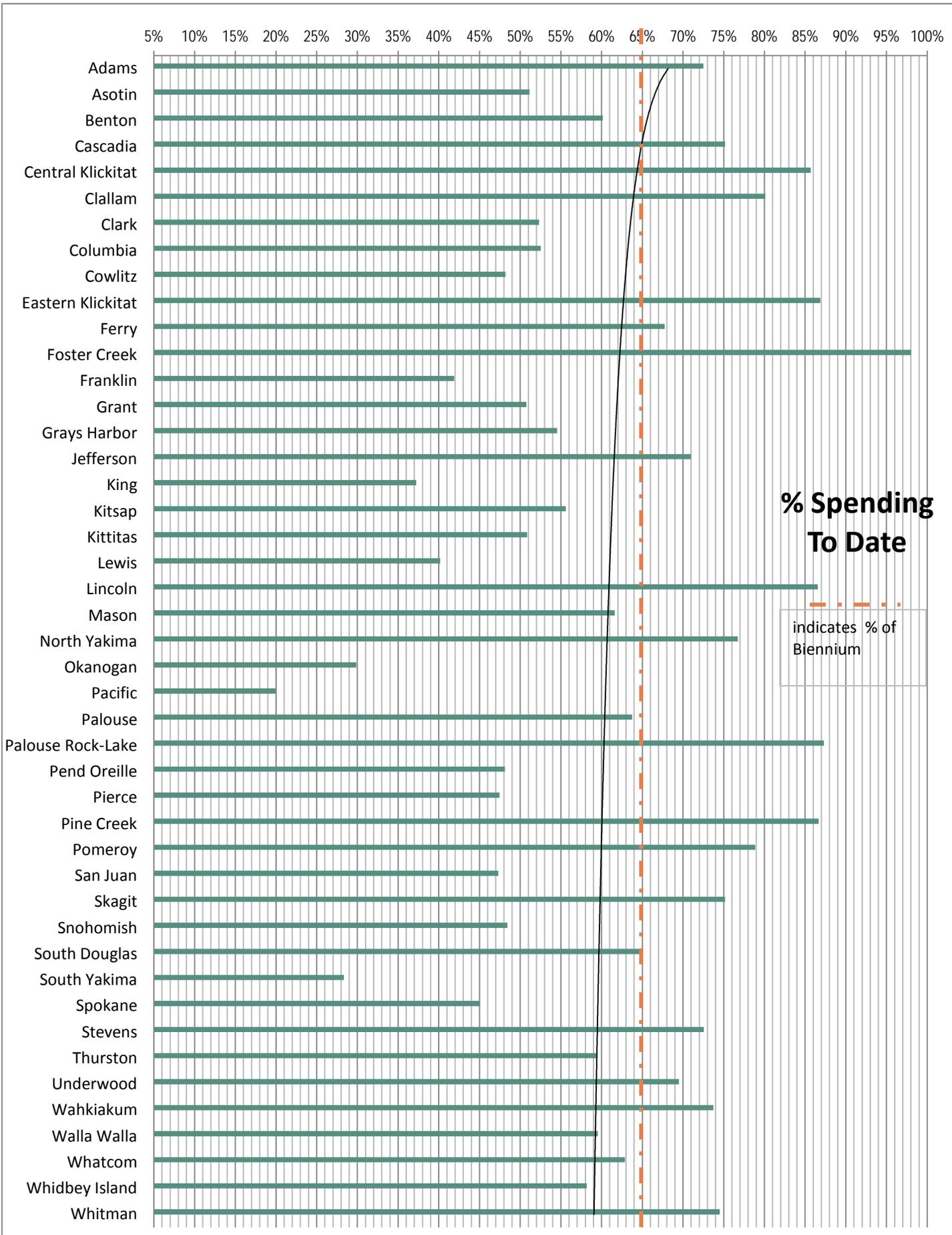
Programs		Expenses To Date		Balance Remaining		Percentages By Program Remaining	
Total	\$33,349,318.89	Total	\$13,448,817.68	Total	\$19,900,501.21	Total	59.67%
Specialty Crop	86,556	Specialty Crop	36,415	Specialty Crop	\$50,141	Specialty Crop	0.00%
Critter Pad	798,480	Critter Pad (new)	229,851	Critter Pad	\$568,629	Critter Pad	0.00%
Lewis Flood	120,000	Lewis Flood	29,610	Lewis Flood	\$90,390	Lewis Flood	75.32%
TSP Federal	1,301,000	TSP Federal	441,711	TSP Federal	\$859,289	TSP Federal	66.05%
RCO Cowiche	476,421	RCO Cowiche	18,162	RCO Cowiche	\$458,259	RCO Cowiche	96.19%
Total	\$33,349,319	Total	\$13,448,818	Total	\$19,900,501		56.68%

NOTES:

Conservation District Grant Status As of 3/5/2015 - Combined Operating & Capital Funds

Grants & Contracts		Expenses To Date		Percentage Expended		Percentage Remaining	
Total	\$27,706,870.65	Total	\$15,260,493.28	Total	55.08%	Total	44.92%
Funds Under Contract	Operating/Capital \$	Expenses TD	Operating/Capital \$	% Expended by Fund	%	% Remaining	%
Adams	\$ 208,452	Adams	\$ 151,163	Adams	72.52%	Adams	27.48%
Asotin	\$ 757,320	Asotin	\$ 387,315	Asotin	51.14%	Asotin	48.86%
Benton	\$ 378,558	Benton	\$ 227,738	Benton	60.16%	Benton	39.84%
Cascadia	\$ 440,281	Cascadia	\$ 330,895	Cascadia	75.16%	Cascadia	24.84%
Central Klickitat	\$ 305,215	Central Klickitat	\$ 261,572	Central Klickitat	85.70%	Central Klickitat	14.30%
Clallam	\$ 1,215,226	Clallam	\$ 973,524	Clallam	80.11%	Clallam	19.89%
Clark	\$ 241,276	Clark	\$ 126,234	Clark	52.32%	Clark	47.68%
Columbia	\$ 426,139	Columbia	\$ 223,828	Columbia	52.52%	Columbia	47.48%
Cowlitz	\$ 293,746	Cowlitz	\$ 141,530	Cowlitz	48.18%	Cowlitz	51.82%
Eastern Klickitat	\$ 136,016	Eastern Klickitat	\$ 118,169	Eastern Klickitat	86.88%	Eastern Klickitat	13.12%
Ferry	\$ 222,896	Ferry	\$ 151,005	Ferry	67.75%	Ferry	32.25%
Foster Creek	\$ 190,660	Foster Creek	\$ 186,891	Foster Creek	98.02%	Foster Creek	1.98%
Franklin	\$ 525,758	Franklin	\$ 220,256	Franklin	41.89%	Franklin	58.11%
Grant	\$ 954,024	Grant	\$ 484,122	Grant	50.75%	Grant	49.25%
Grays Harbor	\$ 413,225	Grays Harbor	\$ 225,307	Grays Harbor	54.52%	Grays Harbor	45.48%
Jefferson	\$ 445,421	Jefferson	\$ 316,038	Jefferson	70.95%	Jefferson	29.05%
King	\$ 664,701	King	\$ 247,372	King	37.22%	King	62.78%
Kitsap	\$ 421,849	Kitsap	\$ 234,606	Kitsap	55.61%	Kitsap	44.39%
Kittitas	\$ 1,865,814	Kittitas	\$ 948,931	Kittitas	50.86%	Kittitas	49.14%
Lewis	\$ 2,378,555	Lewis	\$ 955,790	Lewis	40.18%	Lewis	59.82%
Lincoln	\$ 263,606	Lincoln	\$ 228,170	Lincoln	86.56%	Lincoln	13.44%
Mason	\$ 657,887	Mason	\$ 405,302	Mason	61.61%	Mason	38.39%
North Yakima	\$ 443,836	North Yakima	\$ 340,533	North Yakima	76.73%	North Yakima	23.27%
Okanogan	\$ 1,856,093	Okanogan	\$ 554,205	Okanogan	29.86%	Okanogan	70.14%
Pacific	\$ 1,127,031	Pacific	\$ 224,724	Pacific	19.94%	Pacific	80.06%
Palouse	\$ 438,569	Palouse	\$ 279,614	Palouse	63.76%	Palouse	36.24%
Palouse Rock-Lake	\$ 144,774	Palouse Rock-Lake	\$ 126,395	Palouse Rock-Lake	87.30%	Palouse Rock-Lake	12.70%
Pend Oreille	\$ 273,513	Pend Oreille	\$ 131,603	Pend Oreille	48.12%	Pend Oreille	51.88%
Pierce	\$ 639,661	Pierce	\$ 303,643	Pierce	47.47%	Pierce	52.53%
Pine Creek	\$ 136,256	Pine Creek	\$ 118,073	Pine Creek	86.66%	Pine Creek	13.34%
Pomeroy	\$ 511,373	Pomeroy	\$ 403,400	Pomeroy	78.89%	Pomeroy	21.11%
San Juan	\$ 294,065	San Juan	\$ 139,126	San Juan	47.31%	San Juan	52.69%
Skagit	\$ 1,185,964	Skagit	\$ 891,490	Skagit	75.17%	Skagit	24.83%

