Meeting Packet

July 15, 2021

**Held virtually due to COVID-19**

Lacey, WA, 98503

“To conserve natural resources on all lands in Washington, in collaboration with conservation districts and partners.”
Meeting Agenda

Thursday, July 15, 2021

Business Meeting

**Held virtually due to COVID-19**

Time

Please note that the times listed below are estimated and may vary. Please visit the SCC website for the most up-to-date meeting information.

Meeting accommodations

Persons with a disability needing an accommodation to participate in SCC public meetings should call Stephanie Crouch at 360-407-6211, or call 711 relay service. All accommodation requests should be received no later than Tuesday, July 6, to ensure preparations are appropriately made.

Meeting Coordinates

At or before 8:30 a.m. on July 15, 2021, please join the meeting using this link. You may use your computer audio, or dial into the meeting using the information provided after logging in. SCC staff requests that you self-mute your audio line to allow for full discussion by Commissioners.

Public Comment

Public Comment will be allowed prior to the beginning of all action topics. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per comment.

Agenda

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<th>TIME</th>
<th>TAB</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>LEAD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>non</td>
<td>Call to order/Welcome/Introductions</td>
<td>Chairman Longrie</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Pledge of Allegiance</td>
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<td>• Additions/Corrections to agenda items</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:40 a.m.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Consent Agenda – call for public comment</td>
<td>Chairman Longrie</td>
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<td>(Action)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a. May 19 &amp; 20, 2021 draft meeting minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:45 a.m.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Commission Operations – call for public comment (Action)</td>
<td>Jean Fike</td>
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<td>b. Cultural Resources Policy &amp; EO 21-02</td>
<td>Laura Meyer</td>
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<td>c. 2022-27 Strategic Plan development timeline</td>
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<td>d. Revised 2022-27 Strategic Plan goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Budget – call for public comment (Action)</td>
<td>Sarah Groth</td>
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<td>e. 2022 Potential supplemental budget packages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>District Operations – call for public comment (Action)</td>
<td>f. CAPP Report</td>
<td>Shana Joy</td>
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<td>g. Certification of Cascadia CD’s June 9, 2021 Election</td>
<td>Ron Shultz</td>
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<td>h. Update on Palouse CD Election (Information)</td>
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<td>i. Adoption of proposed Election Guide changes</td>
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<td>j. Joint Committee on Elections update (Information)</td>
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<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>10:30 a.m. – BREAK</td>
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<td>10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Programs – call for public comment (Action)</td>
<td>k. Additions to eligible CREP stream layer (Clallam and Palouse CD)</td>
<td>Brian Cochrane</td>
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<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Presentation: Commodity Buffer Program</td>
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<td>Spokane CD</td>
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<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>12:00 p.m. – LUNCH</td>
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<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>District Operations (Information)</td>
<td>a. District Operations report</td>
<td>Mike Baden</td>
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<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Budget (Information)</td>
<td>b. 2016-2020 Audit Report</td>
<td>Sarah Groth</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:40 a.m.</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Programs (Information)</td>
<td>c. VSP Update</td>
<td>Packet Items</td>
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<td>d. Center for Technical Development Update</td>
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<td>1:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Partner Updates (Information)</td>
<td>• Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife Update</td>
<td>Mike Kuttel, Jr.</td>
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<td>e. National Association of Conservation Districts Update</td>
<td>Packet Item</td>
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<td>f. Natural Resources Conservation Service Update</td>
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<td>1:55 p.m.</td>
<td>Commission Operations (Information)</td>
<td>g. Governance Sub-committee report</td>
<td>Shana Joy</td>
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<td>h. Clarification of WSCC’s Voluntary Approach (Action)</td>
<td>Dir. Smith</td>
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<td>• General Update</td>
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<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
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TAB 1
Regular Business Meeting

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/SCC) met virtually on May 20, 2021. Chairman Longrie called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Dean Longrie, Chairman and elected west region rep.
Harold Crose, Vice-chairman and elected central region rep.
Perry Beale, Department of Agriculture
Larry Cochran, elected eastern region rep.
Jeanette Dorner, Washington Association of Conservation Districts
Jim Kropf, Washington State University
Ben Rau, Department of Ecology
Terra Rentz, Department of Natural Resources
Sarah Spaeth, Governor Appointee
Daryl Williams, Governor Appointee

**COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT**

Carol Smith, Executive Director
Mike Baden, Northeast Regional Manager
Allisa Carlson, South Central Regional Manager
Brian Cochrane, Habitat & Monitoring Coordinator
Stephanie Crouch, Administrative Assistant
Kate Delavan, Office of Farmland Preservation Coordinator
Bill Eller, Elections Officer and VSP Coordinator
Lori Gonzalez, Executive Assistant
Josh Giuntoli, Southwest Regional Manager
Sarah Groth, Fiscal Manager
Alison Halpern, Policy Assistant
Karla Heinitz, Contracts Manager
Laura Meyer, Communications Coordinator
Shana Joy, District Operations Manager
Levi Keeseecker, Natural Resources Scientist
Ron Shultz, Policy Director
Ashley Wood, Fiscal Analyst

**PARTNERS REPRESENTED**

Ryan Baye, Washington Association of Conservation Districts
Sherre Copeland, US Forest Service
Michael Kuttel, Jr., Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Doug Rushton, National Association of Conservation Districts
Tom Salzer, Washington Association of Conservation Districts

**GUESTS ATTENDED**

Please see “Attachment A and B” for full list of attendees.

**Consent Agenda (Action)**

*Draft March 18, 2021 meeting minutes*

*Motion by Commissioner Cochran to approve the March 18, 2021 meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Williams. Motion carries.*

**Budget and Finance (Action)**

2021-2023 Proposed Budget
Chairman Longrie invites Sarah Groth, SCC Fiscal Manager, to begin presenting on the first agenda item. Ms. Groth begins by explaining that the state legislature has passed an operating budget, a re-appropriation capital budget and a new capital budget. SCC staff seek approval to allocate funds to districts. The funding allocation request is as follows:

1. **SCC Administration** The operating budget passed by the legislature allows for administration funding to continue at the same levels as the 2019-21 biennium.

2. **Implementation Allocation:** SCC recommends funding for Implementation in accordance with the Updated Implementation Grant Allocation (approved at March 21, 2019 SCC regular business meeting) at $5,302,000 per fiscal year, an increase of approximately $1,000,000 per fiscal year due to increased CTA funding received in the 2021-2023 operating budget.

3. **Engineering Allocation:** Professional Engineering grant remain at the same level as fiscal year 2021 at $675,000 per fiscal year.

4. **Irrigation Efficiencies:** Appropriation is provided solely for technical assistance and grants to conservation districts for the purpose of implementing water conservation measures and irrigation efficiencies.

5. **CREP:** The capital budget passed by the legislature included $4,000,000 for CREP. This included proviso language for $2,000,000 for project development and project management /TA, $250,000 for targeted riparian buffer incentive project (Mount Vernon) as well as reappropriation for unspent 2019-2021 Cost Share and TA funds.

6. **Task Orders** The operating budget allows SCC to continue funding NRCS task orders at a level slightly higher to fiscal year 2021 funding not to exceed $225,000 per fiscal year. SCC staff are working with districts and NRCS to prepare task orders to allow districts to begin work July 1, 2021.

7. **Livestock TA** Livestock TA has been funded from the capital budget for Shellfish and NRI projects in the past. The Legislature reappropriated unspent 2019-2021 Shellfish and NRI projects, and $4,000,000 in new NRI and $3,500,000 in new funding for Shellfish. In addition, the legislature appropriated $1,110,000 million of the State Toxics Control Account which can also be used for Livestock TA projects.

8. **Shellfish** The Legislature reappropriated unspent 2019-2021 Shellfish and $3,500,000 in new funding for Shellfish. SCC staff request approval to award funding in accordance with commission approved programmatic guidelines for Shellfish and any cultural resource work required per Executive Order 21-02.

9. **Natural Resource Investments** The Legislature reappropriated unspent 2019-2021 NRI and $4,000,000 in new funding for NRI. SCC staff request approval to award funding in accordance with commission approved programmatic guidelines and any cultural resource work required per Executive Order 21-02.

10. **Wildfire Recovery Funding** “One-time funding is provided for conservation district technical assistance, project cultural resources review, engineering, and cost-share grants to landowners for recovery from wildfire damage.”

Ms. Groth explains that procedures outlining the allocation of this funding are currently in development and that SCC hopes to begin immediately on July 1, 2021. This is a short timeline that
is necessitated by the fact that the funding was placed in the operating budget - $1.5 million each of the next two fiscal years. Projects started in the coming fiscal year must be completed by June 30, 2022.

In order to maximize flexibility to respond to wildfire recovery needs, SCC anticipates a rolling-allocation system similar to the methods utilized in the FY’s 16-17 when there was last dedicated funding, with a regular review and award of submitted cost-share projects and other recovery funding needs on a set and predictable timing interval. SCC will consult with key conservation districts that were affected by large fires in 2020, or participated in the prior wildfire funding allocation process as the procedures are finalized.

**Motion by Commissioner Crose to approve the funding proposal proposed below with specific award amounts for the following grant programs in the attached table (meeting packet page 55). Seconded by Commissioner Beale. Motion carries.**

**2021-2023 Grant & Contract Procedure Manual update**

Ms. Groth continues presenting on the next agenda item with Shana Joy. Ms. Joy and Ms. Groth explain that at the January 2021 meeting commission members gave their approval for SCC staff to send the draft manual out to conservation districts for the 45-day comment period. SCC staff are reporting the comments received and are requesting approval of the proposed changes. Ms. Groth included a summary of changes and comments received for consideration, which can be found on meeting packet page 57.

**Motion by Commissioner Spaeth to approve the proposed changes to the Grant and Contract Procedure Manual for use by districts, effective July 1, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.**

**2022 Potential Supplemental Budget Packages**

Ms. Groth continues presenting on the next agenda item concerning 2022 Supplemental Budget Topics, explaining that Commission staff, working with WACD, conservation districts, and agency partners, will continue to develop these concepts (as approved by the Commission) into the required format with additional detail. They will be presented to the Commission at a subsequent meeting for final approval to submit to OFM by the deadline.

SCC is currently exploring topics which funding received did not meet the level of funding needed. The topics listed below are under the categories of Capital and Operating budgets.

**Capital**

**FarmPAI**

At the January 2021 Conservation Commission meeting, the Commission passed a motion supporting the development of the Farmland Protection and Affordability Investment (FarmPAI) program. FarmPAI fills a critical gap in the available tools for farmland protection by providing access to low-interest loans for fee simple land acquisition when high-priority agricultural land faces imminent risk of development. The program would help facilitate land access to underrepresented producers including young and beginning farmers, people of color, and veterans. If approved, the loan funding would be made available by the State Housing Finance Commission. However, FarmPAI’s success
requires ready sources of conservation easement funding to permanently protect the land and make it affordable for the next generation farmer.

**Operating**

*Conservation Equity and Engagement*

1. **Secure a contract for an equity assessment of the SCC, including programs and services, to identify opportunities.**

2. **Support conservation districts seeking more capacity to reach communities who are under-resourced.**

If these needs aren’t funded, some areas and communities of the state may experience barriers that impede full participation in and availability to SCC’s voluntary conservation work and its benefits. For example, 12.9 percent of people in Washington (942K) live with some form of disability, including impairments to vision, hearing, and/or mobility; around 10 percent (735,000) lack internet connection in their homes; 10.3 percent (751K) live below the poverty line; 8.9 percent (649K) are veterans; and nearly 20 percent (1.5M) speak a non-English language. Washington also is home to 29 federally recognized tribes who are a key partner in natural resource conservation.

**Sustainable Farms and Fields**

The bill for the Sustainable Farms and Fields program passed last year with strong bipartisan support and overwhelming enthusiasm and interest by both the agricultural and environmental communities. Unfortunately, the COVID outbreak and the economic uncertainty that followed meant that funding was not requested for this upcoming biennium. SCC has been working with our climate/agricultural advocacy partners, WACD/NACD, and NRCS to explore federal funding opportunities and private-public partnerships to jumpstart SFF, and they would also like to submit a supplemental budget request as potential funding source. Climate change mitigation is a top priority at the federal and state level, and farmers are eagerly waiting for the program to begin so they can implement climate-smart practices as quickly as possible.

**Motion by Commissioner Spaeth to approve supplemental budget topics for further development by SCC staff for possible submittal for the 2021 supplemental budget. Seconded by Commissioner Cochran. Motion carries.**

**Review of WACD and SCC Agreement**

Ms. Groth presents on the final agenda item under “Budget.” She shares that each year the SCC requests approval to enter into a contract with WACD for contract work on tasks identified by SCC Executive Director and SCC leadership. SCC is asking for approval to enter into a contract with WACD for contract work on tasks identified by SCC Executive Director and SCC leadership.

**Motion by Commissioner Cochran to approve the request for SCC Executive Director Carol Smith to work with WACD Executive Director Tom Salzer to develop and enter into a contract up to $65,000 per fiscal year. The tasks would include support for the annual meeting in December, preparation for fly-in meeting in concert with NACD and supervisor development and other smaller tasks as identified. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.**

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**Policy & Programs (Action)**
**Sustainable Farms and Fields**

Chairman Longrie invites Alison Halpern, SCC Scientific Policy Advisor, to present on the agenda item. Ms. Halpern shares that the programmatic guidelines are in progress, and that drafts are being written, which will need to be shared with conservation districts for review as soon as they are ready.

**Motion by Commissioner Beale to authorize Executive Director Carol Smith to approve the distribution of the Sustainable Farms and Fields and Shellfish Grant programmatic guidelines drafts to conservation districts for a 45-day review and comment period when they are ready to be shared. Seconded by Commissioner Spaeth. Motion carries.**

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**District Operations (Action)**

**Conservation District Appointed Supervisor Applications**

During the current appointment cycle, the State Conservation Commission (SCC) received a total of 49 appointed conservation district supervisor applications to fill full-term positions across the state, including one mid-term position. All applications for these appointments were due into the Commission by March 31, 2021.

Of the 49 applications that were received, staff identified 21 applications from eight conservation districts needing a more comprehensive review. The review consists of interviewing individual candidates for situations where there is a competition for an appointed position as well as when there is one candidate that is new to serving as a supervisor. For situations where there is only the incumbent applying for re-appointment, the incumbent will remain in their position.

This year, 21 individual interviews were conducted with the area commission member, another available commission member, and one regional manager. A revised list of interview questions was also developed for consistency.

**West Region Conservation District Appointments**

**Motion by Commissioner Longrie to appoint all the non-contested west region conservation district applicants to their respective board of supervisors (Clallam CD, Bennett Smith, Grays Harbor, Elizabeth Zaborac, Jefferson County, Janet Aubin, San Juan Islands, Vicki Heater, Snohomish CD, Marni Swart, and Whidbey Island CD, David Edwards). Seconded by Commissioner Cochran. Motion carries.**

**Kitsap Conservation District**

**Motion by Commissioner Longrie to appoint Roderick Camarce to the Kitsap Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.**

**Lewis Conservation District**

**Motion by Commissioner Longrie to appoint David Fenn to the Lewis Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.**
Pierce Conservation District

Motion by Commissioner Longrie to appoint Amy Moreno-Sills to the Pierce Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.

Thurston Conservation District

Motion by Commissioner Longrie to appoint Doug Rushton to the Thurston Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.

Whatcom Conservation District

Motion by Commissioner Longrie to appoint Fred Berman to the Whatcom Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.

Central Region Conservation District Appointments

Commissioner Crose moves to appoint all non-contested applicants for the central region to their respective boards (Adams CD, Gary Cook; Benton CD, Jack Clark; Cascadia CD, Amy Bridges; Central Klickitat CD Stephen Cunningham; Eastern Klickitat CD Peter Mercer; Foster Creek CD, John McLean; Franklin CD Brad Baille; North Yakima CD, Gail Thornton; South Douglas CD, Joe Sprauer; South Yakima, Ky Shinn; and Underwood CD, Barbara Bailey). Seconded by Commissioner Williams. Motion carries.

Cascadia Conservation District

Motion by Commissioner Crose to appoint Kurt Hosman to the Cascadia Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Rentz. Motion carries.

Clark Conservation District

Motion by Commissioner Crose to appoint Dean Longrie to the Clark Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Rentz. Chairman Longrie recuses himself. Motion carries.

Eastern Region Conservation District Appointments

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to appoint all the non-contested applicants for the eastern region to their respective conservation district board of supervisors (Asotin CD, Jason Schlee; Columbia CD, Cody Chapman; Ferry CD, James Rochelle; Lincoln CD, Jeff Schibel; Palouse CD, Chris Heitstuman; Rock Lake CD, David Johnson; Pend Oreille CD, Randall Leestma; Pomeroy CD, Michael Hastings; Steven County CD, Tom McKern; Whitman CD, Bryan Jones). Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.

King Conservation District

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to appoint William (Bill) Knutsen to the King Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.

Walla Walla County Conservation District

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to appoint Annie Byerley to the Walla Walla County Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Commissioner Beale. Motion carries.
2021 Conservation District Elections

Chairman Longrie invites Bill Eller, SCC VSP Coordinator, to present on the next agenda item concerning Conservation District Elections. Mr. Eller shares that none of the 43 districts had any issues of significant noncompliance with WAC Title 135-110 and the election procedures published for this cycle that rose to the level warranting non-certification of the election.

District staff responsible for elections did a great job in solving most issues related to election rules and policy compliance; adjusting to the changes to the election WAC that the Commission made in September 2020, and dealing with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Virtually all the issues that did arise were resolved before they became irreversible or otherwise affected the election process.

Compliance with election rules and policies seems to have held steady this year, but the increasing politicization of the conservation district election process, use of technology (internet ballot requests) and more active campaigning by candidates continues to put pressure on our election system. While providing election forms and most other materials electronically has created some efficiencies, processing and interpreting the election data and conducting election investigations continues to take substantial Commission staff time and resources.

