Conservation District
Elections and Appointments

2020-2021

Bill Eller
Conservation Commission Election Officer
May 2021
Agenda

- Elections overview
  - Rules
  - Resources available to CDs
- 2021 election statistics
- Special circumstances -
  - COVID-19 & mail-in elections
  - Adjusting to election WAC changes
  - Cascadia & Palouse
  - New legislation put on hold
  - Election Guide changes for mail-in elections
- Certification of 43 CD elections
“The Commission shall establish procedures for elections, canvass the returns and announce the official results thereof.”
RCW 89.08.190
CD ELECTIONS ARE NOT GOVERNED BY GENERAL ELECTION RULES

- RCW 29A.04.330(1)(b) specifically exempts conservation districts from general & special elections requirements, relying instead on election procedures established by the Conservation Commission
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELECTION TRAINING, REVIEW PROCEDURES, ADOPT POLICIES</th>
<th>PREPARE ELECTION – ADOPT ELECTION RESOLUTION, NOTICE TO PUBLIC</th>
<th>BY STATUTE, ELECTIONS MUST BE HELD DURING THIS TIME, CD REPORTS RESULTS TO COMMISSION</th>
<th>CD REPORTS RESULTS TO THE COMMISSION, COMMISSION CANVASES RETURNS</th>
<th>ELECTION WINNERS CERTIFIED AND ANNOUNCED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August – October</td>
<td>October – December</td>
<td>January – March</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>3rd Thursday in May</td>
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Roles and Responsibilities

- Conduct election
  - Before
  - During
  - After

- Create rules & procedures
- Certify & announce results
- Hold CDs accountable
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
COMMISSIONERS
ELECTION OFFICER
REGIONAL MANAGERS

CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD SUPERVISORS
ELECTION SUPERVISOR
STAFF
POLL WORKERS

THE PUBLIC
CANDIDATES
VOTERS
THE PARTIES
OBSERVERS, SERVICE GROUPS
Resources Available to CDs
Voting in Your Local Election

Interested in voting in your local conservation district election?

Conservation districts conduct local elections outside the general elections process to fill volunteer positions on their boards. All CD elections occur during the first quarter of the calendar year (January-March). Contact your local conservation district to learn their next election date and process.
Local Elections & Appointments

Conservation District Board Supervisors work to make a difference in their communities by ensuring the sustainability and protection of natural resources.
Conservation District Candidates
Guide to Elections

- Where to File for Office 3
- Complete Your Candidate Information 4
- Campaigning, Candidate Statements, and Withdrawing 5

Conservation District Applicants
Guide to Appointments

- Where and How to File for an Appointed Position 3
- Qualifications to Serve as an Appointed Supervisor 4
Welcome to the Conservation Commission's conservation district (CD) elections and appointments web page.

Here you'll find information and resources for voters, candidates/applicants for CD board positions, and election administrators.

Each CD in Washington is governed by a board of five members, called supervisors. Three are elected locally by the public, and two are appointed by the Conservation Commission. At least two of the elected and one of the appointed supervisors must be local landowners or operators of a farm. The term of office is three years. Supervisors serve without compensation — they are volunteers.

Thank you to everyone who provided comments on our proposed changes to CD Elections! The comment period closed on September 1, 2020. Election changes will be on the agenda of the September Commission Meeting.

Procedures and Rules

- Election and Appointment WAC
- Election and Appointment Procedures Manual
Chapter 135-110 WAC
Election and replacement of conservation district supervisors

Complete Chapter

WAC Sections

**GENERAL**

- 135-110-100 Purpose and authority.
- 135-110-120 Compliance.
- 135-110-130 Documents provided to conservation commission to be copies.
- 135-110-140 Records retention.
- 135-110-150 Conservation district must remain impartial.
- 135-110-160 Legal boundaries of conservation district to be available.
- 135-110-170 Only one ballot per voter may be counted.
- 135-110-180 Disruptive acts prohibited.

**ESTABLISHING ELECTION, PROVIDING NOTICE**

- 135-110-200 Conservation district must hold election.
- 135-110-210 Conservation district must adopt election resolution.
- 135-110-220 Due notice required before and after election resolution.
- 135-110-230 Conservation district appoints election supervisor.
- 135-110-240 Election may be on-site, remote, or both.
- 135-110-250 Voting must be accessible.

**CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY, FILING, NOMINATION, VERIFICATION, WITHDRAWAL**

- 135-110-300 Every candidate must be a qualified district elector.
- 135-110-310 Some candidates must be landowners or farm operators.
- 135-110-320 Submission of candidate information required to be elected.
Election & Appointment Guide

- Updated for readability
  - All WAC rule language taken out (will need to read the WAC now)
- Reflects new WAC changes
  - Checklists
  - Sample resolution
  - Policies updated
    - Ballot requests
    - Notices
    - Candidate optional information (candidate statements)
    - Filling elected position vacancies
    - Candidate recruitment
EF1 & EF2
## 2021 Election & Appointment Deadline Calculator

### Enter election date:

**1/1/2021**

Your election must be held between January 1 and March 31, 2021!

Enter date above using the following format: MONTH / DAY / YEAR (XX / XX / XXXX)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Form, Checklist or Appendix</th>
<th>WAC</th>
<th>Guide Page #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>11/17/20</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Decide if the notice of a full-term appointed position vacancy will be combined &amp; published along with the notice adopted election resolution. If not, you must remember to publish the appointed vacancy notice before February 28</td>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Best Practice</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>11/17/20</td>
<td>BOS</td>
<td>Hold the BOS meeting to adopt the election resolution*</td>
<td>Appendix D</td>
<td>135-110-210</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>11/24/20</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Publish the first notice of the adopted election resolution not later than 7 days after the BOS meeting (at least 5 days before the 2nd notice below)*</td>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>135-110-220(2)</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>12/1/20</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Publish the second notice of the adopted Election Resolution*#</td>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>135-110-220(2)</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>12/1/20</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Candidate provides required information to CD by the filing deadline*</td>
<td>PF-A</td>
<td>135-110-320</td>
<td>8-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>12/1/20</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Candidate provides optional information (candidate statement (if CD allows)) to CD by filing deadline*</td>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>135-110-430</td>
<td>18-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>12/1/20</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Deadline to submit EF1 to the WSCC*</td>
<td>EF1</td>
<td>135-110-210(3)</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>On:</td>
<td>12/1/20</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Candidate filing deadline (at least 4 weeks before election date)*</td>
<td>EF1</td>
<td>135-110-330</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Before printing ballots</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Verify each candidate is qualified to serve</td>
<td>Checklist 1</td>
<td>135-110-355</td>
<td>7-8, 26</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>12/11/20</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Suggested deadline for voters to request ballots from the CD</td>
<td>Appendix A, EF1</td>
<td>135-110-410</td>
<td>6-8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>12/18/20</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Suggested deadline for requested ballots to be sent by the CD to requestors or for requestors to pick up their ballots</td>
<td>Appendix A, EF1</td>
<td>135-110-520</td>
<td>6-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>On Election Day:</td>
<td>1/1/21</td>
<td>PO</td>
<td>Complete poll lists, count ballots, complete Checklist 2 for each poll site</td>
<td>PF-C, Checklist 2 &amp; EF1</td>
<td>135-110-550</td>
<td>7-8</td>
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<td>No later than</td>
<td>1/15/21</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Deadline for EF2 to the WSCC. Paper forms and checklists remain at the CD</td>
<td>EF2</td>
<td>135-110-750</td>
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<td>No later than</td>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Advertise for 4 weeks any full-term appointed position vacancies using the same notice process as the election resolution</td>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Guide</td>
<td>10-11</td>
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<tr>
<td>No later than</td>
<td>March 31</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Use AF1 online to apply for appointed positions on appointment districts boards</td>
<td>AF1</td>
<td>Guide</td>
<td>10-11</td>
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**Abbreviations:**
- C = Candidate; BOS = CD board of supervisors; ES = Election Supervisor; PO = Polling Officer; EF = Electronic Form; PF = Paper Form; A = Applicants for appointed positions

**PLEASE NOTE:** These times are minimums, the BOS can set more than this minimum amount of time (WAC 135-110-330); if they do so, all * dates will have to be adjusted accordingly.
Before The Election

☐ Review CD election policy and procedures. In those election policy areas that are left to the CDs to determine, craft and adopt needed policies and procedures. Appendix A - Sample Ballot Request Instructions, Appendix B: Due Notice Compliance Notice Examples, Appendix C: Sample Candidate Optional Information Template, Appendix D: Sample Election Resolution

☐ Use the Election Calculator to determine potential election cycle deadlines based on a CD’s proposed election date.