Grants & Contracts		Expenses To Date		Percentage Expended		Percentage Remaining	
Total \$27,706,870.65		Total \$15,260,493.28		Total 55.08%		Total 44.92%	
Funds Under Contract	Operating/Capital \$	Expenses TD	Operating/Capital \$	% Expended by Fund	%	% Remaining	%
Snohomish	\$ 1,106,584	Snohomish	\$ 535,843	Snohomish	48.42%	Snohomish	51.58%
South Douglas	\$ 129,880	South Douglas	\$ 84,540	South Douglas	65.09%	South Douglas	34.91%
South Yakima	\$ 652,679	South Yakima	\$ 185,062	South Yakima	28.35%	South Yakima	71.65%
Spokane	\$ 221,272	Spokane	\$ 99,677	Spokane	45.05%	Spokane	54.95%
Stevens	\$ 310,185	Stevens	\$ 225,029	Stevens	72.55%	Stevens	27.45%
Thurston	\$ 282,087	Thurston	\$ 167,373	Thurston	59.33%	Thurston	40.67%
Underwood	\$ 401,297	Underwood	\$ 278,869	Underwood	69.49%	Underwood	30.51%
Wahkiakum	\$ 335,822	Wahkiakum	\$ 247,610	Wahkiakum	73.73%	Wahkiakum	26.27%
Walla Walla	\$ 646,361	Walla Walla	\$ 384,677	Walla Walla	59.51%	Walla Walla	40.49%
Whatcom	\$ 2,667,931	Whatcom	\$ 1,677,511	Whatcom	62.88%	Whatcom	37.12%
Whidbey Island	\$ 324,974	Whidbey Island	\$ 189,055	Whidbey Island	58.18%	Whidbey Island	41.82%
Whitman	\$ 170,039	Whitman	\$ 126,684	Whitman	74.50%	Whitman	25.50%
Total	\$ 27,706,870.65	Total	\$ 15,260,493				38.69%



TAB 5

March 2015 Commission Meeting

District Operations Staff Report (January 2015 to March 2015)

Conservation District Assistance

Activities included:

- Supervisor election and appointment assistance (all districts & Ferry, Thurston, Whatcom, Pend Oreille, Spokane)
- District operating policies (Thurston)
- Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS) projects review, prioritization, assistance and data (all districts)
- Land owner contacts (Grays Harbor, Pacific)
- Conservation easement assistance (Eastern Klickitat & Central Klickitat)
- Good Governance self-assessment, Schedule 22, Internal audit, year-end funding request assistance (all districts)
- Audit history report (all districts)
- Audit follow-up assistance (Mason, Stevens, Skagit)
- District capacity building (Pend Oreille, Foster Creek, Grays Harbor, Clark)
- Long Range Planning assistance (Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Whitman, Lewis)
- Permit issue assistance (Okanogan)
- Rates & Charges and assessment summary update (districts with assessment or rates & charges)
- Open Government training assistance (all districts)
- Regional Managers provided in-person assistance and follow-up with; Conservation Districts

Looking Ahead

- District Capacity Building Assistance
- District Operations Issues Resolution Assistance
- Orientation & Open Government Training of new Supervisors
- CPDS & Project Development
- Sharing of Examples, Templates, Information
- Good Governance District Self Evaluations
- District Supervisor Elections & Appointments

Cultural Resources:

Larry Brewer has prepared policy recommendations for Commission member consideration at their March meeting along with the development of a summary of district responses prepared by Alicia Johnson. Ray Ledgerwood attended the 2.25.15 meeting of the 0505 work group with representatives of state agencies working on ways to coordinate on cultural resource investigations. Conservation Districts were provided the opportunity to input on the draft Cultural Resources Policy for the past 6 weeks. Results of the input will be brought to the Conservation Commission at the March Meeting. For more information contact [Larry Brewer](#)

Resource Management System Planning:

Ray Ledgerwood moderated a 2.25.15 webinar on Resource Management System program offered by NRCS for Conservation Districts and Conservation Commission staff, supervisors, and members with Peter Bautista (NRCS) presenting. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Carlton Complex:

Bill Eller addressed a contracting research issue with landowners who might want to participate with us and the Okanogan CD on cost-share related to the Carlton Complex fire. For more information contact [Bill Eller](#)

Emergency Management:

Bill Eller has submitted, on behalf of the Commission, our quarterly ICOOP report to EMD. For more information contact [Bill Eller](#)

Supervisor Elections:

Bill Eller prepared and sent information to each district on election records retention requirements. Bill wrote a one-page elections brochure / FAQ designed for districts to use in explaining the CD election process to voters and the public in general. Whatcom CD requested the brochure for use during their election this March, so time was short in order to create such a brochure. Whatcom CD wanted something that addressed why CD elections are different from and outside of the general election procedure that most voters are familiar with. The brochure is in draft stage now, but we hope to have it available for download by all districts and anyone who wants the information on our web page next week. Bill also observed the Pine Creek CD Election. He also sent warning emails to all CD's that had not met their initial deadline to send Election Form 1 to the Commission by their candidate filing deadline. This necessitated a review of the election database for each individual CD election date in order to calculate their candidate filing date so that an assessment of whether or not the district had complied with the rule could be done. All that work was successful as all districts have met this first paperwork deadline. He also continued to process a mountain of election forms, and answer elections and appointment related questions – some easy to answer, more very complex with four elections having significant issues to address. Bill also has been working with Lori Gonzalez and Alicia Johnson on improvements to the appointed supervisor nomination forms. For more information contact [Bill Eller](#)

Disasters and Districts:

Bill Eller facilitated the initial meeting of the Disasters and Districts Work group on 1.23.15 following up on the session was put on at this year's WACD involving a panel of eight different conservation districts – managers, staff, and supervisors were present to talk about their experiences – good and bad – in disasters over the last few years. About 50 folks attended the session. The first meeting of a group of attendees willing to serve on a Workgroup to move this effort forward and to gauge interest, participation, future direction and set up a schedule for further meetings, as necessary. Bill Eller and Craig Nelson will be presenting a program on Disasters and Districts at the NACD meeting in New Orleans. Bill Eller continued to coordinate the work of the Disasters & Districts (D&D) Workgroup. About 20 people are interested in serving on the D&D Workgroup. Four Sub-Committee assignments were created for four areas (Plans, Agreement, Informational Materials, and Training) and are working on assigning Commission and CD staff and supervisors to each Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committees will create, review, and edit materials that CD's can use before, during and after disasters. We hope to have our work finished by the WADE conference in June. Bill also researched permitting issues during times of disaster – when, where, and how permits can be waived or expedited. For more information contact [Bill Eller](#)

Partners in Preparedness Conference:

Bill Eller developed a PowerPoint Presentation on Districts and Disasters for the 2015 Partners in Preparedness Conference (PIP) in April. The Commission will be presenting during a break-out session along with Okanogan CD (Craig Nelson) on the Carlton Complex Fire and how the Commission and Districts can and should be part of the recovery efforts for such disasters. PIP is the largest and most successful regional emergency preparedness conference in the Pacific Northwest. PIP annually hosts nearly 700 people representing business, schools, government, the nonprofit sector, emergency management professionals, and volunteer organizations. PIP is billed as an event that “attracts top-notch speakers with expertise that includes lessons learned from recent worldwide events like earthquakes, work place violence, current hazards research, contingency planning, school preparedness, technology, media interactions, and public health issues. Speakers and exhibitors provide cutting-edge information on subjects such as business continuity planning, school safety, public health preparedness, homeland security, and public information. For more information contact [Bill Eller](#)

Long Range Planning

Regional Managers have begun work with the thirteen conservation districts that have long range plans that are due for work this year. Regional Managers work included facilitation of long range planning meetings during this reporting period with Ferry and Adams CDs including public participation meetings, a 2.24.15 LRP work session with Lewis County CD and a 3.2.15 LRP work session with Lincoln County CD. A new format will be developed for use in 2016 built from recommendations by Conservation Districts and Commission members and staff. For more information contact [Stu Trefry](#) or [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Chehalis Flood Projects:

Butch Ogden worked this reporting period with a Grays Harbor landowner on some issues he is having with the Flood Authority and a project to protect his house, met with the Farm Bureau, and Grays Harbor County Commission. Butch found a clause in the building permit ordinance that may allow us to build farm pads without any permitting. Butch also attended a meeting and tour hosted by the Governor's Chehalis work group and the Chehalis tribe to make Congressman Kilmer aware of the flood recovery efforts in the basin. He had an opportunity to share some with Congressman Kilmer and answered some questions for him including ways he can help from D.C. Butch suggested support for CREP in the federal budget would be appreciated. He also met with two landowners on the tour about farm pads. The Chehalis tribe offered to fence a large pile of dirt they have for any farmers would need evacuation areas on South Bank Rd. For more information contact [Butch Ogden](#)

Internal Audits, Schedule 22:

Regional Managers made contact with conservation districts regarding assistance on self-assessment activities including Good Governance, Internal Audit, and Schedule 22. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Good Governance:

Correspondence was sent to each district promoting a self-assessment at each district using the current Good Governance 23 elements and encouraging districts to work with their Regional Manager on any district operations items needing addressed. We will be using the existing Good Governance policy, checklist and procedure for this year, while calling for any recommendations from Conservation Districts, Commission members and staff to improve the future Good Governance process. Regional Managers are also working with districts on internal audits, Schedule 22 financial procedures and audit preparation reviews. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Coordinated Resource Management:

Ray Ledgerwood chaired the 2.10.15 in-person meeting of the CRM Task Force. Topics included the development of a tracking system for status of CRMs, Two potential CRMs with Forest Service, MOU signing and funding for facilitation. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Whatcom CRM:

Ray Ledgerwood facilitated a 2.6.15 meeting of the Whatcom Watershed Improvement Districts with Whatcom County Public Works, Dairy Federation and Whatcom Conservation District on a coordinated water sampling and monitoring effort along with technical and financial assistance coordination to address water quality issues in Whatcom County including the recent closure of Portage Bay shellfish area. 25 people participated. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

North Lynden CRM:

Ray Ledgerwood facilitated a meeting of the North Lynden CRM on 1.20.15. Discussion topics included: the Lummi Tribe correspondence indicating they were no longer going to participate because of the recent closure of Portage Bay shellfish area; meeting with all Whatcom County Watershed Improvement Districts, Whatcom County, Whatcom Conservation District and Dairy Federation to coordinate water quality sampling and follow-up technical assistance and cost share in areas with water quality issues leading to the shellfish closure (meeting on 2.6.15). For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Easements:

Bill Eller re-wrote and edited an MOU between WDFW and Eastern Klickitat and Central Klickitat CDs related to a conservation easement (CE) on 23,000 acres of land above Goldendale owned currently by Western Pacific Timber. The Districts hope to work with WDFW to purchase the land and hold a CE on it. We are early in the process, so there is a lot of heavy lifting to be done yet. For more information contact [Bill Eller](#)

NACD & NASCA:

Stu Trefry participated in the NACD Urban and Community Resource Policy Group meeting and met with several contacts from across the nation involved in training and district capacity building at the NACD Annual Meeting. Bill Eller and Craig Nelson presented a program on Disasters and Districts. Shana Joy presided as President of NASCA for meetings of the State Conservation Agency leaders and partners throughout the NACD Annual Meeting, For more information contact [Stu Trefry](#), [Bill Eller](#) and [Shana Joy](#)

Ecology Watershed Assessments – Eastern WA:

The Ecology sponsored State Agriculture Water Quality Stakeholder Group (Cattlemen, Farm Bureau, WACD) sponsored and completed the series of three informational meetings on a revised process for eastern WA watershed assessments that will occur this spring. The revisions are based on producer input from last year's watershed assessments and letters written to land owners with water quality issues. Ray Ledgerwood facilitated both the 1.27.15 meeting in Fairfield with 89 people attending and the 1.29.15 meeting in Pullman with 41 people attending and this week's 2.4.15 meeting in Walla Walla with 49 people attending. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee

Mike Baden and Ray Ledgerwood participated in the NRCS STAC meeting on 2.27.15. Topics included background on Local Work Groups (LWG) purpose and role, a survey of LWGs needs, State Resource Assessment needed by June 30, reports of accomplishment by each LWG including accomplishment reports on state initiatives, and planned process for LWG work in FY2016. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#) or [Mike Baden](#).

Shellfish & Special Projects

Butch Ogden has continued work on landowner contacts with cranberry growers who want to have help with chemigation for their bogs funded with shellfish funds. Butch also attended the WRIA 24 citizens committee meeting to meet with the shellfish growers and worked with Pacific CD on approved landowner agreements for about 10 cranberry growers. Worked with a landowner in Pacific who the district is working with through the FFFPP program on removing a tide gate and culvert and replacing 3 blockages with one bridge thus opening up a lot of habitat including about a mile of salt water estuary. Worked also with a landowner in the Naselle river valley on both a CREP contract and a fish blockage project with WSCC and SRF board funding. For more information contact [Butch Ogden](#)

WADE Annual Conference:

Stu Trefry and Craig Nelson are developing the Supervisors track for the 2015 WADE Annual Conference. For more information contact [Stu Trefry](#)

NRCS Tribal Conservation Advisory Council:

Ray Ledgerwood facilitated the 2.19.15 and 2.20.15 NRCS Tribal Conservation Advisory Council strategic planning session in Marysville. Ten tribes were represented in the work session on strategic areas, structure and procedures, goal setting, input to NRCS. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

WSU Career Day & Internships with WSU Students:

Monte Marti, Jennifer Boie and Ray Ledgerwood met with dozens of perspective new employees and new supervisors at WSU's Spring Career Day this week (2.3.15) in Pullman and provided information to students on district jobs and internships now available. Monte, Jennifer and Ray also met with Rich Koenig and Kim Kidwell to discuss a statewide internship program for Conservation Districts with WSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Open Government Training:

Forty Conservation Districts have all or majority of their supervisors completing the legislatively required Open Government Training requirements. A new web-based system for districts to enter the names of supervisors and staff that have completed the training was used for tracking the progress. For more information contact [Alicia Johnson](#) or [Stu Trefry](#)

CPDS Data for Capital Projects:

Each Regional Manager reviewed district's CPDS data related to priority projects in preparation for the development of a capital project budget summary. RMs worked with Melissa Vander Linden on issues to be resolved and then followed up with districts they serve regarding any issues with incomplete data, districts priority criteria worksheets, and any questions on projects not meeting a capital project criteria. For more information contact [Melissa Vander Linden](#) or [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Technical Training & Certification:

The Conservation District Training Work Group provided a webinar on 1.21.15 to review progress on their activities on: technical proficiencies and training; certification programs for Dairy Nutrient Management Planning and Riparian Management; technical policy input from districts; communication with technical employees on training and development opportunities; and quality assurance. For more information contact [Larry Brewer](#)

District Rental Payments:

At Debbie Becker's request regional managers contacted each conservation district in their service area regarding the amount of office rental being paid by those impacted with the USDA NRCS decision to require rental or services for being in NRCS office space. Many districts moved out of NRCS office space this past year. The summary rental costs of effected districts totaled \$483,000 per year. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#) or [Debbie Becker](#)

New Regional Manager:

Mike Baden began work on January 16th as our new North Central/Northeast Regional Manager. Mike has been busy completing logistics with Lacey staff including his new employee forms, equipment, and vehicle needs. Mike also received orientation on RM duties, policies, measures of success and protocols with Ray Ledgerwood. He has completed calls to each of the district managers and requested information on services they would like to have from him in the next few months. For more information contact [Mike Baden](#) or [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

Quick Notes for Districts:

Stu Trefry coordinates with other WSCC staff to prepare a monthly briefing paper called Quick Notes as a quick reference for district managers and chairs to important district operations updates, training and schedule items. For more information contact [Stu Trefry](#)

WADE/Supervisor Track Coordination:

Stu Trefry participated on WADE monthly teleconferences and worked with Craig Nelson on coordinating the Supervisor Track for the 2015 WADE Conference. For more information contact [Stu Trefry](#)

In Person Work with Districts:

Regional Managers provided in-person assistance this reporting period with; Thurston, Jefferson, Pine Creek, Whitman, Lewis, Lincoln, Pacific, Grays Harbor, King, Clallam, Kitsap, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Palouse, Whatcom, Cowlitz, Walla Walla, Benton, Franklin, Adams, Central Klickitat, Snohomish, Skagit, South Yakima, Kittitas, Palouse Rock Lake, North Yakima, Lewis, San Juan, South Douglas, Lewis, Eastern Klickitat, Grant County, Cascadia, Ferry, Spokane, and Foster Creek Conservation Districts.

Follow-up assistance on district operations issues and needs with Palouse, Asotin, Pomeroy, Adams, King, Clark, Underwood, Stevens County, Lewis, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Asotin, Whatcom, Thurston, Mason, Pomeroy, Pend Oreille, Ferry, Okanogan, Foster Creek, Grant County, Whidbey Island, Snohomish, Cascadia, Underwood, Pacific, Palouse Rock Lake, and Grays Harbor Conservation Districts. For more information contact [Ray Ledgerwood](#)

March 14, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members and Mark Clark, Executive Director
FROM: Larry Brewer, Special Projects Manager
SUBJECT: WSCC Cultural Resource Policy for WSCC funded cost shared projects.

Background

A Cultural Resource Policy and some CR Review procedures, were developed, reviewed by a commission committee, accepted by the Commission at their December 2014 meeting, sent to the Districts for their comments, changes made, and is being presented for final consideration at this March 2015 meeting.

District comments were collected, reviewed, and a Q& A sheet developed to answer the concerns and clarify some points. Some minor changes were made to the policy and procedures, but for the most part remain as were approved in December.

Requested Action:

For WSCC to comply with Governor's Executive Order 0505 (GEO-0505), I would request that the Commission adopt the attached Cultural Resource (CR) policy **for Practices completed after July 1, 2015.**

This action will support the WSCC biennial budget request that was submitted Fall of 2014, which told OFM that the Commission will be adopting a Cultural Resource (CR) policy to comply with the GEO-0505.

Brief Summary of Policy and Procedure:

The proposed Cultural Resource policy would apply to all conservation practices done with any WSCC-managed funds including Operational Funds or Capital funds beginning July 1, 2015.

The proposed Procedure would allow for a district to do the required GEO-0505 Cultural Resource compliance themselves or a District could ask WSCC to assist with their CR compliance process.

-In short, the procedure for projects needing CR review, is

1)for the DAHP project description forms (EZ1) to be provided to DAHP and the affected tribes for their review of potential effects on Cultural Resources.

2)Based upon comments from DAHP and/or the affected tribes, projects would be a)implemented, b)further reviewed, c) CR site surveys completed for review, or d)other actions taken such as formal consultation before implementation can proceed.

-Districts will notify WSCC when CR compliance is completed before WSCC reimbursement.

Other Cultural Resource issues will be addressed to support the Policy and Procedures such as:

-All Districts must have an Inadvertent Discovery Plan (IDP).

-Exemptions will be sought by WSCC for all Districts.

-CR Training for Districts will be requested and individual District trainings encouraged.

-Training for this policy and procedures will be provided.

-This policy and procedure will be reviewed in 2016.

Cultural Resource Review Policy for WSCC-Funded Conservation Work

Goal:

WSCC is sensitive to the cultural resource concerns of the tribes in Washington State and in an effort to help preserve and protect those cultural resources, the Commission encourages each District to communicate with their local tribes regarding the conservation work that they do, in an effort to develop a working relationship that supports their conservation activities while protecting important cultural resources.

The WSCC for its part will ensure that future activities of the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) are compliant with the Governor's Executive Order (GEO) -0505 regarding the preservation and protection of our statewide Archeological and Cultural Resources in the disbursement of State funds to conservation districts for capital construction projects to conserve the state's natural resources.

Policy:

Before a Conservation District can be reimbursed for conservation practices (capital construction projects) with WSCC managed funds (regardless of the source, such as Operational Funds or Capital funds), a District must provide documentation to WSCC that:

- 1. a GEO-0505 review has been completed or*
- 2. the project/practice is exempted from the GEO-0505 review or*
- 3. a GEO-0505 review is not needed.*

Policy to take effect for practices completed after 7/1/15.

DRAFT

Procedure: District Options for Cultural Resource Review when using WSCC funds. – 3-6-15 version

I. CR Goal:

-The WSCC goal for the CR Review process is to comply with GEO-0505, minimize the impact of any conservation work on CR, and to get conservation practices implemented in a cost effective manner.

II. Final Authority:

-Because the Governor's Executive Order 0505 holds WSCC accountable for Cultural Resource reviews for Projects funded by WSCC, the WSCC Executive Director will make final decisions regarding whether a Cultural Resource Site Survey or any additional Cultural Resource activities are required prior to WSCC grant reimbursement.

III. Applicability:

This process applies to all District construction projects that are funded in whole or in part with WSCC managed funds.

The cost of complying with the CR review process is eligible for grant reimbursement.

IV. CR review can be completed in one of three ways:

Option A. Another State or Federal agency completes the review which is documented by a

1. "GEO-0505 complied statement" signed by an authorized District signer.

(Statement would say: CR Review completed by BPA, or WDFW, etc)

Option B. District completes the review which is documented by a:

1. "GEO-0505 complied statement" signed by an authorized District signer or
2. "GEO-0505 complied statement" signed by a Professional Archeologist

Option C. WSCC assisted compliance with GEO-0505, if requested by District

-The WSCC will have a procedure to assist districts with the CR review of the District's cost shared practices, if assistance is requested by the District.

-The WSCC will notify the District when the CR review is completed and the District will document the completion by a:

1. "GEO-0505 complied statement" signed by authorized District signer, based upon the report from WSCC.