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to certify and announce the official winners of 43 of 45 conservation district elections, as listed in the table titled: Conservation District Election Results (Meeting packet pages 70-71). Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.

Conservation District Election Guide – changes after COVID

Chairman Longrie invites Bill Eller to continue presenting on the next agenda item concerning the Conservation District Election Guide. Mr. Eller explains that Commission staff are proposing two changes (amended sample notices and sample election resolutions) to the Conservation District (CD) Election and Appointment Guide (Guide) to assist CDs in their elections. Both changes came about as a result the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff propose the changes be made available to CDs as per the Commission’s “Policy on Policies.” Staff would prepare a summary of the comments and present those and the final draft of the Guide for adoption at the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Crose to make the draft, updated Guide updates available to the CDs for comment, as per the Commission’s “Policy on Policies.” Seconded by Commissioner Cochran. Motion carries.

Commission Operations (Action)

2022-27 Strategic Plan Development – Proposed Goals

Chairman Longrie welcomes Laura Meyer, SCC Communications Manager, to present on the next agenda item surrounding the 2022-27 SCC Strategic Plan. Ms. Meyer presents the goals that were
amended during the May 19, 2021 work session the previous day. These goals fall under the following strategic priorities:

- Voluntary Conservation of Natural Resources
- Agricultural and Working Lands Viability and Food System Support
- Governance and Accountability
- Climate Resiliency
- Leadership, Partnership, and Collaboration

**Motion by Commissioner Crose to approve the SCC 2022-2027 strategic plan goals as revised in the notes from the May 19, 2021 Conservation Commission Strategic Planning Work Session, with the exception of those goals that are flagged for staff to revise and bring back for Commission approval at their business meeting in July 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Rentz. Motion carries.**

**Natural Resource Investments Programmatic Guidelines**

Chairman Longrie invites Shana Joy to resent on the Natural Resource Investments Programmatic Guidelines. Ms. Joy shares that at the March 18, 2021 Commission meeting, draft programmatic guidelines were approved for distribution to all conservation districts for review and comment. This comment period closed on April 23, 2021, with an informational webinar held on April 7, 2021. The webinar was attended by 18 people from 19 conservation districts. Twelve formal comments were received by the close of the comment period. The NRI Committee met to review the comments and questions that were received on April 29, 2021. The NRI grant program administration and performance will be monitored through the 21-23 biennium and adaptively managed, with any necessary updates made prior to the start of each new biennium moving forward.

**Motion by Commissioner Cochran to adopt the Natural Resource Investments programmatic guidelines and landowner agreement template as presented for implementation beginning July 1, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Crose. Motion carries.**

**Presentation: Forest Health and Wildfire Resiliency Showcase**

Chairman Longrie invites Shana Joy to introduce conservation district representatives who will present on the fire resiliency showcase. These representatives are Kai Hoffman-Krull (San Juan CD), Anna Lael (Kittitas County CD), and Lacey Ausman-Ditto (Asotin CD).

Mr. Hoffman-Krull begins the presentation by presenting on Biochar and the Forest Carbon Cycle. Biochar has been a historic process of sequestering carbon. 30% of annual carbon emissions are captured by global net forest growth, and Pacific Coast forests absorb the highest rate of carbon in the US, and CA fires of 2020 released an estimated 90 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, 30 million more than the total carbon dioxide emissions from providing power to the state. Within San Juan County, they are looking at an issue that is happening all over the state. Essentially, forests are choking each other out because of how crowded they are. On top of this, drought conditions are exacerbating issues, and 85,000 acres of forest needing restoration. Pile burning is a method used to get rid of commercial logging, and it sterilize soil, create invasive weed habitat, and off gasses all stored carbon. Biochar is a charcoal that is produced in the absence of oxygen, and can endure in soil for thousands of years.
Ms. Lael begins presenting on the Kittitas Fire Adapted Communities Coalition (KFACC). Kittitas County is 1.4 million acres, and more than 70% of that is public land. Most of the large fires that have occurred in the last 21 years have occurred on public land. The Taylor Bridge fire occurred on almost all private land. Since 2009, Kittitas County CD has been working to be a part of FireWise. The Taylor Bridge Fire happened in 2012, and KCCD hit the ground running. In May 2017, they called in Mr. Ledgerwood, bringing in as many partners to these meetings as possible. These partners included Fire Departments, DNR, USFS, and more. They crafted their mission statement, which reads “A coordinated movement to increase community resiliency to wildfire by providing education, planning, and technical assistance for implementing activities with the people that live, work, and recreate in Kittitas County.” KFACC has met regularly every month since May 2017, coordinated outreach efforts, prescribed fire in the Wildland Urban Interface, implemented 200+ acres of private landowner cross boundary treatment, regularly reviewed county policies and provided feedback, and did a major update of the county wildfire protection plan in 2018. Outreach includes videos available to the public, capitalizing on the attention received after Jolly Mountain Fire. They created the KFACC Landowner Portal where landowners can access the videos, as well as learning how to prepare for wildfire, providing resources, and more.

Ms. Ausman-Ditto begins presenting by giving a brief overview of Asotin County, located in the extreme southeast of Washington State. The county is heavily wooded, and is designated as extreme fire risk. DNR has defined this area as one of their priorities landscapes in forest health management in their plan recently submitted. Recently, ACD has been focusing on salmon habitat. It helped identify areas that could use some help, and helped prioritize where to add fish habitat. Because of the complex landscape, there is extreme risk of wildfire in uplands. There are overstocked stands, pathogen mortality, and fire adapted ecosystem, and there is degraded steelhead habitat in lowlands. Asotin CD came up with an idea – Forest Fuels for In-Stream Habitat (FFISH). They are working to connect ecosystems, watersheds, and people. They offer technical assistance, top-down watershed restoration, forestry education, land manager empowerment, partnerships, and materials for LTPBR habitat projects.

Policy & Programs (Information)

The 2021 Legislative Session was a long, 105-day session with the primary focus being passage of budget bills for the operating, capital, and transportation budgets for the 2021-23 biennium. Due to the COVID pandemic, meetings and committee hearings were conducted remotely. Although things seemed to function smoothly, one result of the new methods of remote communication was it slowed the legislative process. As a result, many bills didn’t pass simply because the legislature ran out of time.

Despite these challenges, the Legislature was able to accomplish a great deal of work. They passed the 2021-23 operating and capital budgets. The transportation budget remains to be passed and a special session may be needed. In policy, the legislature passed significant bills relating to a capital gains tax, the Climate Commitment Act creating a “cap and invest” program, policing reform, and environmental equity and justice legislation.

2021-23 Operating and Capital Budgets

The primary task of the 2021 Session is the passage of the 2021-23 operating and capital budgets. They were able to accomplish this task without resorting to a special session.
In April 2020, due to the COVID pandemic and the closure of business activity, the estimates of a revenue shortfall for the state were as high as $8 billion dollars for the three-year period from FY 20 through FY 23. Fortunately, Washington’s gig economy is more resilient than most states as much of the economic activity in the area of software and tech work can be done remotely. Over time, revenue projections continued to improve.

Finally, in March 2021 the State Revenue Forecast Council projected revenues for the 2021-23 biennium at 8.2% over projects. That said, there was still enough of a shortfall for the last fiscal year of the current 2019-21 biennium that the legislature did take the proposed 15% reductions from state agencies.

2021-23 Operating Budget and Capital Budget
Commission members have previously seen the comparison tables prepared by SCC staff regarding the 2021-23 operating budget. This information is provided as a high level overview. The Commission’s 2021-23 capital budget isn’t all that SCC had hoped for. Funding for the CREP program is lower than requested and will create some challenges in implementing the program. Shellfish funding was also reduced, as was funding for the Irrigation Efficiencies program. A bright spot was support for the RCPP programs across the state.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work Plan

SCC staff met informally to discuss DEI over the summer of 2020, made time available during our weekly staff meetings for DEI discussions, and formed a DEI Working Group (Working Group) in November 2020. The purpose of the Working Group is to explore how the Conservation Commission can equitably and inclusively fulfill our mission and statutory duties; advance DEI through our policies, programs, and procedures; and support personal and professional DEI learning opportunities for staff. Staff volunteered to participate and the Working Group includes cross-functional representation.

In winter/spring of 2021, the Working Group gathered feedback from staff to assess perspectives, needs, and desires related to DEI. Through this process the Working Group learned:

• Staff would like to facilitate and participate in conversations and opportunities for learning that are respectful, welcoming, and transparent.
• Staff want to:
  o Focus on what unites us
  o Allow for a diversity of perspectives
  o Meet people where they are
  o Use data
  o Use simple language
  o Show how DEI relates to conservation and agriculture
  o Listen and respond to the needs of conservation districts
  o Provide voluntary resources to support conservation districts
• Staff do not want to:
  o Point fingers
  o Place blame

• Staff have varying exposure to formal and informal training. Staff requested additional DEI trainings and resources.

The next step for the Working Group is to develop a DEI work plan. Work plan activities will likely include:
• Creation of a Working Group charter that will include member terms to allow additional staff to participate on a voluntary basis
• Identification of training resources and the method for sharing across the agency
• Creation of DEI definitions with a conservation and agricultural lens
• Identification of funding needs to support:
  o Agency resources (e.g. tailored training, DEI audit/assessment, translation services)
  o District resources (e.g. small grant program to support DEI resources, translations services)
• Identification of how to align and coordinate with the newly formed Office of Equity

**Agricultural Conservation Easements Update**

Chairman Longrie invites Kate Delavan to continue sharing on the next agenda item. Ms. Delavan shares that the Conservation Commission closed on the Schuster Ranch agricultural conservation easement in Klickitat County in April 2021. The agricultural conservation easement permanently protects approximately 2,000 acres used for beef cattle and dryland crops. The conservation easement ensures this property will remain open and available for agriculture now and into the future while keeping the land in private ownership.

With the completion of the Schuster transaction, the Conservation Commission now holds a real property interest in three conservation properties. There are four additional easement projects in the pipeline. Staff are working to align resources and develop new procedures to support the growing easement portfolio.

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**District Operations (Information)**

**Regional Manager Report**

Chairman Longrie invites Allisa Carlson to present the Regional Manager Report. Ms. Carlson shares that the regional managers have been giving ongoing support to conservation districts throughout the state, including but not limited to:
- Partnering and relationships assistance
- CAPP Assistance
- New Supervisor and staff orientations and professional development
- Tracking grant spending and vouchering
- Open government training
- Cultural Resources
- Long range and annual planning assistance
- Records retention and PRA
- OPMA & Executive Sessions.

Regional managers have also continued to provide support through COVID-19.

**CAPP Preliminary Report**

Chairman Longrie invites Shana Joy to present the CAPP Preliminary Report. Ms. Joy shares that the Conservation Commissioners, at the January 2021 meeting, approved the CAPP system with eight Standards including Accountability Standard 1 with requirements for use in 2021. The 15
Accountability Requirements (Standard 1) are based in law (RCW) and administrative code (WAC) for conservation districts. Completing 100% of these items is a threshold for receiving state funding through the Conservation Commission. The attached initial annual status report is submitted to the Conservation Commission for their information at this time. A final CAPP status report will be provided in July 2021.

**Governance Sub-Committee Report**

Shana Joy continues presenting on the Governance Sub-Committee Report. Ms. Joy begins by sharing the committee roster, and their meeting schedule. The first bit of work being performed surrounds Governance Culture and Commissioner Expectations. The next two items to work on are decision making and Commission meetings. Those will be worked on at a later date. They are currently working on drafting policy language around board purpose, governing commitments, board job descriptions, board officers, committees, and advisors to the board. Another part of the current work is surrounding Commissioner expectations, including Attendance and engagement, code of conduct, communication and representation, representing the Commission, ethics and conflicts of interest, and addressing violations.

The current timeline hopes to continue working on drafts, including an all staff review and an AAG review as needed. Currently planning to bring full drafts of all three sections for initial review at the July 15, 2021 Commission meeting. They hope to request adoption of final drafts at the September 16, 2021 meeting.

**Cultural Resources Policy Update**

Chairman Longrie invites Jean Fike, SCC Puget Sound Regional Manager, to present on the next agenda item. Ms. Fike shares that on April 7, 2021 Governor Inslee issued Executive Order 21-02 (attached) to replace Executive Order 05-05 pertaining to archaeological and cultural resources. SCC staff are actively reviewing the new EO and corresponding with the WA Department of Archaeological and Historical Preservation for further guidance and clarifications on the new language and practical application of the new EO. An updated policy and related procedures is planned to be presented at the July 15, 2021 meeting.

**Commission Operations (Information)**

Chairman Longrie adjourns the meeting at 3:01 p.m.
Attendees
Ryan Baye
Perry Beale
Alan Chapman
Larry Cochran
Brian Cochrane
Roylene Comes At Night
Harold Crose
Stephanie Crouch
Jon Culp
Kate Delavan
Jeanette Dorner
Bill Eller
Lori Gonzalez
Sarah Groth
Josh Giuntoli
Alison Halpern
Shana Joy
Levi Keesecker
Mike Kuttel, Jr.
Jim Kropf
Patrick Lewis
Dean Longrie
Jean Mendoza
Laura Meyer
Nicholas Peak
Terra Rentz
Tom Salzer
Ron Shultz
Carol Smith
Sarah Spaeth
Nick Vira
Daryl Williams
Meeting Attendees
May 20, 2021

Attendees
Paul Anderson
Lacey Ausman-Ditto
Mike Baden
Ryan Baye
Perry Beale
Jennifer Boie
Allisa Carlson
Alan Chapman
Corina Cheever
Larry Cochran
Brian Cochrane
Roylene Comes At Night
Harold Crose
Stephanie Crouch
Jon Culp
Kate Delavan
Jeanette Dorner
Bill Eller
Jean Fike
Lori Gonzalez
Sarah Groth
Josh Giuntoli
Alison Halpern
Kirstin Haugen
Kai Hoffman-Krull

Attendees (cont.)
Shana Joy
Levi Keesecker
Mike Kuttel, Jr.
Jim Kropf
Anna Lael
Patrick Lewis
Dean Longrie
Alicia McClendon
Loren Meagher
Jean Mendoza
Laura Meyer
Nicholas Peak
Ben Rau
Terra Rentz
Brad Riehle
Doug Rushton
Tom Salzer
Jeff Schibel
Ron Shultz
Carol Smith
Sarah Spaeth
Michael Tobin
Nick Vira
Daryl Williams
Ashley Wood
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Shana Joy, Regional Manager Coordinator
Jean Fike, Puget Sound Regional Manager

SUBJECT: Cultural Resources Policy Update

Action Item [x]
Informational Item [ ]

Summary:
On April 7, 2021 Governor Inslee issued Executive Order 21-02 to replace Executive Order 05-05 pertaining to archaeological and cultural resources. Since that time Commission staff have worked with DAHP and other agencies to determine what changes would be needed in the Commission's cultural resources process to bring it into compliance with the new Executive Order. Proposed policy language and associated procedures have been determined by DAHP to comply with EO 21-02. Staff are requesting the Commissioners direct staff to publish the draft cultural resources policy update for at least a 30 day review and comment period by conservation districts with the intent that further action will be considered at the September 2021 Commission meeting.

Staff Contact:
Jean Fike, jfike@scc.wa.gov or Shana Joy at sjoy@scc.wa.gov

Background and Discussion:
The Commission has been operating under Executive Order 05-05 since July 2015. Policy and procedures were developed at that time to comply with EO 05-05, mitigate impacts and protect cultural resources as conservation districts implement projects funded through Commission programs.

Following the issuance of EO 21-02 on April 7, 2021 Commission staff have been in communication with DAHP to determine what changes would be needed in the Commission's cultural resources process to bring it into compliance with the new EO. As in 2015, the process is closely modeled after that used by NRCS.
The WSCC cultural resource policy language is proposed to be changed from the current language which reads:

**Purpose (2015):**
The Washington State Conservation Commission (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 attempt 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 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 (2015):**
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) EO-0505 review has been completed or
2) the project/practice is exempted from the EO-0505 review or
3) EO-0505 review is not needed.

To the following language:

**Purpose (2021):**
The Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) values the protection of archeological and cultural resources. We encourage each district to develop good working relationships with local Tribes that can help inform and support their conservation activities and better protect cultural resources. The WSCC will ensure that future activities funded by WSCC are compliant with the Governor’s Executive Order 21-02 regarding Archaeological and Cultural Resources.

**Policy (2021):**
Projects funded by the WSCC must follow current policy and procedures regarding the protection of cultural resources. Before a Conservation District can be reimbursed for conservation practices (capital construction projects) with WSCC-managed funds (regardless of source and including both Operational Funds and Capital Funds) a District must attest to WSCC that:

1) a cultural resource review compliant with EO 21-02 has been completed; or
2) per WSCC policy the project/practice does not require EO-21-02 review; or
3) a cultural resource review was conducted by another state agency in compliance with EO 21-02; or
4) a cultural resource review was conducted under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; and

all records pertaining to cultural resource review and tribal consultation have been emailed to DAHP.

Additionally, unless subject to Section 106 (federal cultural resources review process) property acquisition projects culminating in soil-disturbing construction activities will be subject to cultural resources review under EO 21-02.

This language has been reviewed by DAHP and found to be in compliance with EO 21-02. Proposal letter and DAHP concurrence letters are included in the Packet.

Proposed changes to procedures include:

- The form used by districts to attest that their project complies with SCC cultural resources requirements will be updated.
- Moving forward, the SCC will update conservation practice lists to match the latest lists from NRCS.
- Districts will be required to email all documents related to cultural resources review and consultation to DAHP before they will be reimbursed.
- The program and concurrence from DAHP will be revisited at least every five years, as is NRCS’s.
- Unless subject to Section 106 (federal cultural resources review process) property acquisition projects culminating in soil-disturbing construction activities will be required to undergo cultural resources review under EO 21-02.
- The flow chart currently posted on the SCC website will be replaced with a narrative process description.
- The process by which districts request reimbursement for cultural resources costs will be modified to match new fiscal practices.

