



STATE OF WASHINGTON

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF AN INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT

SCC IS 13-01 Election Process for Elected Members of the Conservation Commission

Effective Date: September 19, 2013

Statutory References: RCW 34.05.230(1) An agency is encouraged to advise the public of its current opinions, approaches, and likely courses of action by means of interpretive or policy statements.

RCW 89.08.030 Provides for three members of the Commission to be elected each year by the district supervisors at their annual statewide meeting.

RCW 89.08.030 states, in relevant part:

The three elected members shall be elected for three-year terms, one shall be elected each year by the district supervisors at their annual statewide meeting. One of the members shall reside in eastern Washington, one in central Washington and one in western Washington, the specific boundaries to be determined by district supervisors. At the first such election, the term of the member from western Washington shall be one year, central Washington two years and eastern Washington three years, and successors shall be elected for three years.

Unexpired term vacancies in the office of appointed commission members shall be filled by appointment by the governor in the same manner as full-term appointments. Unexpired terms of elected commission members shall be filled by the regional vice president of the Washington association of conservation districts who is serving that part of the state where the vacancy occurs, such term to continue only until district supervisors can fill the unexpired term by electing the commission member.

FINDINGS

The Conservation Commission finds:

1. The lack of specificity in the statute for the nomination and election of the elected members of the Commission has created confusion as to the process for individuals to be considered for the position.
2. Providing a description of the ministerial process by which persons declare their interest and the election of elected members of the Commission takes place will serve the district supervisors' and the Commission's interest in a sound process for such elections.

INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT

Based on these findings, the Conservation Commission hereby issues the following interpretive statement:

The Conservation Commission interprets RCW 89.08.030 to require a clear and public process for nomination of candidates for the position of elected member of the Commission. The Commission will provide for such a process as follows:

- The Commission shall issue a notice of opening for candidates for elected Commission member no later than October 1 of the year in which a candidate is to be elected.
- Interested candidates will submit their interest in the elected Commission position to Commission staff no later than November 15 in the manner detailed by the Commission.
- Commission staff will distribute the list of all candidates who submitted their interest to the district supervisors by November 30.
- Nominations from the floor at the annual meeting of the supervisors prior to the election shall be allowed.

The Conservation Commission interprets that RCW 89.08.030 requires an assurance that the process for electing the elected member of the Commission is be clear and impartial. The Commission will provide for such a process as follows:

- The election of the elected member of the Commission shall take place during the annual statewide meeting of the board supervisors.
- Election shall be by the district supervisors. Associate supervisors are not eligible to vote.

- Commission staff shall conduct the election, distribute and tally the ballots by secret ballot, and the chair of the Commission or designee shall announce the results during the annual meeting.
- Following announcement of the results, the elected member of the Commission shall be sworn-in to the position by the Chair of the Commission or designee.

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