V. Compliance documentation before WSCC payment.

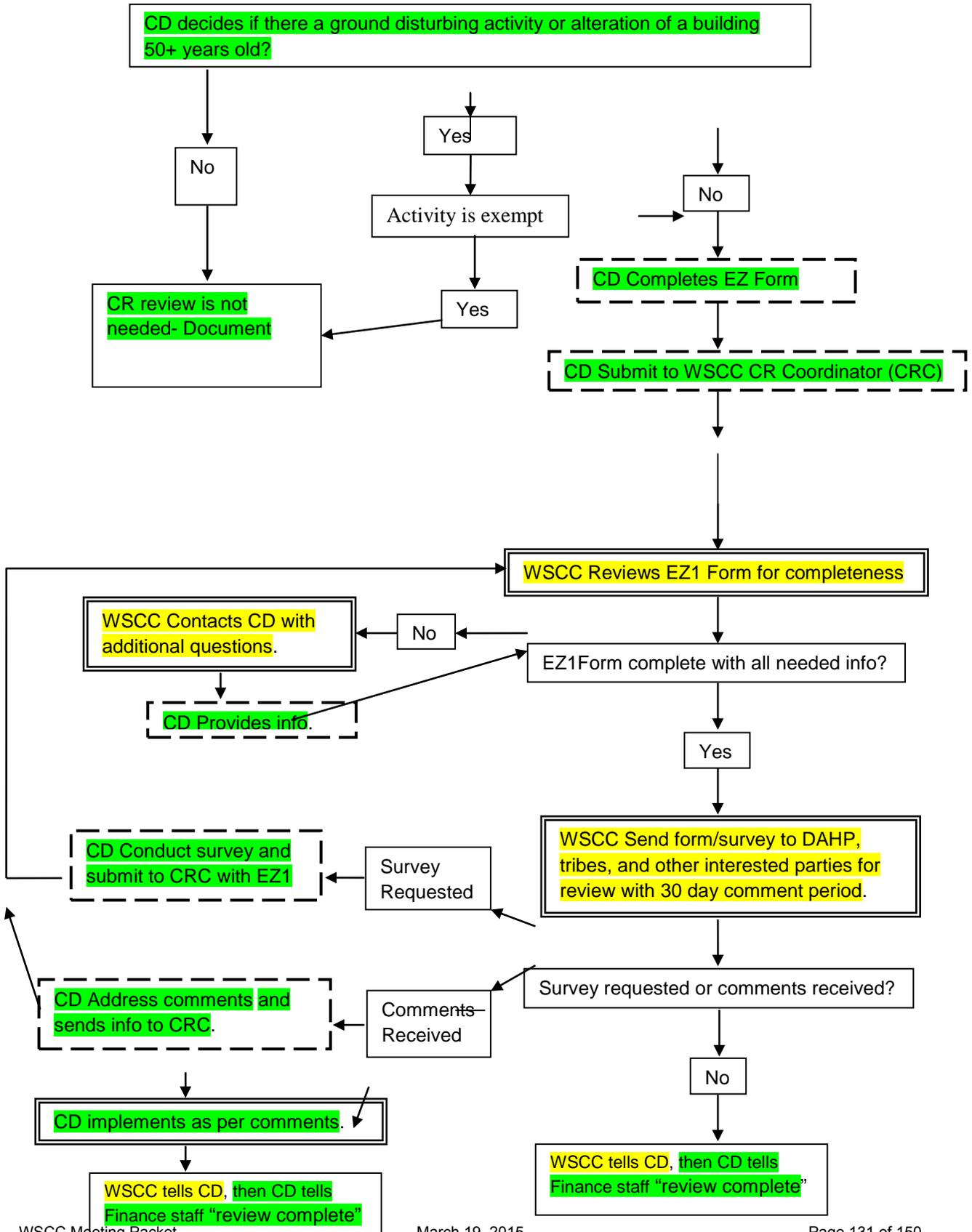
- District must provide a signed "GEO-0505 complied statement" to Financial Staff prior to eligibility for grant reimbursement.

*A standard "GEO-0505 complied statement" template will be provided for Options A, B, and C above in which an applicable box (i.e. Complied, Exempted, Does not apply, or CR Review completed by _____ agency) is checked.

VI. Internal CR documentation:

-Each District is responsible for internally documenting their GEO-0505 compliance which would be subject to external review.

Procedural Flow Chart for WSCC Assisted Cultural Resource Reviews (Option C) (3-6-15 version)



Continued: Procedural Flow Chart for WSCC Assisted Cultural Resource Reviews (Option C)(3-6-15)

Section 106 versus Governor's Executive Order 05-05

- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is applied to actions funded by federal agencies.
 - If Section 106 has been conducted for a project by a federal agency, it may be accepted by WSCC for compliance with GEO-0505.
- Governor's Executive Order 0505 is required for all state funded capital construction projects. This includes projects with both state operating and capital funds provided by the WSCC.
 - GEO-0505 cannot be adopted to meet Section 106 requirements for federally funded projects.
 - The Conservation Commission can accept another state agency's GEO-0505 process to meet WSCC cultural resources review requirements.

Correspondence: Washington State Conservation Commission is responsible, as the funding agency, for contacting the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), affected tribes, and other interested parties to meet cultural resource review requirements. Previous approval from DAHP nor the tribes does not necessarily fulfill these requirements but may be considered. WSCC may delegate this to a District with the capacity to do their own GEO-0505 compliance.

EZ Forms: found at <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/governors-executive-order-05-05>

- EZ-1: This form is to provide information about ground disturbing activities.
- EZ-2: This form is to provide information about alterations to buildings 50 years or older.

Ground Disturbing Activities: This refers to any work that impacts the soil or ground from its current conditions. There is no threshold for this criterion. If the activity requires any work that goes below the surface of the ground, it requires a cultural resources review, unless exempted by agreement with DAHP

Changes to Project Design or Project Area: If there are any changes made to the project area or design after cultural resources review has been completed, review will have to be reinitiated in order to capture the changes. It is suggested that cultural resources review begin only after the final design is complete to expedite the process.

Timing: The time period it takes for cultural resources review occurs cannot change. Please plan ahead to ensure enough time is permitted prior to implementation, which could be 45 days or more.

Eligibility

- All activities associated with cultural resources review are grant eligible.
- Construction or BMP implementation that occurs prior to cultural resources review may not be eligible for reimbursement.

Questions? Contact your WSCC Cultural Resource Coordinator.

**** NOTE: In cases where practices or projects are done involving other state agency funds or federal funds, those other agency CR guidelines should be followed and may be considered to have taken care of WSCC CR requirements.**

DRAFT – 3-6-15

Option C – Procedures for WSCC Assisted Cultural Resource Reviews

-In order to comply with GEO-0505, the WSCC will use the following procedures when WSCC assists districts with their District's CR review.

Step 1. The District will determine if the project involves any ground disturbing activities or involves any structures 50 years or older **and a CR Review is needed (considering authorized exemptions).**

- If the answer is "NO", the District must document this in their practice file.
- If the answer is "YES", go to step 2 and/or 3.

Step 2. For any activities involving structures 50 years or older, the district fills out a Historic Property Inventory (HPI) form on DAHP's Historic Property Inventory online database for DAHP's review. Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) may require more intensive investigation or mitigation of impacts to the structure depending on the historical significance of the building.

Step 3. For any ground disturbing activity, the District must complete DAHP's EZ-1 form to describe the project.

If the District chooses to go ahead and have a professional archeologist do a site specific cultural resources survey (with the archeologist following DAHP guidelines), then the complete survey report will accompany the EZ1 form. (A district may choose to have a Cultural Resource Site Specific Cultural Resource Survey done at any time, if the District thinks one is warranted.)

-DAHP EZ forms available at: <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/governors-executive-order-05-05>

-DAHP CR Report Cover Sheet at: http://www.dahp.wa.gov/sites/default/files/CRSURVEYcoversheet_Aug2011.doc

Note: This step could certainly be augmented by the District working with any Tribe that is interested and willing to work with the district. Any tribal agreement concerning the project, verbal or otherwise, should be documented and included with the EZ1 report.

Step 4. The District will submit a copy of the EZ-1 Form electronically, and if available, a site specific cultural resources survey, and any previous tribal or DAHP correspondence regarding the project to the WSCC.

Step 5. The WSCC will compile and process all of the appropriate forms and correspondence:

a. If an EZ-1 Form is submitted by the District, the following will be sent out by the WSCC:

- 1) WSCC tribal cover letter with the Director's signature and the EZ1 form to all potentially interested tribes.
- 2) An email to DAHP for review: the EZ1 form and all project correspondence including tribal, WSCC, and District correspondence.

b. If both an EZ1 form and a Site Specific Cultural Resources Survey have been submitted by the District, the following will be sent out by the WSCC:

- 1) WSCC tribal cover letter with the WSCC Director's signature and only the Cultural Resource Survey (and no other correspondence unless necessary) asking for concurrence to implement to all potentially interested tribes.
- 2) Electronic versions of all WSCC letters, any tribal or district correspondence, and the survey will be emailed to DAHP for review.

Step 6. The WSCC will send DAHP's and the tribes' correspondence and responses, or a lack of response notice to the District,

- a. If DAHP and tribes respond that there will be no effect to cultural resources or do not respond within the 30 day request period then the WSCC will notify the district that the project will be considered to have complied with GEO-0505 and the project may be implemented.