It is not expected that the new EO 21-02 requirements will increase compliance costs appreciably.

**Recommended Action:**
Commissioners direct staff to publish the draft Cultural Resources Policy update for at least a 30-day review and comment period by conservation districts, with the intent that further action will be considered at the September 2021 Commission meeting.
Cultural Resources Complied Statement
(For use when requesting reimbursement from WSCC)

1. Identify the Practice/project that this statement applies to: ________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

2. Please check all that apply below and complete the blanks:

Another State or Federal agency
____ Cultural Resource Review was completed by: ____________________________ (BPA, WDFW, etc.)

District Completed
Cultural Resource Review was completed by: ________________ CD. Please select the outcome below:

____ The practice is listed on SCC’s website as having “little or no potential to affect cultural resources” and therefore requires no additional review; or

____ A Professional Archeologist (please provide Archeologist’s name): ____________________________
has indicated the project does not require further review; or

____ Cultural resource review and consultation were conducted and DAHP and potentially affected Tribes
have no remaining concerns.

AND

____ all documents related to this cultural resources review have been emailed to DAHP

3. Submitted by:

___________________________________________________                    _________________
Authorized District Signer or a Professional Archeologist   Date

(must be provided to WSCC Financial Staff prior to eligibility for grant reimbursement)
TO: Conservation Commission Members  
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Laura Meyer, Communications Manager

SUBJECT: Modification Requested to 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Development Timeline

Summary: Staff recommend that we modify our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Development Timeline to allow more time to gather, review, and incorporate input from conservation districts and partners.

Requested Action (if action item): Extend the deadline to finalize the SCC 2022-2027 Strategic Plan from the September 2021 Commission Meeting to the December 2021 Commission Meeting.

Staff Contact: Laura Meyer, Communications Manager (360-701-9455)

Background and Discussion:
At the December 3, 2020 SCC meeting, Commissioners approved a staff-proposed timeline for developing our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. That timeline (see figure 1 on next page) set a deadline to finalize our plan at the September 2021 Commission Meeting. It also set a May-July 2021 time period for staff to gather input from partners, including conservation districts.

Stakeholder input on our five-year plan is important to us. As our primary partners, we particularly want to give conservation districts adequate time to review and discuss it. We’re currently gathering feedback from partners and districts on our goals, but after further discussion among staff, we’d like to extend the window for gathering partner feedback and allow more time to share details with conservation districts before the plan is finalized.

Recommended Action and Options (if action item): Staff request that the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Development Timeline be modified as pictured in figure 2 on the next page, extending the deadline to approve the plan until the December 2, 2021 Commission Meeting in order to allow more time for partner and CD input.
Figure 1: Approved Timeline for 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Development

- **Nov-March**: SCC staff develops recommendations for strategic priorities.
  - Nov: Staff crafts recommended process for developing plan.
  - Dec SCC Meeting: Commissioners review/approve process for developing plan.
- **March-May**: SCC staff develops recommendations for goals.
  - Mar SCC Meeting: Commissioners review/approve strategic priorities.
  - Jan SCC Meeting: Commissioners review statute, vision, mission, and values.
- **May-July**: SCC seeks input from partners on strategic plan.
  - May SCC Meeting: Commissioners review/approve goals.
  - May: Commission reviews strategic plan input.
- **Sept 2021**: Finalize plan.
  - Sept SCC Meeting: Commissioners approve 2022-2027 Strategic Plan.
  - July SCC Meeting: Commissioners review partner input and consider revisions to strategic plan.

Figure 2: Proposed Modification to Timeline for 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Development

- **Nov-March**: SCC staff develops recommendations for strategic priorities.
  - Nov: Staff crafts recommended process for developing plan.
  - Dec SCC Meeting: Commissioners review/approve process for developing plan.
- **March-May**: SCC staff develops recommendations for goals.
  - Mar SCC Meeting: Commissioners review/approve strategic priorities.
  - Jan SCC Meeting: Commissioners review statute, vision, mission, and values.
- **Jun-Aug**: SCC seeks input from partners on strategic plan.
  - June: Commission reviews strategic plan input.
  - July SCC Meeting: Commissioners review/approve goals.
  - July SCC Meeting: Commissioners finalize any revised goals.
- **Sept-Dec**: Finalize plan.
  - Sept SCC Meeting: Commissioners review partner input; either finalize plan or allow time to incorporate ideas.
  - Dec SCC Meeting: Commissioners finalize plan.
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Laura Meyer, SCC Communications Manager

SUBJECT: Revised 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Goals for Review/Approval

Summary:
At the May 2021 Strategic Planning Session, Commissioners approved the majority of goals for our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. A few goals were flagged for staff to revise and bring back for approval at the July Commission Meeting. Staff present those revised goals for your approval today.

Requested Action (if action item):
Approve revised goals for the 2022-2027 SCC Strategic Plan

Staff Contact:
Laura Meyer (lmeyer@scc.wa.gov, 360-701-9455)

Background and Discussion:
Revised goals that require Commission review/action are listed by Priority Area below:

**Voluntary Conservation of Natural Resources**
- No action needed. All goals approved at May 2021 Meeting.

**Agricultural and Working Lands Viability and Food System Support**
- Goal flagged by Commissioners for revision: “Promote policy and funding to support farmland preservation and economic viability as part of the food system.” Suggestion to revise language to better encompass urban food system work.
  - Revised goal for Commission review/action: “Economically viable farms, farmland, and strong local and regional food systems.”
• Goal approved by SCC at May meeting but later flagged by staff for requested revision: “Increase and maintain water supply for agriculture.” Staff concerned that increasing water supply for agriculture may not be feasible.
  o Revised goal for Commission review/action: “Maintain water supply for agriculture.”

**Climate Resiliency**

• Goal flagged by Commissioners for revision: “Equip producers and land stewards to strengthen adaptive management strategies to successfully adapt to a changing climate.”
  o Proposed goal language for Commission review/action: “Equip producers, foresters, and land stewards to strengthen adaptive management strategies to successfully adapt to a changing climate.”

**Governance and Accountability**

• All goals approved at May SCC meeting, but staff would like to add one more goal to this area.
  o Proposed new goal for Commission review/action: “Conservation district boards are well-supported to achieve their mission.”

**Leadership, Partnership, and Collaboration**

• Goal flagged by Commissioners for revision: “Secure recognition and respect for our leadership in voluntary conservation and innovative natural resource solutions.” Suggestion to revise to focus more on public benefit of SCC having this recognition/respect and to make room for activities related to collecting/sharing success stories.
  o Revised goal for Commission review/action: “Demonstrate leadership in voluntary conservation resulting in innovative natural resource solutions that work.”

• Goals flagged for revision/potential merging: “Cultivate a broad and inclusive culture of conservation” and “Enhance cultural and social considerations in natural resource conservation.”
  o Merged goal for Commission review/action: “Cultivate a broad and inclusive culture of conservation.”

For reference, see the next page for the full list of approved goals by priority area. Proposed/revised goals are flagged with “*” and highlighted in yellow.

**Recommended Action and Options (if action item):**

Approve revised 2022-2027 Strategic Plan goals.

**Next Steps:**

With all goals approved, staff teams will continue setting specific objectives, strategies, and tactics to help achieve each approved goal.
2022-2027 Strategic Plan Goals by Priority Area

Goals highlighted in yellow and flagged with "*" are presented for Commission review and potential action – all others were approved at the May Strategic Planning Session.

Priority Area: Voluntary Conservation of Natural Resources

Goal 1. Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat
Goal 2. Protect and improve water quality and availability
Goal 3. Protect and improve soil health
Goal 4. Improve forest and rangeland health on private land
Goal 5. Strengthen awareness of natural resources’ value and conservation opportunities.

Priority Area: Agricultural and Working Lands Viability and Food System Support

Goal 1. The SCC is a trusted and knowledgeable partner in advancing working lands protection and agricultural viability across Washington.
Goal 2. Working lands are available for future generations.
Goal 3. Maintain water supply for agriculture.*
Goal 4. Economically viable farms, farmland, and strong local and regional food systems.*

Priority Area: Climate Resiliency

Goal 1. Equip producers, foresters, and land stewards to strengthen adaptive management strategies to successfully adapt to a changing climate*
Goal 2. Increase carbon sequestration
Goal 3. Decrease greenhouse gas emissions
Goal 4. Increase stakeholder understanding about climate-smart practices and holistic co-benefits
Goal 5. Increase wildfire resiliency of Washington’s natural and working landscapes and communities

Priority Area: Governance and Accountability

Goal 1. The SCC Board and agency operates legally, transparently, accountably, and inclusively
Goal 2. A fully engaged and representative Commission board
Goal 3. Conservation district boards represent their community
Goal 4. Conservation districts operate legally, transparently, accountably, and inclusively
Goal 5. Conservation district boards are well-supported to achieve their mission*

Priority Area: Leadership, Partnership, and Collaboration

Goal 1. Earn and maintain the trust of partners and decision-makers
Goal 2. Demonstrate leadership in voluntary conservation resulting in innovative natural resource solutions that work*
Goal 3. Cultivate a broad and inclusive culture of conservation*
Goal 4. Foster collaborative, holistic, multi-benefit solutions for natural resources and agriculture
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
    Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Sarah Groth, Fiscal Manager

SUBJECT: 2022 Supplemental Budget Requests

Summary:
SCC is requesting approval for three 2022 supplemental budget packages. Supplemental budget package requests are for new or additional funds in the existing biennium, funding should be for items that are extraordinary or unexpected.

Requested Action (if action item):
Approve the three packages and not to exceed amounts for the packages for continued development and submittal to Office of Financial Management by the deadline of September 13, 2021.

Staff Contact:
Sarah Groth

Background and Discussion:
SCC is requesting approval for continue to develop the three decision packages listed below:

Operating:

Conservation Equity and Engagement - not to exceed $500,000

1. Secure a contract for an equity assessment of the SCC, including programs and services, to identify opportunities. This will enable us to better assess and deliver our statutory duty to meet the “pressing need for the conservation of renewable resources in all areas of the state, whether urban, suburban, or rural” and ensure that “the benefits of resource practices, programs, and projects, as carried out by the state conservation commission and by the conservation districts, should be available to all such areas.” The assessment will help us identify and overcome potential unintended barriers that impact our ability to fulfill this duty.

Based on assessment results, the contractor also would work with staff to identify potential actions to include/prioritize as we implement our 2022-2027 long-range strategic plan (currently under development), including actions related to the following goals:

- Cultivate a broad and inclusive culture of conservation. (Leadership, Partnership, and Collaboration: Goal 3)
- The SCC Board and agency operates legally, transparently, accountably, and inclusively. (Governance and Accountability: Goal 1)
2. **Support conservation districts seeking more capacity to reach communities who are under-resourced.**

CDs would be eligible to submit proposals to a new small grant program to fund efforts including, but not limited to: translating materials into other languages and/or for the visually or hearing-impaired; building relationships with under-resourced communities; improving web/electronic accessibility; providing access to DEI trainings (e.g., state required foundational trainings); taking cultural competency trainings (e.g., Veterans Cultural Competency Training, Government-to-Government/State-Tribal Relations); or partnership-building/outreach (e.g., efforts to engage/serve beginning and underrepresented farmers).

This mini grant program supports several aspects of our developing 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, including our work to build conservation district capacity and assist them in complying with legal requirements, such as those related to web and IT accessibility. It also supports the following goals:

- Cultivate a broad and inclusive culture of conservation. (Leadership, Partnership, and Collaboration: Goal 3)
- Conservation districts operate legally, transparently, accountably, and inclusively. (Governance and Accountability: Goal 4)
- Conservation district boards are well-supported to achieve their mission. (Governance and Accountability: Goal 5)
- Strengthen awareness of natural resources’ value and conservation. opportunities. (Voluntary Conservation of Natural Resources: Goal 5)

Estimated cost: $350,000-$425,000

The total estimated request for this package is not to exceed $500,000.

If these needs aren’t funded, some areas and communities of our state may experience barriers that impede full participation in and availability to our voluntary conservation work and its benefits. For example, 12.9 percent of people in Washington (942K) live with some form of disability, including impairments to vision, hearing, and/or mobility; around 10 percent (735,000) lack internet connection in their homes, 10.3 percent (751K) live below the poverty line; 8.9 percent (649K) are veterans; and nearly 20 percent (1.5M) speak a non-English language. Washington also is home to 29 federally recognized tribes who are a key partner in natural resource conservation. We need a more comprehensive and informed engagement strategy to truly make our services available to all.

**Sustainable Farms and Fields - not to exceed $2,000,000**

The bill for the Sustainable Farms and Fields program passed last year with strong bipartisan support and overwhelming enthusiasm and interest by both the agricultural and environmental communities. Unfortunately, the COVID outbreak and the economic uncertainty that followed meant that we did not request funding for the FY21-23 biennium. We have been working with our climate/agricultural advocacy partners, the Governor’s Office, WACD/NACD, and NRCS to explore federal funding opportunities through USDA and the proposed American Jobs Plan. We are also exploring potential private-public partnerships to jumpstart SFF. Although practices eligible under the SFF program have been included in the Governor’s Climate Commitment Act, appropriations for that account are not yet available.

With climate mitigation a top priority at the state and federal levels, we are seeking a modest amount of state funding for FY23 to implement this voluntary incentive program to help eager producers implement climate-smart practices as quickly as possible.
FarmPAI - not to exceed $2,000,000

The Farmland Protection and Affordability Investment (FarmPAI) Program is a proposed program to support protection of high priority agricultural land at imminent risk of development. This critical and necessary program supports Washington farmers and keeps land in production. The program also facilitates land access to underserved producers including young and beginning farmers, people of color, and veterans. FarmPAI's revolving low interest loan program for fee simple land acquisition would be managed by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission with the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) acting as a program advisor.

Supplemental budget funds are necessary as FarmPAI's success requires ready sources of conservation easement funding to permanently protect the land and make it affordable for the next generation farmer. The WSCC's agricultural conservation easements program is a strategic complement to FarmPAI in alignment with the Office of Farmland Preservation statutory goals (RCW 89.10.010). The WSCC is requesting Commission authorization to request up to $2,000,000 for the easement account (RCW 89.08.540) through the supplemental budget. These costs could not have been anticipated at the time the agency biennial budget was developed as the program is under development.

Recommended Action and Options (if action item):

Approve the three budget packages for further development and submittal to Office of Financial Management by the deadline of September 13, 2021 as listed below:

Operating:
- Conservation Equity and Engagement - not to exceed $500,000
- Sustainable Farms and Fields - not to exceed $2,000,000

Capital:
- FarmPAI - not to exceed $2,000,000
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
    Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Shana Joy, District Operations & Regional Manager Coordinator

SUBJECT: 2021 Conservation Accountability and Performance Program Final Report

Summary:
The Conservation Commissioners, at the January 2021 meeting, approved the CAPP system with eight Standards including Accountability Standard 1 with requirements for use in 2021. The 15 Accountability Requirements (Standard 1) are based in law (RCW) and administrative code (WAC) for conservation districts. Completing 100% of these items is a threshold for receiving state funding through the Conservation Commission. This final annual status report is submitted to the Conservation Commission for your information and requested action.

Requested Action:
Approve the allocation of Implementation Grant funds in the amount of $117,823 to the Pine Creek Conservation District for fiscal year 2022.

Background and Discussion:
Conservation Accountability and Performance Program Final Conservation District Statuses:
Forty-two conservation districts are currently meeting the Accountability Standard 1 elements that can be evaluated at this time. For reference the Accountability Standard 1 elements are included below. These are status remarks around a few of the specific accountability elements.

Item 3. Forty-four conservation districts submitted the annual plan of work by May 30th. King Conservation District has been granted an extension to the due date.

Item 4. Pine Creek Conservation District has hired a new manager who is already actively meeting with clients in the district, making contact with neighboring districts, and exploring partnerships and opportunities for new projects. These steps all indicate that the district is moving in a positive
direction towards progress on the goals included in their long range and annual plans of work. This item will continue to be monitored closely.

Item 6. Cascadia Conservation District has completed their new election. Palouse Conservation District is actively working to re-do their election. See also the report from the SCC Elections Officer, Bill Eller.

Item 8. The final Pine Creek Conservation District audit has been published. The finding that was issued is pertaining to records retention of financial records. The district has taken steps to ensure proper records retention of financial records going forward. They have hired a new accountant who has taken over the daily financial duties and financial records management for the district with proper internal controls in place.

Item 11. The annual financial reporting to the State Auditor’s Office was due May 30th. The Rock Lake Conservation District did not submit the required annual reporting on time. Please see the attached letter from the district for further explanation of how this oversight occurred and what the district plans to do to ensure this will not happen again.

Item 14. The Pine Creek Conservation District is on a better path forward for timely submittal of grant vouchers as required by the contract between SCC and the district. However, sufficient time has not yet passed for the district to demonstrate that they will be meeting this requirement consistently over time. This item will continue to be monitored closely by SCC staff.
**STANDARD 1**

Compliance with Laws (required standard)

Conservation Districts must fulfill their legal requirements as Political Subdivisions of the State of Washington and comply with all laws and the Washington Administrative Code. This evaluation is based on the best available information at the time it is conducted.  