☐ Set the parameters of your election at a Board meeting. EF1, Appendix D: Sample Election Resolution; if an appointed position’s term on the CD Board will expire this current election cycle, decide if the Notice of the Adopted Election Resolution will also include an advertisement that there will be a vacant appointed position available and the deadline to apply is March 31. AF-1, Appendix B – Due Notice Compliance Notice Examples; within seven days of the board meeting at which the election resolution was adopted, publish the Notice of the Adopted Election Resolution. EF1, Appendix B – Due Notice Compliance Notice Examples

☐ If an appointed position’s term on the CD Board will expire this current election cycle, encourage applicants to apply before the March 31 deadline.

☐ Encourage your CD supervisors to seek out potential election candidates before the candidate filing deadline.

☐ Provide PF-A to potential candidates.

☐ Verify, for each candidate, that eligibility requirements have been met. Checklist 1: Verification and Eligibility for the Office of Elected Supervisor

☐ Inform candidates found to be ineligible of the reasons for the ineligibility.

☐ Encourage candidates to inform voters of the candidate’s desire and qualifications to be elected to the office of CD supervisor. Appendix C: Sample Candidate Optional Information Template

☐ Decide if the CD will publish candidate statements. Appendix C: Sample Candidate Optional Information Template

☐ Create the official election ballot. PF-D, Appendix B – Due Notice Compliance Notice Examples

☐ Decide if the CD will conduct an in-person or online orientation of the combined list of voters. If it will, then do so.

☐ Provide ballots to voters who request them. Appendix A - Sample Ballot Request Instructions

☐ Obtain the list of current registered voters from the County Auditor or Secretary of State.
Election Q & A Forum

- Twice a month through the 2020-2021 election season
- Beginning on Tuesday, October 6
- Forums every other Tuesday, from 8:30 – 9:30 am
- The forums were recorded and posted to the Commission’s elections web page
- The schedule:
  - October 2020: 6 & 20
  - November 2020: 3 & 17
  - December 2020: 1 & 15
  - January 2021: 12 & 26
  - February 2021: 9 & 23
  - March 2021: 9 & 23
2021 Election Statistics
**RED** indicates an election was held.
### JANUARY 2021

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### MARCH 2021

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Percent of CDs Automatically Re-electing Their Incumbent

![Graph showing the percent of CDs automatically re-electing their incumbent from 2011 to 2021. The graph shows a trend with some fluctuations, but the options for 2020 and 2021 are marked as no longer available.](image-url)
Total Number of Ballots Cast

- 2011: 3065
- 2012: 2209
- 2013: 673
- 2014: 689
- 2015: 4969
- 2016: 4983
- 2017: 7168
- 2018: 8813
- 2019: 7718
- 2020: 12982

Line graph showing the trend of total number of ballots cast from 2011 to 2021.
Of Elections Held, Percent Observed by Commission Staff
Special Circumstances
COVID-19 and social distancing

- All CDs
- Mail-in elections
Changes in the election WAC from September 2020

- All CDs hold elections
- No nominating petitions
- Write-in eligibility revamped - more opportunity for them to be eligible
Cascadia and Palouse CDs election resets

- Cascadia – June 9, 2021
- Palouse - pending
New Legislation to Pursue

- **RCW change** – Amend RCW Chapter 42.56 – confidentiality of email addresses and phone numbers on CD ballot request lists.
  - Already an issue advisory (#01-18), but only a best practice, not a permanent fix.
  - Follow the issue advisory (#01-18) – posted on the SCC web page under the “More Background on Elections” tab.
  - Commission policy staff sought a legislative fix during this session, but that was put on hold.
Election Guide changes to address mail-in elections

- Resolution example
- Notice examples
Certification!
Questions?

Contact:

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