The District will insure that every person working on the project site be familiar with the District's Inadvertent Discovery Plan (IDP) procedures in case any cultural resources are discovered.

The District will consider all mitigation measures into the project that are mentioned in any responses.

- b. If DAHP or a tribe requests more information, the District will be asked to compile required information and submit to WSCC and the cultural resources review process will continue.

c. If DAHP or a tribe suggests that a Site Specific CR Survey is warranted, then the District in consultation with WSCC will decide if a survey is to be done. If one is done then go back to Step 4 and proceed.

- d. If the District, DAHP, or the tribes determine there will be a negative effect on cultural resources or historic properties, that cannot be avoided or adequately minimized, then go to step 7.

Step 7. The WSCC Executive Director's may make a determination that a project will have an effect on Cultural Resources or historic properties that would trigger a process of formal consultation regarding whether the effect is adverse or not. Or the WSCC Executive Director may determine that a project will have no effect or minimal effect on CR or historic properties.

The WSCC will coordinate the formal consultation process, if formal consultation is needed.

Formal consultation can result in a memorandum of agreement detailing how the adverse effects will be resolved. The CR process is complete after the MOA has been signed by the appropriate consulting parties and then the District/Landowner may proceed with project activity.

WSCC may ask for a professional archeologist to provide input into the process at any time, if needed.

Useful References

-The WSCC Coordinator will maintain tribal contact information and provide it upon request.

-The WSDOT web site also has a current list of tribal contacts at:

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/tribal/TribalContacts.htm>

-Tribal cultural resources contact information at:

<http://www.dahp.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Washington%20Tribes%20Contact%20List.pdf>

-Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) EZ forms at:

<http://www.dahp.wa.gov/governors-executive-order-05-05>

-Governor's Office of Indian Affairs at: <http://www.goia.wa.gov/>

-Tribal information map at: <http://www.goia.wa.gov/Tribal-Information/Map.htm>

-National Historic Preservation Act, 16 USC 470: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/pdf/nhpa.pdf>

-Protection of Historic Properties, 36 CFR 800: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/pdf/36cfr800.pdf>

-Advisory Council for Historic Preservation: <http://www.achp.gov/>

-National Register of Historic Places at: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr>

TAB 6

From: Teri Murrison
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 2:24 PM
To: Wertz, James; Peak, Nicholas (Peak.Nicholas@epa.gov); 'Stewart, Bill'; Dave Pisarski (Dave.Pisarski@deq.idaho.gov)
Cc: Carolyn Watts (Carolyn.Watts@swc.idaho.gov)
Subject: July WQ Tour

Gentlemen,

Thanks for meeting with me this morning to brainstorm the July tour. It was very helpful to get your input.

Here, to the best of my recollection, is what we discussed. We didn't specify timeframes for the tasks so I am throwing some in. Please let me know if you remember differently or if a timeframe is not realistic. I have already booked some rooms and made arrangements for Bill's favorite restaurant. ☺ Please forward this info to the folks who will hear from my folks to begin planning the site tours.

Reflecting the sites we discussed,

- Lava Hot Springs: I plan to ask Chris Banks to be the lead on developing a draft itinerary of site visits (with our staff, districts, NRCS, and DEQ region folks – Lynn Van Everian and EPA (Bill)) for the tour from Lava to Pocatello on the 21st.
- Twin Falls: I will ask our Nitrate Priority Area expert Carolyn Firth to coordinate efforts with our staff, districts, U of I, NRCS, DEQ - Sunny Boohider, and EPA (Bill) to develop a draft site visit itinerary for the 22nd (Pocatello to Boise).
- Boise: I will ask someone (yet to be determined) to come up with a proposed itinerary for Friday's site visits (with districts, NRCS, DEQ – Lance Holloway, and EPA (Bill)).

Date	Activity	Comments/Responsible Person	Due	Hotel/Meals
Mon., July 20	Arrive Lava Hot Springs by 6 pm BBQ	Each agency arrange (and report to Teri) own participants, transportation, lodging – no bus Nick - provide EPA headcount, Dave - provide DEQ's Celia – provide ISDA's Chris Banks/districts	Headcount due by 4/1	Lava Hot Springs – Home Hotel , 208-776-5050 Kathy (http://www.homehotel.com/) 20 rooms blocked off under "Conservation Commission" @ \$92/nt., release rooms on 7/1, please book directly
Tues., July 21	Lava – leave @ 8 am, tour projects in Whiskey Creek/Bear River area, arrive Pocatello by 6 pm	Commission/DEQ (Steven, Jerry) with NRCS input develop draft itinerary, include Matt Woodard w/TU, Dave will engage Lynn Van Everi, Sunny Boohider, and Lance Holloway, keep Curt, Barry in loop	Draft due 4/1	Pocatello – Holiday Inn Express , 200 Via Venitio (up the hill from Hampton Inn. 208-478-9800 20 rooms blocked off under "Conservation Commission" @ \$83/nt., release rooms on 7/1, please book directly

		Teri to distribute draft itin to EPA/DEQ		
Weds., July 22	<p>Pocatello (8 am depart) – Boise (by 6 pm),</p> <p>lunch @ Farmhouse Restaurant in Wendell</p> <p>possible tour sites – ARS/Uofl research facility (Kimberley), Nitrate priority area sites?, Howard Niebling (extension), Twin Falls Canal Co., others?</p> <p>Dinner</p>	<p>Commission will work with DEQ/ISDA regional folks to develop draft itinerary</p> <p>ISDA/CAFO site???</p> <p>Nick to contact Dave Bjornberg (ARS)</p>	Draft due 4/1	<p>Farmhouse – 208-536-6688 Stephanie Otero reserved 1:00 pm for 20-30 – fixed menu – chicken fried steak, vegetarian option, Basque Bread, separate checks, Commission to notify Farmhouse # 7 days ahead,</p> <p>Hotel in Boise – Last day to book: 7/1/15</p> <p>Marriott hotel(s) offering your special group rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SpringHill Suites Boise ParkCenter for 83.00 USD per night Book your group rate for Conservation Commission <p>Dinner on own</p>
Thurs., July 23	<p>Boise tour – 8 am – 2 pm</p> <p>Possible sites – Dixie Drain, EQIP drip projects (mint, etc.)</p>	<p>Commission will work with DEQ regional folks to develop draft itinerary (Dixie Drain, Parma, drip systems on mint – NRCS, etc.).</p> <p>Make sure to contact Steve Burgos @ City of Boise, Watershed group</p>	Draft due 4/1	<p>Hotel in Boise – Last day to book: 7/1/15</p> <p>Marriott hotel(s) offering your special group rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SpringHill Suites Boise ParkCenter for 83.00 USD per night Book your group rate for Conservation Commission <p>Commission to rent bus this day only</p> <p>Dinner – all? Sponsors?</p>
Fri., July 24	<p>Boise Conservation Summit (Zion’s Bank Building)</p> <p>8:30 Registration 9:00 – 4:00 PROGRAM & Lunch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor/Lt. Gov? 	<p>Each agency to determine speaker on themes of wq/voluntary conservation in Idaho, partnerships, collaboration, and pending issues & opportunities, Teri to invite Celia, IASCD, and if time permits may</p>		<p>Registration fee - \$15/per person to cover lunch</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA, DEQ, ISDA, Commission, IASCD speakers <p>Afternoon – Commission hold joint Board meeting with OR, WA, IASCD, Districts</p> <p>EPA on own (sidebar meetings w/ISDA, etc.) &</p>	invite some partners (ie Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, etc.)		

I think that's it. If I missed something, PLEASE remind me. Thanks and I'll be in touch.

Teri

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March 13, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members

FROM: Mission Statement Subcommittee
(Lynn Bahrych, Dean Longrie, Alan Stromberger, Laura Johnson, and Ray Ledgerwood)

SUBJECT: SCC mission statement revision

Summary:

The Mission Statement Subcommittee requests that Commission members review a proposed SCC mission statement revision and determine what additional feedback and evaluation (if any) is needed from conservation districts, SCC staff, and/or partners before the statement is presented for final approval at the May 2015 planning meeting. Our efforts to evaluate and seek feedback on the mission are detailed in the “Background” section of this memo.