**Date Evaluation Conducted:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance with Laws and Requirements</th>
<th>Citation (link to RCW or WAC)</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Annual report of accomplishments was submitted on time, in the prescribed format to the Commission.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.070 (11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. District Long Range Plan submitted on time &amp; meeting RCW and Commission requirements.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.220 (7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. District Annual Work Plan submitted on time &amp; meeting RCW and Commission requirements.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.220 (7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The District has made a demonstrated effort to address their top resource needs identified in their Long Range Plan.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.220 (7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Upon request, District contracts and agreements have been submitted to the Commission.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.210</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Supervisor elections &amp; appointments are conducted according to RCW and WAC requirements. At least one District representative (ideally Elections Supervisor) has completed mandatory Elections Training provided by the Commission.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.190 &amp; 89.08.200 &amp; WAC 135-110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Annual financial reporting to State Auditor’s Office completed correctly and on time.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.210</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. All State Auditor identified issues (during SAO audits) have been resolved to the extent possible.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.070 (12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Open Public Meetings Act is followed including executive sessions.</td>
<td>RCW 42.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. State Public Records Act is followed.</td>
<td>RCW 42.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. All Board Supervisors and Public Records Officers are current on the required Open Public Meetings and Public Records Act Training.</td>
<td>RCW 42.30.210 &amp; RCW 42.56.150 &amp; RCW 42.30.210</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Keeping public informed of Conservation District activities.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.220 (13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. State Ethics laws for public officials are being followed.</td>
<td>RCW 42.20 &amp; 42.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. District in compliance with terms of Commission/District Master Agreement.</td>
<td>RCW 89.08.070 (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Demonstrated diligence in complying with state and federal statutes such as: contracting, employment/labor laws, etc., through adoption of up-to-date policies, training, and use of available resources such as MRSC and Enduris.</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Standard 1 Ideas for Improvement:**
July 1, 2021

TO: Dean Longrie, Ph.D.
    Chairman, Washington State Conservation Commission

FROM: Andrew J. Wolfe, District Manager- Rock Lake Conservation District

SUBJECT: Late Filing of Annual Financial Report

I write to explain the late filing of the Rock Lake Conservation District’s Annual Financial Report. To begin, the following is the recounted sequence of events from our Financial Manager, Cindy White:

“I do not take this matter lightly and have lost sleep over it knowing the repercussions that could occur. I have worked for the Rock Lake Conservation District (Formerly Palouse-Rock Lake CD) since 1994 and this is my first offense of this kind. Normally I would have begun working on the report in February, but due to the unforeseeable quadrupling amount of burn permits that were to be issued beginning in February through May, 2021 I was rather consumed. I was the only one authorized by the Department of Ecology to issue permits.

I had been in contact with the Auditors Help Desk on March 17, 2021 over a particular issue regarding the correct bars code to use in reporting a child support payment for Jonathan Whitney. They responded on March 20, 2021 and said they would expect to see the “deposit” of funds & “payment” of funds using the 389XXXX & 589XXXX codes. On the same topic I reached out to the auditor’s help desk on May 21st to make sure the bars code for defining the amounts on the payroll were done correctly using code 382.30.00 to make it was a negative number (showing it was taken out of the pay check). On May 24, 2021 They responded stating that instead of the reporting it as a negative, they would use BARS code 5823000 and report it as a positive number. Therefore, I took their suggestions and used their numbers on the report.

When I submitted the Annual Financial Report on May 28, 2021 at approximately 4:45 p.m. I was dismayed to find a red flag indicating there was an issue on the Bars codes used for the Child Support Payment issue. I couldn’t get a response from the Auditor’s office, and did not know what could be wrong after checking with them and using their bars codes. I sent a message to the help desk but did not receive an answer until June 2nd. At this time, the Auditor helper responding to my plea, (who did not agree with the bars codes given me) and talked me through what to do to remove the flag. At which time I discovered there was a variance of $14,659 on the schedule 01. After going through all of the numbers several times I finally came to the conclusion it had to be the previous year’s information that was wrong. The difference in the amount was due to a wrong ending balance on the bank reconciliation from the previous year, after which point the error was corrected and the report was finally submitted on June 4, 2021.”
As the District Manager of Rock Lake Conservation District I was well apprised of Cindy’s progress in regard to the financial report clear up to the final moments of Friday May the 28th. Internally, I had set an April 30 deadline for the submission of this report, as the season progressed however it was clear that this deadline was not going to be met. With the Memorial Day weekend it seemed all but impossible to reach anyone who could help resolve the matter.

There were multiple factors that led to this unfavorable reality though I have, in the time since the incident, devised and initiated measures to ensure against this happening in the future. Ultimately, this season’s mishap was due, in large respect, to the high expectations and workload I placed on Cindy. Included in that load is the transition to a new grant/project management platform I know she has struggle to adjust to while meeting my expectations in the last year. It is clear to me that the summation of her old and new responsibilities at RLCD (some which indeed require honing new skills) are more than she can be expected to maintain. My prescribed remedies include the following:

1) **Diversify Issuance of Burn Permits**- While this spring was unprecedented in regard to burn permits due to near record high grain crops in 2020, additional staff will be trained to accommodate this service such that Cindy is not the only individual to carry this yoke.

2) **Outsource Tasks**- There are many concurrent tasks for which Cindy is responsible near the end of each month. In this specific moment, I believe Cindy was under added duress knowing that, in addition to the financial report, there were also other matters of importance in need of tending that simply had to wait. Many of these tasks will be outsourced beginning July 2021, starting first with payroll, which has, in my observance, always taken what I might deem an inordinate amount of time for 4 full-time employees. I met with a local accounting firm in early June and they are ready, willing and capable to accommodate our needs.

Myself as district manager, as well as our Board of Supervisors, take this matter very seriously. I assure you we are already taking measures to address the issues and will continue to do so in the future.
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Bill Eller, Election Officer

SUBJECT: cascadeia Conservation District Election

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**Action Item** X

**Informational Item** □

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**Background Summary:**
Staff recommends the Conservation Commission (Commission) certify and announce the official results of the Cascadeia Conservation District (CCD) election.

**Requested Action:**
That the Commission certify and announce that Dillon Miller was the winner of the CCD election.

**Cascadeia Conservation District Election:**
On February 5, 2021, the CCD held an election. Due to an error, no poll list was created by the CCD. As a result, the Commission failed to certify the February CCD election at its regular meeting on March 18, 2021.

CCD then went to Superior Court in Chelan County and the court invalided the February election and ordered another election to be held. This was necessary because CCD neither CCD nor the Commission have the ability to hold an election outside of the first quarter of the year, as required by statute and our administrative code.\(^1\) CCD held this second election on June 9, 2021. There were no errors during this second election.

**Staff Contact:**
Bill Eller, beller@scc.wa.gov, 509-385-7512

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\(^1\) RCW 89.08.190 and WAC 135-110-200.
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
    Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Bill Eller, Election Officer

SUBJECT: Palouse Conservation District Election

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Action Item

Informational Item X

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Background Summary:

On February 9, 2021, the PCD held an election. Due to an error, fewer than two polling officers were present when the sole ballot received was processed. As a result, the Commission declined to certify the February PCD election at its regular meeting on March 18, 2021.

Requested Action:

None. Informational item only.

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Palouse Conservation District Election:

After the non-certification of its election by the Commission on March 18, 2021, PCD went to Superior Court in Whitman County to seek a new election date. The court subsequently ordered PCD to take a number of steps, which are listed below, from an email exchange with Shelley Scott, Finance and Administration Manager for PCD:

Palouse Conservation District has been working with the law firm, McGuire, DeWulf, Kragt & Johnson to meet the requirements of the judge’s order, dated April 14, 2021, requiring notice for declaratory and injunctive relief.

Item 1: Complete - File a Summons per C.R. 4 and serve it along with the Petition and Declaration on the Washington Secretary of State and the Whitman County Auditor.

Item 2: Complete - Each of the Directors and Officers of the District were provided with a copy of the Petition, Declaration and the judge’s Order.
Item 3: **In Process** - File a Summons by Publication and publish as required by RCW 4.28.100-.110 – The first date of publication was May 6, 2021 and there is a 60 day wait period before we can re-note our petition.

Item 4: **We need WSCC assistance** - Once the 60 wait period is complete (after July 6, 2021) and as long as no objections are received (None have been received as of this morning), we will need to re-note our petition for a hearing. **We will need your assistance with the revised orders for the judge.**

*One other piece of information that I just found out from the attorney this morning is that the Whitman County Prosecutor has entered a Notice of Appearance on this matter.*

Commission staff have assured the PCD that we will provide whatever assistance the need.

**Staff Contact:**
Bill Eller, beller@scc.wa.gov, 509-385-7512
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Bill Eller, WSCC Elections Officer

SUBJECT: Adoption of Proposed Changes to the CD Election Guide as a Result of COVID-19

Action Item X

Summary:
Commission staff proposed two changes (amended sample notices and sample election resolutions) to the Conservation District (CD) Election and Appointment Guide (Guide) to assist CDs in their elections. Both changes came about as a result the COVID-19 pandemic. CDs were able to comment on the proposed changes as per the Commission’s “Policy on Policies” through July 9, 2021. No comments were received. Staff recommends adoption of the changes.

Requested Action (if action item):
The Commission adopt the changes to the Guide.

Staff Contact:
Bill Eller, WSCC Elections Officer  beller@scc.wa.gov  (509) 385-7512
Ron Shultz, WSCC Policy Director  rshultz@scc.wa.gov  (360) 790-5994

Background and Discussion:
At the May 2021 Commission meeting, staff presented proposed changes to CD election process related to mail-in only elections. The COVID-19 pandemic social distancing protocols resulted in a number of conservation districts holding their annual election by mail-in ballot only. Previous versions of the Guide had public notices and sample election resolutions that were not specific to
mail-in only elections. Commission staff separated out poll-site elections from mail-in elections, and created sample notices and resolutions for each. Those sample notices and resolutions have been added to a draft Guide and now need to be adopted for use.

The Commission’s GovDelivery notice system was used on May 20, 2021 to notify CDs, per the Commission’s “Policy on Policies,” that comment on the changes could be made through July 9, 2021. No comments from CDs were received. A final version of the Guide follows this memo in the Commission packet for the Commission to adopt.

CD Comments
None.

Effect of Adopting the Proposed Changes
If the proposed changes are adopted, the Guide would be available for use with the adopted changes for the upcoming 2021-2022 election cycle.

Recommended Action and Options (if action item):
The Commission adopt the proposed changes, after CD comment, to the Guide.
In Washington, conservation districts hold a unique position in the conservation of our natural resources. They serve as the local contact for landowners, farmers, and ranchers as they seek to conserve our natural resources.

Conservation districts are governed by a board of supervisors, three of whom are elected and two of whom are appointed by the Conservation Commission. Conservation districts function best when they are filled with elected and appointed board members who care about and are involved in the conservation of natural resources.

When created in 1939, conservation districts in Washington State were given the ability to conduct their own elections by the Washington State Legislature, and that process continues to this day. The Conservation Commission is required to set conservation district election policies and procedures to promote fair and open elections.

This publication explains the election law relating to the election and appointment for the office of conservation district supervisor. Please note, this publication is not a substitute for the statutes and regulations governing this process but rather should be read in conjunction with them.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the Commission’s Election Officer.

We will be happy to assist you.

Carol Smith
Executive Director
Washington State Conservation Commission

Washington State Conservation Commission 300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 989502
PO Box 47721
Olympia, Washington 98504-7721

Phone: (360) 407-6200
Fax: (360) 407-6215
Email: elections@scc.wa.gov
Website: Washington State Conservation Commission Elections

Alternate document formats are available upon request.

Guide may be subject to change. Washington State Codes are currently under review.
Purpose

These 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 the Washington Administrative Code (WAC), Chapter 135-110. Not all requirements for election compliance are addressed in this Guide. CDs are directed to the WAC Chapter 135-110, forms, and other materials available on the Commission’s web page¹ to ensure full compliance with election policy and procedures.

Authority


The Commission is tasked³ to appoint two supervisors who are qualified by training and experience to serve as conservation district supervisors. Conservation district supervisors are required⁴ to conduct conservation district elections annually. Such elections must comply with these procedures.

If any provision in these procedures or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of these procedures or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected. In circumstances where these rules and/or procedures are silent or in conflict, the Commission will look to general election law⁵ rules and procedures for guidance.

Failure to comply with these procedures

Failure to meet the requirements of these procedures may affect a conservation district’s status on the Conservation Accountability and Performance Program. If the Commission chooses not to certify an election, the conservation district must seek judicial review of the election in Superior Court.

For appointment applications found to be significantly noncompliant, the conservation district or applicant must correct all deficiencies on the application. The applicant and conservation district must comply with these procedures before the Commission will act on an application for appointment to the position of conservation district supervisor.

General requirements

Each year, either during the last quarter of the calendar year preceding an election or immediately in January or February of the year in which the election will be held, each conservation district Board of Supervisors must adopt a resolution setting an election date within the first quarter of the year in which the election will be held.⁶ The date the Board of Supervisors chooses to hold the election will determine when the resolution must be adopted.⁷ Each conservation district Board of Supervisors must also appoint one election supervisor to organize, coordinate, and perform functions required of the conservation district in the election and appointment of conservation district supervisors.⁸ This information, plus a list of conservation district supervisor positions expiring in the year of the election, published and must be posted conspicuously in the conservation district office.

Due notice in print media, as defined in WAC 135-110-110, must be provided for every full-term conservation district election and every full-term conservation district appointment process.⁹ Notices for both processes may be combined if the conservation district so chooses. Conservation districts are strongly encouraged to exceed the minimum due notice requirements to reach the maximum number of potential candidates and voters.

For poll site elections, the conservation district Board of Supervisors must specify the location(s) for polling and the hours in which polling will occur.¹⁰ Every poll site must be open for at least four consecutive hours at a time convenient for voters.¹¹ Every poll site must have at least two polling officers present during the hours the polls are open.¹² Polling places selected must have sufficient parking to accommodate the

¹ https://scc.wa.gov/cd/elections-administrators
² RCW 89.08.190
³ RCW 89.08.160
⁴ RCW 89.08.190
⁵ RCW Chapter 29A
⁶ WAC 135-110-210
⁷ WAC 135-110-220
⁸ WAC 135-110-230
⁹ WAC 135-110-110 and WAC 135-110-220
¹⁰ WAC 135-110-210 (2) (b)
¹¹ WAC 135-110-240 (2)
¹² Ibid. and WAC 135-110-620
expected number of voters and must be accessible to voters.\textsuperscript{13} If the election will be held only by mail, the date set by the conservation district is the end date for receiving ballots from voters, and the location will be where ballots are counted. Included in the notice is the deadline (the day, time, and where the ballots need to be mailed to) for ballots to be returned by mail.

Every candidate in a conservation district election must be a qualified district elector.\textsuperscript{14} A qualified district elector is a registered voter residing within the boundary of the conservation district where the candidate wishes to serve. In addition, some positions may be required to own land or operate a farm to be eligible.\textsuperscript{15}

The filing deadline for candidates is four weeks before Election Day, unless, by formal action, the conservation district supervisors choose a filing deadline greater than four weeks before Election Day.\textsuperscript{16}

All ballots or computer voting records must be retained by the conservation district for twelve months after the election has been certified, at which time they may be destroyed, unless the election has not been certified by the Commission or the election has been challenged.\textsuperscript{17} Conservation Districts must retain the original version of all election forms until ballots may be discarded.\textsuperscript{18}

Elections are final when certified and the official results are announced by the Commission in May of each year or later as deemed necessary by the Commission.\textsuperscript{19} A supervisor-elect takes office and can begin official duties as a board supervisor when the election is final, which is after the May Commission meeting.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{13} WAC 135-110-250 and WAC 135-110-580
\textsuperscript{14} WAC 135-110-300
\textsuperscript{15} WAC 135-110-310
\textsuperscript{16} WAC 135-110-330
\textsuperscript{17} WAC 135-110-140
\textsuperscript{18} WAC 135-110-130
\textsuperscript{19} WAC 135-110-770
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid. and RCW 89.08.190. Read together, the RCW and WAC are linked. The phrase “following the election” in the RCW is linked to the initial phrase “the commission shall establish procedures for elections...” which is linked to the meaning of “final” for election purposes in WAC 135-110-770(1). Elections are final when they are certified by the Commission and the official results are announced by the Commission in May of each year or later as deemed necessary. Therefore, a supervisor-elect takes office and can begin official duties as board supervisor when the election is final, which is after the May Commission meeting.
Information standards

Notice of the Adopted Election Resolution (NAER)
The information in the NAER must be published twice, at least six days between each publishing, no later than seven days after the hearing at which the NAER is adopted. The purpose of the NAER is to inform the public, voters and potential candidates of the date, time, place and manner of the election. Certain information must be provided by the CD in the NAER. The information in the adopted election resolution must be provided to the Commission no later than the candidate filing deadline.

Candidate required information
Specific information must be submitted by each candidate to the conservation district.

Eligibility determination
The election supervisor must verify the eligibility of each person who submits candidate required information.

Poll list
Conservation districts use poll lists and voters must provide certain information so that the polling officer can determine voter eligibility. For each voter, a polling officer must determine whether the voter is eligible to vote, and if eligibility is contested, each such determination must be initialed by the polling officer.

Ballot results report
Polling officers and the election supervisor must record ballot results for each polling location. Conservation districts and polling officers must record certain information in the ballot results report.

Required information
Conservation districts must provide the information described in the previous section to the Commission. Conservation districts must use electronic or paper forms provided by the Commission.

Due dates
Conservation Districts must submit EF1 no later than the candidate filing deadline.

Information sufficient for the Commission to certify and announce a conservation district election is due to the Commission no later than fourteen days following the conservation district’s last published election date. This is done by submitting EF2. The conservation district retains all original documents. Other due dates are set out in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Election Form</th>
<th>Due to CD from candidate</th>
<th>Reported Electronically to Commission from CD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EF1 - CD Election Information</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No later than the candidate filing deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF-A - Candidate Required Information (one form per candidate)</td>
<td>At candidate filing deadline</td>
<td>N/A (information included in EF2 below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF2 - Election Report</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No later than 14 days after Election Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF-C - Poll list (all pages)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A (poll lists are to be kept by the CD and made available upon request of the Commission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF-D - Ballots: As many ballots as needed, to be printed by the CD</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A (ballots to be kept by the CD and made available upon request of the Commission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election Feedback Form</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21 A complete list is in WAC 135-110-210 (2)
22 WAC 135-110-210 (3). This is accomplished by filing out form EF1 - CD Election Information, available on the Commission’s elections web page at https://scw.wa.gov/cd/elections-administrators
23 WAC 135-110-320. The form provided for this purpose is Form PF-A.
24 Ibid. See Checklist 1: Verification and Eligibility for the Office of Elected Supervisor
25 WAC 135-110-550. The form provided for this purpose is PF-C.
26 A complete list is in WAC 135-110-550
27 WAC 135-110-460 and WAC 135-110-610
28 WAC 135-110-750. Please use Checklist 2: Ballot Results
29 Ibid.
30 If more time is needed, the election supervisor should contact the Commission.
Conservation district duties

Conservation districts are strongly encouraged to exceed the minimum due notice requirements so that interested parties may be informed of the opportunity to serve as a conservation district supervisor.

Each conservation district must appoint an election supervisor. For each candidate, the election supervisor must verify that specific eligibility requirements have been met. Such determinations must be made separately for each candidate. A county auditor or the Commission may assist a conservation district in determining the eligibility of a candidate, upon request of the conservation district.

If a candidate is found by the conservation district to be ineligible, the conservation district must inform the candidate of the reasons. To assist voters in the selection of a candidate during voting, a conservation district may publish candidate optional information provided by candidates. Conservation districts should adopt a policy to set the parameters for publishing such candidate optional information.

A conservation district must create a ballot and provide a ballot to each person who wishes to vote in the conservation district election.

The conservation district must obtain a current list of registered voters from the County Auditor or Secretary of State for all territory within the conservation district boundary.

The conservation district must be able to show or describe the legal boundary of the conservation district to any voter or to any representative of the Commission, upon demand.

Campaigning versus recruiting candidates. Campaigning is not the same as recruiting candidates. Conservation district staff and supervisors may recruit candidates to serve on the conservation district board in either elected or appointed positions. Candidates for elected positions can come from any segment of society, provided they are qualified district electors and otherwise eligible to serve on the conservation district board. Candidates for appointed positions can come from any segment of society, provided they are registered voters in Washington State and otherwise eligible to serve on the conservation district board. While conservation district supervisors and staff may recruit candidates to serve on the conservation district board, they must not take an official position on an active candidate for an elected position. An active candidate is someone who has submitted PF-A to the conservation district in the current election.

Ballots must be offered to potential voters within the conservation district boundary. To receive a ballot, the voter must request a ballot prior to the current election.

After the candidate filing deadline

The District should verify the eligibility of each candidate to appear on the ballot and serve as a conservation district supervisor.

During a poll-site election

Conservation district supervisors or staff may assist polling officers, but may not directly issue ballots or count ballots, unless such person is also the election supervisor appointed by the conservation district board of supervisors. Each poll site must have a ballot box, signage, and be accessible to voters. The conservation district must provide polling officers at each poll site.

Polling officers must be independent third parties who are not supervisors, employees, interns or municipal officers of the conservation district holding the election. While there is no prohibition against a relative or spouse serving as a polling officer, it is recommended that polling officers not be immediate family members or live in the same household of such supervisors, employees, interns or municipal officers. Individuals hired temporarily to serve as polling officers are not considered employees for the purposes of the prohibition in WAC 135-110-440.

Before the polls open, the conservation district must review with polling officers the procedures for verifying voters, issuing ballots, issuing contested ballots, and tallying and recording election results.

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31 This is done using Checklist 1: Verification and Eligibility for the Office of Elected Supervisor
32 A sample template is in Appendix C – Sample Candidate Information Template
33 See form PF-D
34 WAC 135-110-150
35 A sample candidate recruitment policy can be found in Appendix F
36 Unless a district is utilizing WAC 135-110-515 (4)
37 Checklist 1: Verification and Eligibility for the Office of Elected Supervisor
38 WAC 135-110-440
During a mail-in election

There must be two polling officers present at all times when processing ballots during a mail-in election, including during tallying and counting ballots and recording election results. The election supervisor, if acting as a polling officer, may serve as one of the polling officers while ballots are being processed. The conservation district must provide at least two polling officers during ballot processing. All provisions in this Guide relating to polling officers, the election supervisor, and the processing, handling, and tallying of ballots shall apply during a mail-in election.

Before ballots are processed, the conservation district must review with polling officers the procedures for verifying voters and tallying and recording election results.

CDs must assure privacy in voting

The ballot choice made by a voter must not be seen by any other person during the act of voting or the placing of the ballot in the ballot box. Paper ballots must be placed into ballot boxes. Electronic ballots must assure at least the same level of security and privacy as provided by paper balloting.

After the polls close

The election supervisor, must receive from polling officers the following:
- All poll list pages;
- All ballots;
- A completed Checklist 2: Ballot Results for each polling site, and for each type of election held (poll-site or mail-in); and
- All working papers and notes made by polling officers.

When polling officers have transferred all properly completed forms and documents, and all ballots, to the election supervisor, the polling officers may be excused from their official duty.

Election supervisor duties

Before an election, the election supervisor should
- Confirm that the information in the election resolution has been provided to the Commission by the candidate filing deadline by submitting the EF1.
- Confirm due notice requirements have been satisfied.
- Confirm two polling officers will be present at each poll site. One polling officer and the election supervisor may substitute for the two polling officer requirement at one poll site.
- Prepare polling officers to perform the tasks required of them by reviewing these procedures, the poll list form, the ballot results form, and contested balloting, and confirm all required resources are available at each polling place.
- Provide ballots and information (instructions, deadlines, etc.) to voters upon request.

Immediately after the candidate filing deadline, the election supervisor should
- Verify the eligibility of each candidate to appear on the ballot and serve as a conservation district supervisor.

The election supervisor may assist polling officers, but may not count ballots, unless the election supervisor is serving as a polling officer.

One or more conservation district supervisors, conservation district employees, Commission representatives, or members of the public may observe the handling of ballots and the counting of votes, but may not interfere or disrupt the proceedings in any way.

During a mail-in election and / or for requested ballots
- The election supervisor receives and safeguards mail-in or ballots returned by voters.
- The election supervisor performs all the tasks as for a poll-site election, and determines if ballots are cast by qualified district electors.
- The election supervisor does not count ballots unless the election supervisor is serving as a polling officer. Mail-in and ballots returned by mail or by hand are to be delivered to the election supervisor.
- The election supervisor determines if ballots votes are submitted by qualified district electors.
- As ballots are received from voters, the election supervisor may verify each ballot as eligible or disqualified based on the information provided on or in the outer envelope of the mail-in or returned ballot. Alternatively, the election supervisor may wait until all ballots are received, at which time the eligibility of each voter must be verified before outer envelopes are opened.
- When a voter cannot be verified as eligible to vote in

39 See Appendix A – Sample Ballot Request Instructions

40 Checklist 1: Verification and Eligibility for the Office of Elected Supervisor
this election from information provided on the outer envelope, the outer envelope should be opened. If, after opening the outer envelope, a voter still cannot be verified as eligible to vote in this election, the ballot must be counted as a disqualified ballot.

- The election supervisor may enlist the help of polling officers in verifying mail-in and returned ballots as eligible or disqualified.
- Polling officers must open and count each ballot that has been verified as having been cast by a qualified district elector.
- The inner envelope for each mail-in or returned ballot found to be cast by a person who is not a qualified district elector must not be opened. However, if it cannot otherwise be determined from an examination of the outer envelope or its contents whether the voter is a qualified district elector, the polling officers may open the inner envelope. If, after opening the inner envelope, a voter still cannot be verified as eligible to vote in the election, the ballot must be counted as a disqualified ballot.

Polling officer duties

Before an election, the polling officer should review the poll list form, and confirm these resources are available at each poll site:

- Sufficient ballots for the expected number of voters;
- A reasonable supply of provisional ballots (double-envelope system);
- A ballot box;
- Voting booth or other means of assuring votes can be cast privately;
- A list of registered voters (voter list);
- A map or description of the conservation district legal boundary;
- A copy of these procedures; and
- Poll list forms.

During a poll-site election, polling officers must monitor the voting place for compliance with these procedures, and also serve as guardians of all issued and unissued ballots. Polling officers verify voters and issue ballots. A polling officer must verify a voter is a qualified district elector before issuing a ballot to the voter and record that determination on the poll list. At least one polling officer must be present and in control of any ballot boxes at all times while the polls are open.

At a poll-site election, a provisional ballot must be issued if the voter’s eligibility to vote cannot be determined during polling. A voter whose eligibility cannot be determined may only vote on a provisional ballot. Provisional balloting should be explained to the voter by the polling officer. Polling officers use the poll list to track the identity and number of voters, to identify determinations made by polling officers as to voter eligibility, and to identify voters issued provisional ballots.

After the polls close, polling officers open the ballot box or boxes and count the votes cast for each candidate. If the election had more than one polling place, polling officers may transport uncounted ballots in the ballot boxes to a central location for counting. Ballots must remain in the custody of polling officers until counted. Polling officers count all votes cast. Ballots returned by mail or hand should be tallied separately from poll-site ballots.

All votes must be tallied, including eligible votes and disqualified votes. A vote on a provisional ballot where the voter is found to be ineligible to vote is to be counted as a disqualified vote. Written marks made on a ballot for a candidate shall be governed by Washington State state-wide standards. When verifying a voter who cast a provisional ballot, compare the name and address provided by the voter with the voter list obtained from the County Auditor or Secretary of State. The ballot count results are recorded. Poll officer’s surrender all poll list documents, all ballots, and all working notes and papers to the election supervisor.

During a mail-in election, polling officers receive each ballot from the election supervisor. Each ballot should be sealed inside an envelope. Only one ballot may be in an envelope. If more than one ballot is found inside a single envelope, all such ballots must be disqualified. A ballot in an unsealed inner envelope may be disqualified. Polling officers count votes and verify the ballot count in writing. All ballots must be tallied: eligible, and disqualified. There are no contested ballots in a mail-in election. Written marks made on a ballot for a candidate shall be governed by Washington State state-wide standards. Ballot counts are recorded.

If the conservation district holds a poll-site election and a mail-in election, polling officers must count and record ballots separately for each type of election and for each poll location.

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41 Checklist 2: Ballot Results
42 Please see “Voter Duties” on page 9 for details
43 An example dialogue can be found in Appendix G
44 WAC 434-261-086
45 on Checklist 2: Ballot Results
46 WAC 434-261-086
47 on Checklist 2: Ballot Results
This means a separate Checklist 2: Ballot Results must be completed for each type of election, and poll site location.

**Candidate duties**

Before an election, any person wishing to be a candidate must file candidate required information (PF-A) with the conservation district by the candidate filing deadline. It 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. Such information must not be provided within 300 feet of polls on Election Day. Every candidate must be eligible to be elected to, and hold the office of, conservation district supervisor on the day of the filing of candidate required information with the conservation district.

During a poll-site election, candidates may not seek to influence voters to vote for or against a specific candidate within 300 feet of ballot boxes. Candidates may observe an election while the polls are open but may not interfere with voters or polling officers. After the polls close, candidates may not disrupt or interfere with polling officers. Candidates may observe vote counting.

**Voter duties**

During a poll-site election, no voter may seek to influence any other voters within 300 feet of the ballot boxes. A voter may observe an election but may not interfere with voters or polling officers. A voter must sign in on a poll list and provide sufficient information for a polling officer to determine the individual’s eligibility to vote. Before receiving a ballot, the identity of a voter must be verified by a polling officer. Acceptable forms of voter identification include:

- Valid Washington State driver’s license or Valid Washington State identification card; or
- Any other identification allowed for registering to vote by the Auditor of the County where the conservation district is located.

A voter who cannot be confirmed at the polling place as eligible to vote may vote, but only on a provisional ballot issued by a polling officer. After the polls close, voters and other citizens may not disrupt or interfere with polling officers.

**Non-standard election outcomes**

A write-in candidate may be elected if no person files. The write-in candidate, deemed the unofficial winner, must submit required candidate required information to the conservation district within 28 days of the election, and within that 28 days, the election supervisor must verify the eligibility of the unofficial winner to be elected and to serve.

No eligible candidate elected. When no eligible candidate is elected, the position is deemed vacant and the conservation district may appoint an eligible successor following the official announcement by the conservation commission.

**Replacement of elected supervisors**

The conservation district must consult with the Commission before filling a vacancy in an elected supervisor position. Any appointee to a vacant elected supervisor position must be eligible to serve under WAC 135-110-910. Therefore, depending on the current make-up of the board of supervisors, an appointee to a vacant elected supervisor position may be required to be a landowner or farm operator at the time of appointment. Districts must make this determination before filling the elected position.

Districts should adopt a policy for mid-term replacement of elected supervisors. 51 By using form AF2 - Mid-Term Elected Position Appointment Verifications of Qualifications

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48 WAC 135-110-360
49 Checklist 1: Verification and Eligibility for the Office of Elected Supervisor
50 WAC 135-110-740
51 By using form AF2 - Mid-Term Elected Position Appointment Verifications of Qualifications
52 A sample policy is provided in Appendix E: Filling Mid-Term Elected Positions
Information required

Only an application form provided by the Commission on its web site may be used to apply for the position of appointed supervisor. The application must be filled out in its entirety in order for the applicant to be considered for appointment. Letters of recommendation, resumes, and other items do not need to be included with the application. Late applications and associated documents cannot be considered. The Commission will not consider applications submitted by someone other than the applicant.

Timelines and deadlines

Conservation districts must provide proof to the Commission that it has complied with the requirement to notify the community of the opportunity to apply for an appointed conservation district supervisor position. Proof must be documented.

For appointment to a full term of office, applications and supporting materials must be received by the Commission no later than March 31. If an incumbent holding the office of appointed conservation district supervisor wishes to be reappointed, the incumbent must reapply for appointment. This clearly identifies to the Commission the wishes of the incumbent, and allows the Commission to verify the eligibility of the incumbent to continue his or her service.

For appointment to a partial or mid-term term of office, in consultation with the Commission, the conservation district will establish a deadline for applications and publicize that date for at least four weeks.

Qualifications

An applicant for the position of appointed supervisor of a conservation district must be a registered voter in Washington State.

Applicants may be required to be landowners or operators of a farm, depending on the current composition of the conservation district board of supervisors. The Commission may examine the makeup of the conservation district board, including the applicants’ location and the balance of landowners and farm operations on the board in its decision.

The Commission will vet each applicant with the Department of Ecology and Department of Agriculture. Applicants with prior or pending enforcement action against them may be ineligible to serve.

Applicants are encouraged to attend conservation district board meetings before making application for an appointed position on a board.

Conservation Commission duties

The Commission must notify each conservation district of upcoming vacancies in the position of appointed conservation district supervisor by October 1 of the year prior to the terms expiration. The Commission must notify each appointed supervisor whose term is expiring by January 15 of the year in which the term expires.

The Commission must provide a list of prospective applicants to the conservation district prior to the Conservation Commission making an appointment.

The Commission may supplement at its cost any conservation district notice or advertising for applicants for appointed supervisor.

In the event no applications are submitted from qualified applicants for a conservation district, the Commission may seek qualified applicants from the community served by the conservation district. The Commission may contact each district which received no applications and offer an option to re-advertise the open appointed position for a four week period. If the district declines this option, the Commission will seek qualified applicants itself. Applications received as a result of the second round of advertising will be processed as soon as possible by the Commission.

Full-term appointments

Full-term appointments will be made annually at the regular Commission meeting to be held the third Thursday in May of each year. The term of office will be three years. The term of office for a full-term appointment will expire on the third Thursday of May three years following the appointment. Prior to the May meeting of the Commission Board, the Commission will evaluate all applications received by March 31 in the year the position is open for appointment.

The Commission will evaluate the skills and qualifications of all applicants before making a selection.

53 AF1 – Conservation District Appointed Supervisor Application

54 on EF2
Appointment

applicants for the position of appointed supervisor. A Commission representative will contact the conservation district board chair, vice-chair, and district manager from the affected conservation district prior to the Commission making the appointment.

The Commission will notify all applicants, including those not appointed, of the appointments made at its May meeting. The Commission must notify each conservation district of the appointments made following the May meeting.

Mid-term appointments

The term of office will be until the end of the original full-term. To assure continuity of district operations and effectiveness in administering the authorized conservation program of the conservation district, the Commission may act on an application for mid-term appointment at any time, as determined solely by the Commission.

The Commission will evaluate the skills and qualifications of all applicants for the position of appointed supervisor. A Commission representative will contact a conservation district supervisor from the affected conservation district prior to the Commission making the appointment. The Commission will notify all applicants, including those not appointed, of the mid-term appointments made. The Commission will notify each conservation district of the mid-term appointments made.

Conservation district appointment duties

Conservation districts must provide due notice to citizens of the opportunity to apply for appointment to a full term of office as a conservation district supervisor. Notices should be published at least four weeks before the application deadline. Copies of published notices shall be retained at the district for at least one year, and may be inspected at any time during that year by the Commission. Notices for elections and appointments may be combined.

Appointment notices to the public must include at least the following information:

- There is an upcoming vacant or unexpired appointed supervisor position.
- An applicant must be a registered voter in the state of Washington.
- Applicants may be required to be landowners or operators of a farm, depending on the current composition of the conservation district board of supervisors.
- A conservation district supervisor sets policy and direction for the conservation district.
- A conservation district supervisor is a public official who serves without compensation.
- Application forms may be obtained from the Commission website.
- The deadline (March 31st for full terms, and as determined with the Commission for mid-terms) to submit applications.

Mid-term appointments

Deadlines for applications vary. For full-term appointments, the deadline for applications and associated materials to be received by the Commission is March 31. For partial or mid-term appointments, the conservation district must consult with the Commission to determine an appropriate due date, and then publish that date.

CD procedures for a full-term appointment

- The application period is January 1 through March 31 in the year the appointment is to occur.
- The conservation district must notify the newly appointed supervisor of the date and time of the next meeting of its board of supervisors.