For reference, the current SCC mission statement is below, followed by the draft revision:

Current SCC mission: To lead the wise stewardship of soil, water, and related natural resources for and with the citizens of the state.

Revised SCC mission (pending approval): To engage landowners in voluntary stewardship, in collaboration with conservation districts and other partners.

Background:

- July 2014: Mission Statement Subcommittee formed at Commission meeting.
- September 2014: Subcommittee reviewed mission statements from other agencies / organizations; drafted first SCC mission revision (*to lead and assist conservation districts and partners in engaging landowners in voluntary stewardship of Washington’s natural resources*).
- December 2014: Subcommittee sent first mission revision to conservation district staff/supervisors for review. In general, feedback was positive. Some respondents didn’t

like saying the SCC mission is “to lead” conservation districts; some recommended making the statement more concise and inspirational.

- January 2015: Subcommittee completed second revision of mission statement (*to work with conservation districts, the Governor’s Office, and partners in engaging landowners in voluntary stewardship*) and presented to Commission at January meeting. Commissioners weren’t in favor of listing the Governor’s Office; recommended further revision. Agency Commissioners (Beale, Welker, and Susewind) offered to provide partner perspective on mission revisions.
- February 2015: Commissioners Beale and Welker provided feedback on current and revised SCC mission statements. Recommendations included 1) the word “voluntary” is important, 2) avoid statements that could be true for any state agency, 3) the SCC does more than lead and assist CDs (e.g. the SCC plays a role in state natural resource legislation/policy).
- February 2015: Subcommittee incorporated CD and Commissioners’ feedback; revised third draft of mission (*to engage landowners in voluntary stewardship, in collaboration with conservation districts and other partners.*)

Recommendation: The subcommittee has heard and incorporated feedback from conservation districts and agency partners as part of the mission revision process. If additional feedback is desired, the subcommittee would present the revised mission statement to SCC staff for final review prior to May Commission meeting.

Staff Contact: Laura Johnson, Communications Coordinator, ljohnson@scc.wa.gov.

Below are the resolutions that passed at the WACD Annual Conference in December 2014. The highlighted boxes in light teal blue are resolutions relating to the Conservation Commission. The status box indicates the resolutions that have been recognized by SCC and also shows the remaining resolutions that need action taken by SCC.

2014 WACD Resolutions		
Number	Resolution Title	Status
2014-01	Conservation District Long-Term Funding Opportunities	Motion by Stromberger. Longrie Seconded Jan. 15 Meeting
2014-02	Supporting Full Funding for the Forest, Rangeland Health and Fire Resiliency Program	Motion by Stromberger. Brown seconded to accept 02-09
2014-03	Supporting Full Funding for the Voluntary Stewardship Program	Motion by Stromberger. Brown seconded to accept 02-09
2014-04	Support Funding for Natural Resource Programs to Assist the Implementation of our Work	Motion by Stromberger. Brown seconded to accept 02-09
2014-05	Supporting Conservation Commission Emergency Response Funding	Motion by Stromberger. Brown seconded to accept 02-09
2014-06	Washington Coast Marine Advisory Council to Include Representative from WACD and WSCC Staff, Adding Two New Seats	Motion by Stromberger. Brown seconded to accept 02-09
2014-07	Right to Farm for Shellfish Farmers	Motion by Stromberger. Brown seconded to accept 02-09
2014-09	Green Stormwater Program	Motion by Stromberger. Brown seconded to accept 02-09
2014-10	Management Systems	
2014-11	Control of Noxious Weeds on Public & Private Lands	

2014-12	Changes to WA State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) State-Owned Aquatic Land (SOAL) Permitting/License Process	
2014-13	Enabling Conservation on the Ground in a Timely, Efficient Manner Regarding Cultural Resources Review	
2014-14	Requesting Development of Rapid Permitting & Cultural Resources Reviews During Emergencies	
2014-15	District Overhead Operating Expenditures	
2014-16	Ecology Centennial and 319 Grant Funding Agreements Timeliness of Payments	
2014-17	Ecology Centennial and 319 Grant Funding Agreements Termination Due to Insufficient Funds	
2014-18	Encouraging Sustained Conservation District Funding Strategy Through the Rates and Charges Option	LEGISLATIVE Need action January 15, 2015
2014-19	Sales Tax Exemption Incentive	

March 13, 2015

TO: Conservation Commission Members

FROM: Mark Clark, Executive Director

SUBJECT: May Strategic Planning Session

Summary: On May 18th, the Commission will meet in Kittitas County to work through the agency's **Strategic Plan**. Our Strategic Plan goes through 2015, which makes this a good time for revisions. I encourage you to read the current plan that is available in this link from our website: <http://scc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/09-15-WSCC-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

Some questions for discussion at the March meeting include; would you prefer a complete re-write? Does this plan still guide us in the work we need to accomplish? How would you like to engage staff? How would you like to engage input from Districts? Would you like input from stakeholders?

Purpose of this March discussion is to develop a process for the May meeting.

Action requested: Review current Strategic Plan and assess whether we are on track or would like to make updates to the current plan.

Also included in this tab are the notes from last year's May work session. I would ask that you take some time and review this material. Do we need to update? Would you like this worked into the Strategic plan?

Included in and restated below are the 10 focus work areas for the year. Staff is preparing a report on these for the May meeting.

1. Communication and Outreach activities at state and county fairs and job fairs.
Information booths on natural resource issues, jobs and education needed.
2. Build targeted marketing (legislators, public at large, specific audiences).
3. Implementation activities related to the tribal treaty rights at risk letter.
4. New budget and allocation process completed and implemented for transparency.

5. Coordination with other agencies using the model area concept for getting together on an area-wide project (s) to address an area-wide resource concern.
6. Meeting on long term sustainable funding and action plan developed.
7. Good Governance, administration efficiencies need to be focused for accountability with legislation.
8. Impact on natural resources demonstrated with data, monitoring and Discovery Farms concept.
9. Technical capacity built through certification, training on technical proficiencies needed.
10. Commission is a leader in facilitating change in culture to be a positive, results oriented conservation district family by involving partners an opportunities.

Mission Statement: In July of 2014, a subcommittee was created to assist in refining the mission statement. This subcommittee consists of SCC staff, Laura Johnson, Commissioners Bahrych, Stromberger, and Longrie. The group have met several times discussing the mission statement and made presentations on various versions.

At the January 2015 meeting, the subcommittee presented the most current revised version below:

To work with conservation districts, the Governor's Office and partners in engaging landowners in voluntary stewardship.

Members asked for this item to be included in the May Planning Session. Laura will present and have questions for you at this March meeting in preparation for the May meeting.

Resolutions: We will also be reviewing resolutions at this March meeting and I would ask that as you review them consider if these are currently addressed in our strategic plan. If not, should they be?



Session Objective

- Commission member's discussion, understanding and support for their member role and connection with organizations and agencies in support of the Conservation Commission / Conservation District system.
- Understanding, evaluation and clarity of strategic direction based on strategic plan sessions, 2021 all-districts meetings, and member discussions.
- Identification of the highest priority strategic activities for the next year.