CD procedures for mid-term appointments

- The conservation district must consult with the Commission in determining an appropriate application period and deadline for applications.
- The application period must be at least four weeks (28 calendar days) in duration.
- The conservation district must select a reasonable deadline for applications to be received by the Commission, preferably at least four weeks before the regular Commission meeting at which the conservation district wishes the appointment to be made.
- A conservation district may extend the deadline for applications upon consultation with, and agreement by, the Commission. Due notice of the extended deadline must be provided by the conservation district.
- The conservation district must notify a newly appointed supervisor of the date and time of the next meeting of its board of supervisors.
Dear registered voter:

Thank you for participating in our election by requesting a ballot by mail for the [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District Board of Supervisor Election, which will be held on [INSERT DATE].

**TYPES OF CANDIDATES:**
Per WAC 134-110-350, there are two types of candidates:
1. A declared candidate is a qualified district elector who has submitted candidate required information form to the conservation district by the filing deadline. The name of this type of candidate will appear on the ballot.
2. A write-in candidate is a person who has not submitted candidate required information to the conservation district by the filing deadline.

**CANDIDATES IN THIS ELECTION:**
[INSERT DESCRIPTION OF CANDIDATES IN THIS ELECTION].

**BALLOT SYSTEM:**
Our ballot system is a two-envelope system to ensure the confidentiality of your vote. Complete the ballot and the attest statement and voter information form. Place only your completed ballot inside the smaller secrecy envelope being sure there are no identifying markings on the outside of the envelope then seal the envelope. If there is more than one ballot in the secrecy envelope or the secrecy envelope is not sealed, the ballot may be disqualified.

Place the sealed secrecy envelope and the attest statement and voter information form into the larger envelope, which has our address preprinted in the addressee area of the envelope. The information on the attest statement and information form will be used to verify whether or not you are a registered Washington state voter living in [INSERT COUNTY NAME] County. If we cannot find your name on the voter rolls because you have used a nickname or you have moved and not updated your registration with the County, your ballot will be contested. Seal the outer envelope and write your name and return address in the upper left corner of the envelope.

Your mail-in ballot must be received by the Conservation District by mail or in person no later than [INSERT TIME] on [INSERT DATE] (WAC 135-110-110). Ballots post marked earlier, but received in the mail after [INSERT TIME] on [INSERT DATE] cannot be counted.

Conservation district election procedures are set by the Washington State Conservation Commission and are governed under WAC Chapter 135-110. If you have any further questions about the election procedures, please call the conservation district.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME]
Election Supervisor

[Page 1 of 3]
1. Complete the ballot.

2. Place your completed ballot into the smaller secrecy envelope with no identifying marks.

3. Seal the secrecy envelope with only your ballot in it.

4. Complete the attest statement and voter information form.

5. Place the sealed secrecy envelope and the attest statement and voter information form into the larger white envelope with the [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District address in the addressee area of the envelope.

6. Write your name and address in the upper left hand corner of the larger white envelope.

7. Bring or mail the larger white envelope to the [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District office at [INSERT ADDRESS]. It must be received no later than [INSERT TIME] on [INSERT DATE].

[Page 2 of 3]
[INSERT DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District

Attest Statement and Voter Eligibility Information

I swear under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that I reasonably believe that I am a registered voter of Washington state and that I reside within the [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District boundaries.

Signature

Voter Eligibility Information:

Print your name clearly as it appears on your County voter registration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Initial</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Print your address as it appears on your County voter registration:

Physical home address:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House number</th>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Unit #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

City

Mailing address (if different from physical home address):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PO Box Number or House Number</th>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Unit #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

City

Phone Number

We will only call you if we are having difficulty verifying that you are a registered Washington state voter living in ___________________ County.

We may not be able to count your vote if

● You are not a registered Washington state voter living in [INSERT COUNTY NAME] County. (This will be verified by checking the [INSERT COUNTY NAME] County Auditor’s voter rolls.)

● We cannot read your name and address on this form.

● Anything except the ballot is inside the secrecy envelope.

● The secrecy envelope is not sealed.

● The name or address on this form is different from the one on the [INSERT COUNTY NAME] County Auditor’s voter rolls.
[INSERT DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District

[INSERT ADDRESS, PHONE, EMAIL]

Board of Supervisor Election Ballot Request

I, ____________________________, a registered voter of [INSERT COUNTY NAME] (printed first name, middle initial, last name as it appears on your voter registration card)

County, WA living at ________________________________________________________________

number street City

request □ in person, □ in writing, □ by telephone, or □ electronically, by □ the voter, □ a family member, or □ a registered domestic partner, that a ballot for the Conservation District Board of Supervisors election be mailed to me at the following address:

Mailing address (If the same as above, please write same.):

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Signature [check here if the request was □ by telephone or □ electronically]

Day Time Phone Number: ________________________________

Email (optional) _________________________________________

Ballot requests made in person, by phone or by email must be received by the [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District no later than [INSERT TIME] on [INSERT DATE] to be completed.

Completed ballots may be mailed or dropped off, but must be received by [INSERT TIME], [INSERT DATE] at [INSERT LOCATION OR ADDRESS].

If you have any questions, call our office at [INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER].
Appendix B: Due Notice Compliance Notice Examples

Please refer to WAC 135-110-110, WAC 135-110-210, and WAC 135-110-220 for specific requirements about minimum content in notices published for elections and appointments.

We recommend providing notices to the potential candidates long before the election, announcing vacancies and seeking candidates.

Sample notice of the adopted election resolution that meets minimum requirements for a poll-site election:

A poll-site election for a board seat on the Teton Conservation District will be held on [month] [day], [year] at [address] location. Polls will open at [time] and close at [time]. Registered voters who reside within the Conservation District boundary are eligible to vote. The last day and time that an eligible voter can request a ballot from the District is [DATE AND TIME (month/day/year/time)]. Ballots can be requested from [NAME OF DISTRICT / STAFF PERSON, LOCATION, PHONE NUMBER, ETC.]. If a voter is returning a ballot by mail, the voter must account for the time it will take for the ballot to be returned to the district by mail. Ballots returned by mail must be post-marked no later than Election Day, [DATE (month/day/year)]. Ballots returned by other means must be returned to [PHYSICAL ADDRESS OF ELECTION] no later than [TIME] on Election Day, [DATE (month/day/year)]. Candidates must registered voters residing in the conservation district. [IF APPLICABLE, INCLUDE THIS SENTENCE, OTHERWISE DELETE IT: Candidates are required to be landowners or operators of a farm, based on the current composition of the District board of supervisors.] The filing deadline for candidates to file their candidate required information is [DATE AND TIME (month/day/year/time)]. Interested candidates must file their candidate required information at the following location [ADDRESS], no later than [TIME]. Candidate required information will be accepted at that location by [CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY] in-person delivery, by mail (postmarked no later than [DATE], or by email to [INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS]. Elections procedures are available at the district office. Please contact the District office at [phone] or at the District office at [address] if you have any questions.

Sample notice of the adopted election resolution that meets minimum requirements for a mail-in only election:

A mail-in only election for a board seat on the Teton Conservation District will be held on [month] [day], [year] at [address] location. Registered voters who reside within the Conservation District boundary are eligible to vote. The last day and time that an eligible voter can request a ballot from the District is [DATE AND TIME (month/day/year/time)]. Ballots can be requested from [NAME OF DISTRICT / STAFF PERSON, LOCATION, PHONE NUMBER, ETC.]. The voter must account for the time it will take for the ballot to be returned to the district by mail. Ballots returned by mail must be post-marked no later than Election Day, [DATE (month/day/year)]. Ballots returned by other means must be returned to [PHYSICAL ADDRESS OF ELECTION] no later than [TIME] on Election Day, [DATE (month/day/year)]. Candidates must registered voters residing in the conservation district. [IF APPLICABLE, INCLUDE THIS SENTENCE, OTHERWISE DELETE IT: Candidates are required to be landowners or operators of a farm, based on the current composition of the District board of supervisors.] The filing deadline for candidates to file their candidate required information is [DATE AND TIME (month/day/year/time)]. Interested candidates must file their candidate required information at the following location [ADDRESS], no later than [TIME]. Candidate required information will be accepted at that location by [CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY] in-person delivery, by mail (postmarked no later than [DATE], or by email to [INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS]. Elections procedures are available at the district office. Please contact the District office at [phone] or at the District office at [address] if you have any questions.

Sample appointment announcement that meets minimum requirements for a full-term appointment:
A board seat on the Teton Conservation District is available for appointment by the Washington State Conservation Commission. Conservation district board supervisors are public officials who serve without compensation and set policy and direction for the conservation district. An applicant must be a registered voter in Washington State, and may be required to own land or operate a farm. Applicants for appointed positions do not have to live within the district to apply. For more information, please contact the Teton Conservation District or read the Guide to Appointment for Conservation District Applicants which can be found on the Conservation Commission website. To apply, use this direct link or please visit the Conservation Commission website. Applications and supporting materials must be received by the Commission no later than March 31, [year].

Sample appointment announcement that meets minimum requirements for a mid-term appointment:

A board seat on the Teton Conservation District is available for appointment by the Washington State Conservation Commission. Conservation district board supervisors are public officials who serve without compensation and set policy and direction for the conservation district. An applicant must be a registered voter in Washington State, and may be required to own land or operate a farm. Applicants for appointed positions do not have to live within the district to apply. For more information, please contact the Teton Conservation District or read the Guide to Appointment for Conservation District Applicants which can be found on the Conservation Commission website. To apply, use this direct link or please visit the Conservation Commission website. Applications and supporting materials must be received by the Commission no later than [INSERT DATE].
Appendix C: Sample Candidate Optional Information Template

Background

A district may publish candidate optional information (a candidate statement). If a district chooses to publish information about candidates, it must provide equal opportunity for publication and equivalent space to each candidate.

Districts who wish to allow candidates to publish candidate statements should consider a number of questions, including:

- How will the statement be published (web site only, posted at the district’s office, other forums)?
- How long will the statement be?
- What information is required in the statement (if any)?
- What information is prohibited in the statement (if any)?
- What happens if there are inaccurate, erroneous, or offensive statements or language in the statement?
- When must the statement be provided by the candidate to the district?
- Will the statement be provided with ballot requests and/or mailed to prospective voters?
- If a candidate wishes to rescind a submitted statement, will the district allow that?
- Who decides if the statement meets the parameters set by the district (i.e. it was submitted on time, it meets the length requirements, etc.)?
- Will the statement be edited by the District in any way?
- What procedure would the district use to approve the publication of a candidates’ statement?

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of 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 they are lawful and otherwise comply with the Revised Code of Washington, Washington Administrative Code, and Commission elections policies and procedures.

It is up to the District to modify the template below so that it meets the District's current policy:

Sample Candidate Optional Information Template:

Thank you for your interest in running for the office of elected supervisor of the [DISTRICT] Conservation District!

Prior to Election Day, we encourage you to take the opportunity to tell voters about who you are and how you are connected to the District and county. Please keep in mind though, that such information must not be provided within 300 feet of polls on Election Day.

There’s another chance to tell voters about yourself – that is when you provide candidate option information (a candidate statement). The candidate optional information is similar to your biography – it allows you to inform voters of your desire and qualification to be elected to the office of conservation district supervisor.

If all candidates participate by the filing deadline, and all candidate optional information complies with the District’s policy, the District will publish the candidate optional information as soon as practicable on the Districts' web page. In the event that one candidate provided optional information does not comply with this policy, no candidate optional information will be published by the District.

55 WAC 145-110-430
Your statement should be no more than 200 words. Statements must be typed. You may submit a photograph of yourself with your statement. Photos must be digital (JPEG or TIFF format), current (within 5 years), head and shoulders only portrait, light colored on plain background. Photos with scenery, flags, or other background settings will not be accepted. Color photos are preferred, black and white is acceptable. Judicial robes, law enforcement or military type uniforms are prohibited. No photo may reveal clothing or insignia suggesting that you hold a public office. Submitted photos become the property of the District.

The statement must be limited to information only about you. The District retains the right to eliminate information for space availability or content appropriateness, at the sole discretion of the District. Once submitted, the District has sole discretion to publish that information as it sees fit, provided that each candidate’s statement is treated equally. Inaccurate, erroneous, or offensive statements or language in the candidate statement, as determined by the District’s delegated Election Supervisor, will result in the non-publication of the candidate statement.

Things to think about when you write your candidate statement:

- Describe your current occupation/employer (suggested).
- Describe your position interest (suggested).
- Describe your education (suggested).
- Information about your family (optional).
- Include a photo of yourself (suggested).

Candidate statements must be returned in the proper format, as outlined above, no later than the candidate filing deadline of [DATE], to the District at [ADDRESS]. As determined by the District, the failure to properly submit the statement will result in the non-publication of the statement. Any issue a candidate has surrounding a candidate’s submitted statement must be made in writing [electronic or paper] to the District’s Election Supervisor. As the delegated agent of the District, the District’s Election Supervisor will resolve the issue as soon as practicable and inform the candidate of the decision in writing [electronic or paper].
WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the [DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District ("District") operates under the laws of the State of Washington applicable to conservation districts.

WHEREAS the District is governed by a five-member board, as set out in RCW Chapter 89.08 and WAC Section 135-110.

It is RESOLVED that a POLL SITE election for an open position on the District board of Supervisors will be held on [DATE] from [START TIME] until [END TIME] at the [PHYSICAL ADDRESS OF ELECTION].

The elected position whose term is expiring in May [YEAR] is currently held by [ELECTED SUPERVISOR NAME]. The appointed position whose term is expiring in May [YEAR] is currently held by [APPOINTED SUPERVISOR NAME].

Interested candidates must be registered voters who reside within the boundaries of the District. [IF APPLICABLE, INCLUDE THIS SENTENCE, OTHERWISE DELETE IT: Candidates are required to be landowners or operators of a farm, based on the current composition of the District board of supervisors.] The filing deadline for candidates to file their candidate required information is [DATE AND TIME (month/day/year)]. Interested candidates must file their candidate required information at the following location [ADDRESS], no later than [TIME]. Candidate required information will be accepted at that location by [CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY] in-person delivery, by mail (postmarked no later than [DATE], or by email to [INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS].

Eligible voters are registered voters who reside within the boundaries of the District. The last day and time that voters can request ballots from the District is [DATE AND TIME (month/day/year/time)]. Ballots can be requested from [NAME OF DISTRICT / STAFF PERSON, LOCATION, PHONE NUMBER, ETC.]. If a voter is returning a ballot by mail, the voter must account for the time it will take for the ballot to be returned to the district by mail. Ballots returned by mail must be post-marked no later than Election Day, [DATE (month/day/year)]. Ballots returned by other means must be returned to [PHYSICAL ADDRESS OF ELECTION] no later than [TIME] on Election Day, [DATE (month/day/year)].

The election supervisor will be [NAME].

A conservation district supervisor is a public official who serves without compensation and who sets policy and direction for the conservation district. The published election procedures can be viewed at the District office and are available from the Washington State Conservation Commission at [http://scc.wa.gov/].

Adopted at a regular board meeting of the District Board of Supervisors on [DATE].

________________________     ________________________
Chair Signature       Board member

________________________     ________________________
Board member       Board member

________________________
Board member
WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the [DISTRICT NAME] Conservation District ("District") operates under the laws of the State of Washington applicable to conservation districts.

WHEREAS the District is governed by a five-member board, as set out in RCW Chapter 89.08 and WAC Section 135-110.

It is RESOLVED that a **MAIL-IN** election for an open position on the District board of Supervisors will be held on [DATE (month/day/year)].

The elected position whose term is expiring in May [YEAR] is currently held by [ELECTED SUPERVISOR NAME]. The appointed position whose term is expiring in May [YEAR] is currently held by [APPOINTED SUPERVISOR NAME].

Interested candidates must be registered voters who reside within the boundaries of the District. [IF APPLICABLE, INCLUDE THIS SENTENCE, OTHERWISE DELETE IT:] Candidates are required to be landowners or operators of a farm, based on the current composition of the District board of supervisors.] The filing deadline for candidates to file their candidate required information is [DATE AND TIME (month/day/year/time)]. Interested candidates must file their candidate required information at the following location [ADDRESS], no later than [TIME]. Candidate required information will be accepted at that location by [CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY] in-person delivery, by mail (postmarked no later than [DATE], or by email to [INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS].

Eligible voters are registered voters who reside within the boundaries of the District. The last day and time that voters can request ballots from the District is [DATE AND TIME (month/day/year/time)]. Ballots can be requested from [NAME OF DISTRICT / STAFF PERSON, LOCATION, PHONE NUMBER, ETC.]. If a voter is returning a ballot by mail, the voter must account for the time it will take for the ballot to be returned to the district by mail. Ballots returned by mail must be post-marked no later than Election Day, [DATE (month/day/year)]. Ballots returned by other means must be returned to [PHYSICAL ADDRESS OF ELECTION] no later than [TIME] on Election Day, [DATE (month/day/year)].

The election supervisor will be [NAME].

A conservation district supervisor is a public official who serves without compensation and who sets policy and direction for the conservation district. The published election procedures can be viewed at the District office and are available from the Washington State Conservation Commission at [http://scc.wa.gov/](http://scc.wa.gov/).

Adopted at a regular board meeting of the District Board of Supervisors on [DATE].

________________________     ________________________
Chair Signature      Board member

________________________     ________________________
Board member      Board member

________________________
Board member
Appendix E: Filling Mid-Term Elected Positions

Purpose: To establish a policy outlining the process and procedures for filling mid-term elected position vacancies on the Conservation District Board of Supervisors (Board).

Policy: A vacancy in the office of elected conservation district supervisor is filled by the conservation district board of supervisors after consultation with the Conservation Commission, for the remainder of the unexpired term, subject to the verification of supervisor qualifications by the conservation district and notification to the Commission. Due notice to the affected community shall be required.

(1) The application process shall require, at a minimum, that the board of supervisors pass a resolution:
   a) Acknowledging that the office is vacant;
   b) The dates of the four-week period for applicants to apply; and
   c) Describing the minimum requirements of applicants.

(2) The resolution shall then be advertised to the public at least one week prior to the commencing of the four-week period, and in the same manner as the due notice of an election resolution.56

Procedure: Determining Candidate Skills, Qualifications and Requirements
The Board shall determine the skills and qualifications needed to fill the vacated position in such a way that meet current organizational needs and fills statutory requirements for board make-up, prior to advertising the opening. However, the following skills, qualifications, and expectations will be consistently required of any candidate seeking a board position:

a) Willingness and ability to work and communicate effectively with a team;
b) Willingness to fully participate in board discussions and decisions in open, public meetings;
c) Willingness and ability to be respectful of Staff and other Supervisors;
d) Functional knowledge of Conservation Districts;
e) Willingness and ability to meet all Supervisor requirements set forth in appropriate Board of Supervisors policies;
f) Willingness and ability to participate in various leadership roles, if needed, such as special committees or board officer position;
g) Willingness and ability to represent the District to other public entities and policymakers upon request of the board;
h) Willingness and ability to complete a Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission) orientation within 90 days of assuming office;
i) Willingness and ability to complete the Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Management training within 90 days of assuming office;
j) Having a basic working knowledge of email and internet; and,
k) Willing and able to serve the best interest of the citizens of the District and County, with the ability to put aside personal issues and grievances.

Any appointee to a vacant elected supervisor position must be eligible to serve.57 Depending on the current make-up of the board, an appointee may be required to be a landowner or farm operator at the time of the appointment. The District will make such determination before appointing a person to fill the vacant elected supervisor position by using Commission's form.58 At least two of the three elected conservation district supervisors on the board must be landowners or operators of a farm.

Candidate Recruitment

56 WAC 135-110-970; RCW 42.12.070.
57 WAC 135-110-910
58 AF2- Mid-Term Elected Position Appointment Verification of Qualifications
When an elected seat is vacated, the remaining board members, with input from staff, will determine skills and qualifications necessary to meet organization needs and fill statutory requirements. Once qualifications are determined by the Board, a candidate recruitment process will commence.

The Board will enact a proactive candidate recruitment plan, as follows:

- The Board will discuss viable candidates that stand out in our community as potential assets to the Board and our organization.
- The Board will decide if there are any candidates they would like to reach out to, and the Board will create an outreach plan for conducting these efforts.

District staff will enact a passive candidate recruitment plan, as follows:

- Prepare and issue an advertisement in the legal section of the local newspaper, physically post a notice at the District Office, electronically post via social media, and electronically post on the District’s website. The announcement on the website will include the requirements necessary to hold office, time to be served in vacant position, election information, basic duties, and instructions for submitting applications.

Board and staff can augment this advertising plan to include additional marketing outlets, as needed.

The District Manager will prepare an application form that requests the appropriate information for the Board of Supervisors' consideration of the candidates. Instructions for applying will be available on the District's website. Candidates must provide an application packet that includes:

- A completed application form
- A resume (no longer than two pages)
- A list of at least three community references (prefer organizations that have collaborative partnerships with the District).

Application packets must be submitted electronically to the District Office, to the attention of the District Manager by a deadline designated by the Board. Candidates submitting the required Application Packets materials by the deadline will be circulated to the Board and the District's assigned Commission Regional Manager. The decision as to which candidates will be interviewed will be determined by the Board, based on information contained in the application packet.

**Candidate Interviews**

The Vice Chair (or other board designee) will conduct the reference checks and input from Staff will be collected, disseminated, and reviewed by the Board, prior to candidate interviews. The Board will determine interview questions, with Staff input, and ensure that each applicant is asked the approved set of questions, prior to interviews.

Interviews with candidates must be held in an open public meeting. The Board will interview candidates at the next regularly scheduled board meeting following the application deadline, unless that period is less than two weeks. In such a case, a Special Board meeting may be requested by the Chair. The District Manager will notify applicants of the location, date and time of the candidate interviews.

The candidates' order of appearance will be determined by the date and time their application was received. The Board shall ask the pre-determined set of questions, which must be responded to by the candidate. Each applicant will be asked to answer the same set of questions. Follow up questions, based on responses, are permitted. An informal question and answer period of up to 10 minutes may be allowed upon agreement of a majority of the Board, in which the Board and Staff asks and receives answers to miscellaneous questions.

**Appointing a Candidate**

The Board will base their candidate selection decisions upon information contained in the application packet, the references, interviews, and other material gathered through public avenues, as necessary, to choose a representative of the District. Upon completion of the interviews, the Board may deliberate on the candidate(s). The meeting Chair shall poll the Board to
determine if they are prepared to vote. The selection of a candidate to fill the vacancy is made by a majority vote of the remaining Board Members. Voting will take place in the open meeting and outcomes recorded in the minutes. The Board may postpone an appointment decision until another date, if a majority vote is not received. In addition, the Board may decide by majority vote that none of the candidates meet the desired and/or required qualifications needed to balance the Board makeup and maximize benefit to district functions. In this case, the Board will designate a new application deadline in the future. Active and passive recruitment would occur again during the interim.

It is noted the Board may convene into Executive Session to discuss the qualifications of the candidates.\textsuperscript{59} However, all interviews, nominations, and votes taken by the Board must be held in open public session. The Board may not determine who to select or reach a consensus on a preferred candidate in Executive Session.

Once appointed, the new Board Member will assume their board responsibilities immediately. The term of the candidate selected to fill the vacancy will be in effect until the current term expires. The incumbent may choose to run for election at that time.

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{RCW 42.30.110(1)(h)}
Appendix F: Candidate Recruitment Policy

Conservation districts are free to set policies related to the recruitment of candidates for conservation district elected and appointed positions, provided those policies are not in violation of the Commission’s election and appointment policies and procedures. Below is an example of a policy that could be used related to the recruitment of candidates.

Conservation district staff and supervisors may recruit candidates to serve on the conservation district board in either an elected or appointed positions. Campaigning is not the same as recruiting candidates.

Conservation district staff may distribute informational materials related to their upcoming election, during the normal course of their work duties, provided they do not violate election policy and WAC 135-110-150.

Conservation district supervisors should seek opportunities to recruit candidates to serve on the conservation district board in either an elected or appointed positions, provided that they do not violate election policy and WAC 135-110-150.
At a poll-site election, a provisional ballot must be issued if the voter’s eligibility to vote cannot be determined during polling. A voter whose eligibility cannot be determined may only vote on a provisional ballot. Provisional balloting should be explained to the voter. Example dialog a polling officer could use is below:

*At this time, I cannot verify you are a qualified district elector eligible to vote in this election. For your vote to be counted, you must be a registered voter living inside the boundary of the conservation district.*

*Every vote is important, so if you wish to vote, I will issue you a provisional ballot so that you can vote. Election officials will determine your eligibility to vote after the polls are closed and count all ballots.*

*The provisional ballot is a package consisting of a ballot and two envelopes. After you mark the ballot, place it inside one envelope and seal that envelope. Do not make any identifying marks on that envelope. Place the sealed envelope inside the second envelope.*

*On the outside of the second envelope, print your name and address as used by the County Auditor for your voter registration record, then place the completed provisional ballot package in the ballot box.*
Checklist 1: Verification and Eligibility for the Office of Elected Supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Is the candidate a qualified district elector (registered voter living inside the conservation district).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Proceed to next center cell below ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>If this candidate is elected, will at least two of the three elected conservation district Supervisors be landowners or farm operators?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Proceed to next center cell below ▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Did the candidate submit the required candidate information by the filing deadline?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Proceed to next cell below ▼</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The candidate is eligible to serve and the candidate’s name must be pre-printed on the official ballot.

The candidate is eligible to serve, however this candidate will be a write-in candidate and his or her name will NOT be pre-printed on the official ballot.

Done!
Polling officer instructions: Following the closure of the polls, polling officers must tally valid votes cast. Please record a separate Checklist 2 for each polling location. Retain each Checklist 2 at the district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate name</th>
<th>Type of Candidate (choose one)</th>
<th>Votes counted by type of ballot cast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Declared</td>
<td>Write-In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eligible</td>
<td>Disqualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please record any discrepancies or disqualifications in detail in the box below.

We, the undersigned polling officers (and election supervisor, if the election supervisor also served as a polling officer), do attest by our signatures:

- No ballots were in the ballot box when the polls opened.
- The ballots and ballot box did not leave our control before ballots were counted.
- We counted all ballots cast by voters at this polling location.
- The ballot results above are a true accounting of the unofficial results of this election.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Polling officer name</th>
<th>Polling officer signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Election Supervisor name</th>
<th>Election Supervisor signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

60 Report total ballot counts for each candidate on EF2.
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 CDs 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 provide ballots to a pre-determined 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.

☐ If holding a mail-in (or remote) election, use the double-envelope voting system.

☐ Process mail-in and/or ballots returned by mail or by hand.

☐ Ensure the poll site location is available and otherwise functional as a poll site location. EF1

☐ Confirm that the following resources will be available at each poll site:

☐ Sufficient ballots for the expected number of voters;
☐ A reasonable supply of provisional ballots (double-envelope system);
☐ A ballot box;
☐ Voting booth or other means of assuring votes can be cast privately;
☐ A list of registered voters (voter list);
☐ A map or description of the CD legal boundary;
☐ A copy of the election Guide; and
☐ Poll list forms (PF-D)
☐ Checklist 2 - Ballot Results.

☐ Decide whether or not to declare an emergency when adverse conditions may negatively affect the health or safety of voters or the timely return of ballots.

☐ Before the polls open, review with the polling officers the procedures for verifying voters, issuing ballots, issuing contested ballots, and tallying and recording election results.

☐ Submit EF1 by the candidate filing deadline.

On Election Day

☐ Decide whether or not to declare an emergency when adverse conditions may negatively affect the health or safety of voters or the timely return of ballots.

☐ Assure that voters have privacy when voting.

☐ Have a copy of the election Guide on hand and available for public inspection.

☐ Each polling place must be open for at least four consecutive hours at a time convenient for voters.

☐ Polling places must have sufficient parking to accommodate the expected number of voters.

☐ Polling places must be accessible to those with disabilities and not create undue hardship for them.

☐ Ensure that candidate optional information is not be provided to voters within 300 feet of the poll site.

☐ Each poll site must have a ballot box, signage, and be accessible to voters.

☐ Each poll site must have at least one ballot box.

☐ Each poll site must be conspicuously identified to voters as the place to vote.

☐ Not post the names of candidates at the polls.

☐ Ensure there are at least two polling officers at each poll site (the election supervisor may substitute for one polling officer at one poll site).

☐ Control behavior that disrupts or interferes with the poll site election.

☐ Monitor the poll site for compliance with election procedures.

☐ Ensure that the polling officers verify a voter is a qualified CD elector before issuing a ballot to the voter and record that determination on the poll list. If a determination cannot be made, a provisional ballot must be issued.

☐ Ensure that at least one polling officer is present and in control of the ballot boxes at all times while the polls are open.
☐ Provide provisional ballots to individuals wishing to vote who cannot be verified as eligible to vote prior to the issuance of a ballot.

☐ Be able to show or describe the CD’s legal boundary.

☐ Ensure polling officers use the poll list to track the identity and number of voters, to identify determinations made by polling officers as to voter eligibility, and to identify voters issued provisional ballots.

☐ Ensure that paper ballots are placed into ballot boxes.

☐ Ensure polling officers close the polls at the published time, unless the polls are extended by a CD supervisor or the election supervisor.

After The Election

☐ Verify any write-in candidate is eligible to be elected. This is done using Checklist 1 - CD Verification of Candidate and Eligibility for the Office of Elected Supervisor.

☐ Direct polling officers to open the ballot box or boxes and count the votes cast for each candidate.

☐ Count all votes.

☐ Record all ballot count results on Checklist 2: Ballot Results for each polling site.

☐ Receive the following from the polling officers:
  ☐ All poll list pages (PF-C)
  ☐ All ballots
  ☐ All completed Checklist 2: Ballot Results reports
  ☐ All working papers and notes made by polling officers

☐ Receive from the polling officers an announcement of the unofficial results of the election, subject to certification by the Commission.

☐ Excuse polling officers.

☐ Transmit election data to the Commission as soon as possible, but no later than fourteen days after the election. EF2 – Election Report.

☐ Retain all original data.

☐ For those CDs with elections in January or early February, if an appointed position's term on the CD Board will expire this current election cycle, and the CD has not already advertised the vacancy with the Notice of the Adopted Election Resolution, advertise the vacant appointed position at least one month before March 31. AF-1, Appendix B: Due Notice Compliance Notice Examples.
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
   Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Ron Shultz, WSCC Policy Director

SUBJECT: Update on the Joint Committee on Elections

Summary:
The Joint Committee on Elections (JCE) continues to meet as directed by a Commission motion. The group continues on track to present to the Commission conservation district election change options by the Commission’s September meeting.

Requested Action (if action item):
No action. Information only.

Staff Contact:
Ron Shultz, WSCC Policy Director   (360) 790-5994   rshultz@scc.wa.gov

Background and Discussion:
First, as a reminder, the Joint Committee on Elections was formed at the direction of the Commission by a motion passed at the December 3, 2020 Commission meeting. The motion states:

   Motion by Commissioner Dorner for the Commission to create a joint committee with WACD to develop a list of recommendations for action on election reform. The committee should be formed and begin meeting in January 2021 and submit updates to the Commission and WACD board for their regular meetings with a final report and recommendations to the Commission in September 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Cochran. Motion carries.

JCE meetings are progressing well. The group has been using a “matrix” approach to evaluate various election options. This matrix was shared with the Commission at the May meeting. The matrix has proven to be a useful tool to work through the options and serve as a springboard for good discussions among the members about different options.
In addition, the JCE has heard from the operators of conservation district elections in other states. The group had the opportunity to visit with staff from Oregon and Michigan to learn about their election processes.

**Oregon Election Process**

In Oregon, district supervisors – or directors as they’re called in Oregon – are elected every two years on the general election ballot. Applications for the ballot are submitted to the state Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Program in the state Department of Agriculture. After the applications are evaluated for qualifications, they are sent to the appropriate county election official for placement on the ballot. After the election, and abstract of the results for the district positions are sent to SWCD program staff who confirm the election results. Oregon statute state the county is to pay for the election. Conservation districts are responsible for posting notice of positions up for election.

Due to concerns raised regarding existing requirements to serve as a director (for example a requirement to own at least 10 acres) the Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Commission is undertaking a review of the Oregon conservation district statute including a review of district director requirements.

**Michigan Election Process**

In Michigan, the election process is very similar to Washington, with the elections operated by the conservation districts. Most districts hold their election in conjunction with their annual meeting. This allows the district an opportunity to engage with the local community. According to the presenters at the JCE meeting, the Michigan district elections face many of the same issues we face in Washington: stagnant or inactive boards because of the “hold office until replaced” statutory language; lack of diversity on boards; low voter turnout.

The work of the Michigan conservation districts has also diversified over the years, with districts becoming more engaged in activities such as watershed planning and implementation, forestry, and invasive species issues. This has resulted in a shift on district boards away from agriculture to other interests.

**Next Steps for the JCE**

- The Committee will have a discussion with county auditors to gain their insight about elections and the election process.
- The Committee will continue to discuss and refine election options for consideration by conservation districts.
- Once options are developed, they will be sent to districts giving them an opportunity to comment. Timeline: We are targeting the week of July 19 to go out to districts allowing one month for review and comment.
- Comments from districts will be considered by the Committee to help inform the final recommendations to be presented to the Commission at the September meeting.

We will continue to coordinate the work of the JCE through a steering committee collaboration between WSCC and WACD. JCE Steering Committee Members:

- SCC: Carol Smith, Bill Eller, Ron Shultz, Laura Meyer, Stephanie Crouch (staff support)
- WACD: Tom Salzer, Jeanette Dorner, Ryan Baye
- Mark Craven (JCE Chair)

As a reminder, the JCE members include (NOTE: All members listed are voting members):

**Chair**: Mark Craven, Snohomish (supervisor)

**NE Region**
- Mike Mumford, Pend Oreille (supervisor)
- Dave Hedrick, Ferry (staff)

**SE Region**
- Audrey Ahmann, Walla Walla (staff)
- Larry Cochran, Palouse (supervisor)

**NC Region**
- Craig Nelson, Okanogan (staff)

**SC Region**
- Cindy Reed, North Yakima (supervisor)
- Shirley St. John, South Yakima (staff)

**NW Region**
- Joy Garitone, Kitsap (staff)
- Kirstin Haugen, King (supervisor)

**SW Region**
- Sue Marshall, Clark (supervisor)
- Mike Nordin, Pacific/Grays Harbor (staff)

**SCC**
- Bill Eller
- Ron Shultz
- Laura Meyer
- Stephanie Crouch (admin support)

**WACD**
- Ryan Baye
- Tom Salzer
- Jeanette Dorner

**Recommended Action and Options (if action item):**
No action at this time. Information only.

**Next Steps (if informational item):**
The JCE report and recommendations will be submitted to the Commission at the September meeting.
TO: Conservation Commission Members  
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Brian Cochrane, Habitat and Monitoring Coordinator

SUBJECT: Request to add 9.4 miles of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) eligible streams in Clallam and Palouse Conservation Districts

Summary:
The SCC CREP has received requests from Clallam and Palouse Conservation District staff to add approximately 1.5 miles of Cassalery Creek tributaries in eastern Clallam County and 7.9 miles of Steptoe and Stuart Creeks in southern Whitman County to the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) map of eligible streams. Staff recommends that the Conservation Commission approve their request. A map of proposed segments is provided at Exhibit A.

Requested Action (if action item):
Approve designation of 9.4 miles of eligible stream segments for CREP in Clallam and Palouse CDs per maps at Exhibit A.