Future Accomplishments in Next Three Years

- Show that we are moving to meet water quality and habitat needs
- Show accomplishments with data and real needs so that the legislature and public see what they are getting for the money
- Messaging...Commission's voice and role is elevated as a key to getting more resources through telling our story
- Coordinate efforts among conservation districts and other natural resource agencies to address non-point nutrient issues
- Coordinate with other natural resource agencies...eg more working on projects
- Achieve understanding of WSCC, WACD, NRCS roles and less competition and bickering
- Important to note the makeup of Commission and take advantage of that...keep improving our image with legislature to build credibility...eg budget
- Understand, respect and support the role of other organizations and agencies...develop an understanding, respect, and support among conservation districts about these roles
- Explore marrying the Good Governance model with an accreditation model...responsibility / accountability with consequences
- Coordinating outreach and advertising about what conservation districts can do
- Will have more customers in the door at our conservation districts...because people know what we are and do
- Good direction to the districts regarding what the Commission is expecting...overcome confusion
- More of an effort to bring in outside expertise...eg other entities addressing the same natural resource concern...WSCC as a venue to host discussions about what they are doing and how we coordinate
- Have forums at meetings for land owners to talk with the Commission about benefits of services provided
- Fair, same, transparent election process
- Have agency directors participate in Commission meeting at least once a year

Notes

- Communication & Outreach
- Coordination with Other Entities (groups, agencies, tribes, other)
- Impact on Natural Resource Concerns
- Conservation District Governance, Operations, Technical Capacity & Funding

Working Together as a Commission

RCW 89.08 related to Commission Member responsibilities

- See presentation slides

Role as a Commission Member

- Alan – as a board, charged with allocating dollars, accountability to the districts on how money is spent...accomplish what the voters elected the board members to do...oversee
- Lynn – represent the interests of all conservation districts at the state level...even if elected through an area system...lead to integrity and responsibilities of districts, coordinate with and among districts and the other entities in the state...look at a higher level...not just one or a portion of districts, but all districts
- George – to provide perspective...from agencies point of view...at as a conduit among districts and other parts of my agency...make new connections...bring information to and from Commission...raising concerns...participation and engaged...read materials and be prepared for the meeting and discuss issues...serve on working groups
- Clinton – allocation of state funding to districts...bring forward districts issues and concerns...bring information to districts regarding what the Commission is doing...promote conservation throughout the state...promote cooperation between districts and agencies
- Jim – funding issues, communications...give a tribal perspective on issues and at times when needed, forward initiatives from Governor's office...support and implement the WSCC approved actions
- Larry – champion the cause of conservation...champion conservation districts as the on the ground agencies...communicate with the west districts...get to know fellow Commission members on a personal level
- Todd – make sure we ensure communications and expectations to districts are clear...address the elephant in the room...support the overall good of the WSCC and conservation districts, not biased by agency policy...champion the districts with legislature and others
- Past Commission Member...see Boyum letter...needs to know and appreciate what the conservation districts are and do

Notes:

- Good list that we would share with the Governor regarding new appointments
- Distinction between the role of a member and the Commission itself...not run districts but assure they are well run
- Envision the needs, services and programs for the future
- Hold people accountable to meet the needs, services and programs,
- Advocate for the Commission
- Organize coordination of entities on resource concerns and needs...statewide
- Power in knowing who we are...
- Understanding, respecting and supporting the role of other agencies...interagency communications important...interchange of information...eg Centennial Accord example
- Messaging that comes from the Commission is non-regulatory...ability to advocate for natural resources as a non-regulatory agency

Member discussion and recommendations on improving...

Member Working Relations

- Basic agreement to a common charge...supporting conservation districts getting working on the ground
- Learn about each member...personal and professional...look for opportunities to get to know one another...eg tour, interaction dinner, social opportunities
- Make sure we have member bios shared
- Identifying knowledge gaps...each member with a different level of understanding of issues operations
- Orientation sessions with follow-up on questions on roles and
- Have a code of ethics or ground rules...agreed to items
- Host an informal retreat for Commission members and be able to talk among each other...off record discussion
- Respect each other viewpoints...acknowledge viewpoint
- Have opportunities for discussion among the members
- When a member disagrees with a decision...they should not message against a decision
- More person to person communication among members...welcome to call each other with questions...facilitate...freedom to call each other to explore an idea or concept
- Personal obligation to let the Executive Director know as professional courtesy
- If decision is against the statute or policy of an agency...must be able to abstain from a vote...however...should have responsibility to be a Commission member
- If a commission member is going to make a motion for action at Commission meeting there would be a 'heads up' in case the agency director needs contacted
- Agency member responsibility to communicate within their agency in advance of a meeting on issue or action would be done (no surprises)
- If voting as a member of Commission...take titles away
- Vote as needed as a member...healthy to vote the way they need to vote...pause if needed to check direction.
- If a member is not participating well...add in code of conduct or written policy...chair of the Commission, vice-chair if needed

Action: Member Code of Conduct developed by Lynn Bayrich, Jim Peters

Member Turnover

- Orientations by Executive Director
- A new member would have a mentor with some years of experience
- Role description shared with Director for appointment
- A shadow for situations if you know you will be leaving in a few months...eg WACD President, agency, Gov appointment
- On agency appointments...to extent possible request continuity for a period of time
- Commission member first...agency representative next when serving
- Request that agency represented make this work a priority for the agency

Communications to and Within Commission Members

- Friday Update...need to consider a two-way communication , with more on the issues
- Work completed is related to the broad categories of our work plan is tied back in our communication with members...Friday Update change
- Explore other ways to encourage internal communication...eg net-meetings or webinars for Commission members
- Move from the how many meetings folks attend...should release the burden on staff...focus on issues
- Anything that can be shared two weeks ahead of time will help members prepare for a meeting...post as completed
- After Commission meeting is over we have sent staff notes...some feedback that that the notes are enough...no suggested change...formal minutes only after approved
- As soon as possible, take what we have done today and share with a new member

Mission Statement (revised 5.14.14)

The mission of the Washington State Conservation Commission is to lead the wise stewardship of soil, water, and related natural resources for and with the citizens of the state.

Current Strategic Areas

- Stable & Diverse Funding
- Performance and Accountability
- Communications & Outreach
- Elections
- Leadership
- District/Commission Relationship
- District Boundaries / Structure
- Natural Resource Priorities
- Effective Partnerships
- Legislative Strategy

Strategic Direction Past & Present

Discussion of Commission Strategic past including programs & services that have been brought about through past strategic thinking

- Office of Farmland Preservation
- District operations items...Good Governance
- Most immediate technical services...Puget Sound, Small Acreage – urban and suburban
- CREP
- Water quality
- Irrigation Efficiencies
- Education

Conservation Commission's Future "Place"

Member discussion of the Conservation Commission's place in the natural resource work in Washington State

Group A

- The industry has gone through movements that really push them into the future...
- if WSCC is positioned correctly in a stewardship movement...look at how staff resources could best be used for marketing and outreach...helping conservation districts market themselves...would help the public be more engaged...show the conservation is being practiced and get the neighborhood effect...need to market the services
- really focusing efforts in areas of the state where an impact can be done...strategic monitoring on what we are doing in a watershed, show cost and effect...took a region of the state then announce where we are going to work...have discussion of what it was going to take to effect change...what would be needed eg take water body off of 303d listing...have all agencies and entities talking about what would be done and what would it take...WSCC would not have house the technical expertise...utilize watershed plans...have Commission agree on picking an area...the next one...the next one...outline the conversations that need to happen and bring the entities together with the districts to have a thought provoking discussion...need to get beyond the plans...Commission leadership

Group B

- 2021 Commission seen as problem solving, convening players to get things addressed
- Be a key player in building capacity of conservation districts
- Commission seen as the agency...first agency that land owners would see as where they want to come for services
- As districts build capacity other agencies and organizations seek us out to provide services
- Set up a forum where land owners understand regulations

Group C

- A year, two or three down the road have the Commission be better and effective...envision working together...less about their own agenda...how the Commission should function.
- Leadership role for the group...know what we want to accomplish...do what matters

Strategic Priorities

- Communication & Outreach
- Coordination & Leadership with Other Entities (groups, agencies, tribes, other)
- Impact on Natural Resource Concerns
- Conservation District Governance, Operations, Technical Capacity & Funding

Commission Operations (to make this happen)

Future Strategic Direction

Top 3 strategic things the Commission Members & staff need to concentrate on in the next year

FY15 Strategic Actions

1. Communication and Outreach activities at state and county fairs & job fairs...information booths on natural resource issues, jobs, and education needed
2. Build targeted marketing (legislators, public at large, specific audiences)
3. Implementation activities related to the tribal treaty rights at risk letter
4. New budget and allocation process completed and implemented for transparency
5. Coordination with other agencies using the model area concept for getting together on an area-wide project(s) to address an area-wide resource concern
6. Meeting on long term sustainable funding and action plan developed
7. Good Governance, administration efficiencies need to be focused for accountability with legislation
8. Impact on natural resources demonstrated with data, monitoring and Discovery Farms concept
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