Staff Contact:
Brian Cochrane  
360-701-5749  
bcochrane@scc.wa.gov

Background and Discussion:
The CREP in Washington has designated stream segments so that participants and practices, primarily riparian forest buffers, are in places that achieve the goal of the program: to decrease some of the impacts of agriculture on listed species of anadromous salmon and steelhead. Other practices may be installed intributaries and hydrologically connected wetlands of the identified streams. SCC may identify up to 10,000 miles of stream for installation of riparian forest buffers; currently, 9,607 miles are eligible. A process for identifying new segments is described in the FSA:State agreement (Exhibit B). Clallam and Palouse CD staff have documentation (Exhibit C) from the local tribes, and WDFW staff that habitat is limiting and CREP enrollment of adjacent lands would be beneficial, in
accordance with the process. FSA County Committees have approved the proposed additions in Whitman and Clallam counties.

In Clallam CD, two landowners along tributaries to Cassalery Creek have expressed interest in CREP. Cassalery Creek is known to have cutthroat trout, winter steelhead and Coho salmon, however, lack of riparian habitat is a limiting factor for salmon in this creek. Adding the proposed stream segments will allow wider riparian forest buffers to be planted to replace the sparse shrubby habitat now dominated by invasive reed canary grass and Oregon blackberry.

In Palouse CD, recent work has removed fish barrier culverts, providing 4.8 miles of new habitat for summer steelhead in Steptoe Creek and 3.1 miles in Stuart Creek, a tributary. The landowner on lower Steptoe Creek has recently completed 12 acres of riparian buffer. More acres are anticipated upstream with four additional landowner projects due to the proposed stream additions.

**Recommended Action and Options (if action item):**

Approve designation of 9.4 miles of eligible stream segments for CREP in Clallam and Palouse CDs per maps at Exhibit A.
Exhibit A. Maps of proposed stream additions.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
Proposed Stream Addition
Clallam Conservation District

Legend
- Proposed Addition: tributary of Cassalery Creek
- CREP Eligible Streams
- Conservation District Boundary

Background layer: ESRI World Topographic Map
Prepared by: Brian Cochrane
6 April 2020

Washington State Conservation Commission provides this map for informational purposes only. Every effort to ensure this map is free of errors, but it should not be relied upon for any purpose other than general information. Washington State Conservation Commission provides this map without any warranty of any kind whatsoever, either express or implied, including but not limited to any implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose.
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
Proposed Stream Addition
Palouse Conservation District

Legend
- CREP Eligible Streams
- Proposed Addition: Steptoe and Stuart Creeks
- Conservation District Boundary

Washington State Conservation Commission provides this map for informational purposes only. Every effort to ensure this map is free of errors, but it should not be relied upon for any purpose other than general information.
Washington State Conservation Commission provides this map without any warranty of any kind whatsoever, either express or implied, including but not limited to any implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose.
Exhibit B. Process for adding stream miles.

**Designation of Eligible Stream Segments for CREP Eligibility**

**B Nominating Stream Segments for Approval**

The following actions must be taken to nominate a stream segment which is currently not approved.

Step 1: The Conservation District should consult with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) regional offices and each of the affected Tribes. Representatives from WDFW and the Tribes, along with other fisheries experts, can provide guidance on where a lack of riparian habitat is a limiting factor for salmon and steelhead. FSA and NRCS should be consulted also, particularly to confirm if there is agricultural land in the area.

Step 2: Stream segments not currently designated for CREP, where there is a salmonid presence, or a high potential for presence, can be identified for possible nomination for CREP. The intent of the Washington CREP is to address ESA salmonids listings, and potential salmonids listings, on agriculture. Stream designations should be limited to streams where a significant portion of the lands along the stream are agricultural lands that meet basic CRP eligibility criteria.

Step 3: Using the criteria in subparagraph A, the parties consulted in step 1 should identify those stream segments where riparian habitat is a significant limiting factor for salmonids.

Step 4: Develop a written justification for each nominated stream segment, identifying the criteria from subparagraph A used, those features of the current riparian habitats that are limiting for salmonids and the likelihood of enrollment.

Step 5: Obtain the concurrence of the designation from the FSA County Committee.

Step 6: Submit the designated stream segments, along with the justification, and an indication of the County Committee concurrence, to the Conservation Commission.

Step 7: The Washington CREP Coordinator will submit the nominations to the Conservation Commission and FSA State Committee for approval or disapproval. Because the CREP Agreement limits total eligible stream miles to 10,000 miles, nominations for additional stream segments will generally only be acted on once each year. Nominations must be submitted to the Conservation Commission no later than October 31, and approvals or disapprovals will be issued no later by December 31.

Step 8: Approved stream segments will be added to the GIS database by the Conservation Commission, with a copy provided to the FSA GIS Specialist for distribution to Service Center servers.
Exhibit C. Clallam and Palouse CD submission packages, including requests and justification, photos, concurrence letters from local tribes and WDFW, and photos of the area.
Cassalery Creek Tributary CREP Justification

**Date of Request:** March 13, 2020

**Location:** Sequim, WA
Clallam County
S7, T30N, R3W
WRIA 18

**Stream:** Tributary to Cassalery Creek
Proposed Added Length: 7,900 feet

**Technician:** Meghan Adamire, Clallam Conservation District

**RE:** Justification to enroll 7,900 feet of a tributary to Cassalery Creek as a CREP riparian forest buffer eligible stream.

**Claim**

A top goal within the Dungeness Watershed is to improve and enhance fish habitat. There are very few programs designed to help private landowners accomplish that goal other than CREP, which provides a great incentive to a landowner to restore and protect riparian stream habitat for salmon recovery.

This tributary to Cassalery Creek is dominated by agricultural land in the form of hay fields and pasture for livestock. The buffers are narrow, if any, between agricultural activities and this tributary, which provides many opportunities for installation of riparian forest buffers on these properties along this watercourse.

This tributary to Cassalery Creek is a Type F (fish bearing) stream. A recent barrier assessment performed by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) in December 2019 showed the culvert on Woodcock Road is 33% passable. According to WDFW’s SalmonScape map, cutthroat trout, winter steelhead and Coho salmon are all present in Cassalery Creek, which would mean they would have access to the upper reaches of the tributary proposed to add as a CREP eligible stream.

Lack of riparian habitat is a limiting factor for salmon in this tributary. The tributary is currently eligible for a narrow 15’ hedgerow, but would greatly benefit from a larger 50’ or greater riparian forest buffer, more appropriate to the stream size and salmonid presence in this waterway.
**Support**

The Department of Ecology does not list the tributary to Cassalery Creek on their 303d list; however, Cassalery Creek is listed as Category 5 for the following four parameters: bacteria, bioassessment, dissolved oxygen and turbidity. The tributary proposed to be added as CREP eligible, doesn’t have much of a vegetated buffer along it, and typically where there is a buffer it is comprised of deciduous trees and infested with Himalayan blackberry and reed canary grass. Removing invasive weeds, installing fences with a greater setback from the creek, and planting riparian buffers would likely help the health of the tributary, and therefore the benefit the health and water quality of Cassalery Creek.

There are two landowners along the tributary to Cassalery Creek that have expressed interest in CREP, Landowner willingness is present to support justification of adding this section as CREP eligible.

**Support From Local Agencies**

Hansi Hals, Natural Resources Director for the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, strongly supports wide riparian forest buffers along Cassalery Creek and its tributaries to improve conditions for salmonids (see attached email).

Danielle Zitomer, Habitat Biologist for WDFW, assessed the culvert on Woodcock Road and gave support for fish being able to access the tributary to Cassalery Creek through the culvert. She also noted important benefits to the waterway that installation of riparian buffers would provide (see attached email).
Cassalery Creek, Clallam County WA

Hansi Hals <hhals@jamestowntribe.org>  

Fri, Feb 28, 2020 at 11:43 AM

To: "Meghan Adamire (meghan.adamire@clallamcd.org)" <meghan.adamire@clallamcd.org>

Meghan,

Thank you for reaching out directly to Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. I understand you are interested in the Tribe’s assessment of Cassalery Creek and tributaries, in regards to salmonid presence, potential for presence; and current conditions of riparian vegetation in the reach from its headwaters to Woodcock Road. Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe is especially interested in Cassalery Creek resources; because it is so close to Jamestown. The S’Klallam have treaty protected rights in this area that rely on healthy habitat conditions.

Cassalery Creek has historically supported coho and chum salmon, steelhead, cutthroat and rainbow trout, and dolly varden (Elwha-Dungeness Watershed Plan, 2005). Cassalery Creek has been impacted by channel straightening and incision. A lack of riparian cover has been documented over time and is described as ‘poor’ in the Elwha-Dungeness Plan, 2005 due to low occurrence of conifers, and sections with zero canopy cover. Installation of a riparian forest cover would be a benefit to water temperature, water quality, erosion, habitat forming features and littoral input. These improved functions would translate directly to improved conditions for salmonids.

Jamestown Tribe strongly supports implementing riparian cover along Cassalery Creek from its headwaters to Woodcock Road. It is our position that the benefits listed above are best realized if the riparian buffer is 150’ or greater in width. Please let me know if you have any further questions for me. Thank you, 

Hansi Hals
Natural Resources Director
Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe
1033 Old Blyn Hwy
Sequim WA  98382
(360) 681-4601
Good morning,

Thank you for reaching out to me for consultation regarding the Cassalery Creek system, fish use, and riparian habitat.

On October 24th, 2019 my colleague Adam Brown and I performed a level B assessment of Culvert ID 80000958, located at the Woodcock road crossing of Cassalery Creek. The analysis of the data we collected has determined 33% possibility of this culvert in its current condition. This partial passage essentially means two things:

1) Fish habitat will be expanded and improved by the replacement of this culvert with an appropriately sized crossing; and

2) There is likely a significant number of anadromous fish presently accessing and relying on the section of this watercourse upstream of the crossing.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has mapped Cassalery Creek (including the reach upstream of the culvert) for usage by winter steelhead, coho, and coastal cutthroat trout. The findings of the level B culvert assessment support this species usage as well.

One of the habitat challenges for the section of Cassalery creek upstream of the Woodcock Road Culvert is the lack of an adequate functioning riparian buffer. Issues currently impacting salmonids in this reach range from incision, lack of channel complexity, lack of large woody material, and invasive species dominance, all of which can be improved by appropriate riparian plantings over the long term. Importantly, many significant benefits to water temperature, water quality, erosion, shading, littoral input and predator refuge can be realized relatively quickly with the installation of riparian buffers and plantings. These factors are vitally important components for salmon and steelhead habitat quality.

I unhesitatingly support installation a forested riparian buffer on the stretch of Cassalery Creek, spanning from the headwaters to Woodcock Road, for the benefit of salmonid populations and habitat. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any additional information or assistance I can provide.

Sincerely,

Danielle Zitomer
Habitat Biologist
WDFW Habitat Program
332 E 5th St #210
Port Angeles WA 98362
360-764-0866
danielle.zitomer@dfw.wa.gov
Photos of existing Cassalery Creek tributary habitat.
Request to Increase CREP Stream Miles on Steptoe Creek

History:

Steptoe Creek is a second order stream that drains into the Snake River 6 miles west of Clarkston on the Whitman County side. Originally there was about ~1.5 miles of CREP eligible stream on Steptoe due to a complete steelhead passage barrier with a perched culvert on Steptoe Canyon Road. 14 acres have been enrolled in the CREP program up to the bridge, so all the CREP eligible stream miles in Steptoe are currently under a CREP contract.

Steptoe Creek has document summer steelhead use and is an important stock that makes up the Asotin Creek summer steelhead population that is listed under the Endangered Species Act. With this designation improving riparian habitat and factors limiting steelhead production in Steptoe Creek is a priority listed in the Snake River Salmon Recovery Plan. Lack of riparian habitat, suitable resting and rearing pools and woody debris are listed as factors limiting steelhead production in Steptoe Creek.

The Palouse Conservation District in cooperation with the landowner and Whitman County Road Department submitted an RCO Salmon Grant #14-1914 Steptoe Creek Perched Culvert Design & Assessment, this resulted in RCO #15-1309 Steptoe Creek Perched Culvert Replacement grant, which removed the complete barrier with a full span bridge. This opened up 4.8 miles on the mainstem of Steptoe Creek and an additional 3.1 miles on Stuart Creek, which is a cold water, spring fed tributary to Steptoe. We are requesting to increase CREP eligible stream segments on the 4.8 miles of mainstem Steptoe and the 3.1 miles of Stuart Creek.

There are three landowners on mainstem Steptoe Creek that are interested in the CREP program and at least one landowner on Stuart Creek. Having the ability to offer them participation in the CREP program will go a long way in improving the riparian and water quality habitat in Steptoe Creek, especially since the first ~1.5 miles in already enrolled in the CREP program.
February 16, 2021

Washington State Conservation Commission
Brian Cochrane, Habitat and Monitoring Coordinator
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503

Mr. Cochrane and CREP Reviewers:

This letter is written to support the Palouse Conservation Districts efforts to increase the number of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) eligible miles on Steptoe Creek in Whitman County. Steptoe Creek is entirely within the Treaty Territory of the Nez Perce Tribe. It is our understanding that the intent of Washington State CREP is to address Endangered Species Act (ESA) salmonid listings, and potential listings, on agriculture and stream segments not currently designated where there is a salmonid presence, or a high potential for presence, can be identified for possible nomination into the program. Steptoe Creek summer steelhead are a part of the ESA-listed Asotin Creek population and having more riparian protection from the CREP program would benefit the restoration and protection of their habitat, which is a direct goal of the Nez Perce Tribe's (NPT) Department of Fisheries Resources Management (DFRM) – Watershed Division.

It is our understanding that in 2018 the Palouse Conservation District, Whitman County Road Department, and a private landowner worked in cooperation to replace a perched culvert on Steptoe Canyon Road and this project eliminated a complete barrier for adult and juvenile steelhead returning approximately 4.8 miles of mainstem Steptoe Creek and 3.2 miles of Stewart Creek for a total 7.9 miles above the project. This project is a step in the right direction and the Division supports a holistic ridgetop-to-ridgetop approach to watershed restoration. It is also our understanding that Palouse Conservation District staff is currently in communication with landowners upstream of the barrier removal project that are interested in enrolling in the CREP program. Having protection projects like CREP is vital for water quality and instream habitat for summer steelhead.

The NPT DFRM – Watershed Division fully supports increase the eligible CREP miles on Steptoe Creek in Whitman County.

Sincerely,

Emmit E. Taylor Jr., Watershed Division Director
February 22, 2021

Washington State Conservation Commission
Brian Cochrane, Habitat and Monitoring Coordinator
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503

Mr. Cochrane and Commission Members,

This letter of support is written to increase the length of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) eligible miles on the Steptoe Creek watershed in Whitman County. The Palouse Conservation District (PCD), Whitman County public works and a dedicated landowner have started a conservation effort to rehabilitate/enhance an entire watershed by first removing a complete fish passage barrier in 2018 allowing anadromous salmonids access to upstream spawning and rearing habitat. The PCD, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SRSRB), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the landowner have also implemented instream habitat restoration practices to increase both water quality and quantity, with more restoration planned to be implemented.

It is our understanding that there is another partial fish passage barrier located upstream between the extents of fish use as noted on the map but with plans to correct that partial barrier and more instream habitat restoration planned it is WDFW’s recommendation to extend the CREP eligible miles to approximately 4.8 miles of Steptoe creek and 3.2 miles on Stewart creek.

With this CREP boundary extension it will help both water quality and quantity for the ESA listed Steelhead that are present and will benefit the restoration and protection of their habitat which is vital for the recovery of the population.

With the eager and willing landowners interested in the CREP program WDFW fully supports the increase of CREP eligible miles on the Steptoe and Stewart Creeks in Southeast Whitman County.

Jeff Lawlor
Acting Regional Habitat Program Manager
New Bridge on Steptoe Creek replacing the Perched Culvert

Downstream view of Bridge Replacement Project with steelhead passage barrier removed.
After the barrier was removed, we implemented an instream project with RCO #18-202 Steptoe Creek Instream PALS Project just above the bridge.

Steptoe Creek Instream Habitat Rehabilitation

Project: RCO #18-2020

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<tr>
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Example of 5 different PALS structures above the bridge. Bridge would be in bottom left of above photo.
Proposal

We would like to increase the eligible stream miles for CREP on Steptoe Creek. The passage barrier has been removed and there is interested landowners who want to enroll in the CREP program. Steptoe Creek is an important creek for summer steelhead and we have provided letters of support from Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Nez Perce Tribe. The Natural Resource Conservation Service has documented there is agricultural lands adjacent to Steptoe Creek that have been used for cattle grazing and feeding operations.

It is our request to extend the CREP eligibility line up the mainstem of Steptoe Creek for 4.8 miles and an additional 3.1 miles up Stuart Creek.
TAB 2
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Shana Joy, District Operations & Regional Manager Coordinator

SUBJECT: District Operations and Regional Manager Report

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Report Summary:
Regional Managers offer this report of recent activities and support provided to conservation districts.

**Ongoing Service Areas to Conservation Districts**
- Partnering and Relationships Assistance
- Conservation Accountability & Performance Program (CAPP) Assistance
- New Supervisor and Staff Orientations and Professional Development
- Task Order Development
- Tracking Grant Spending and Vouchering
- Open Government Training
- Cultural Resources
- Project Development & CPDS
- Natural Resource Investments & Shellfish Programs
- Implementation Monitoring
- Long Range and Annual Planning Assistance
- Cross-pollination of Information, Templates, and Examples
- Records Retention and PRA
- CD Audits & Annual Financial Reporting
- Chehalis Basin
- Commission Meeting Planning
- District Digest Publication
- Human Resources (law/rule updates, hiring, performance evaluations, compensation, healthcare, issues)
- OPMA & Executive Sessions

**Conservation District Service, Recent Topics**
- COVID 19 Operations
- Finance Tracking & Management
- Hazard Mitigation Grant
- National Estuary Program Grant
• Fiscal Year/Biennium End
• Public Records Requests
• Supervisor Cost Share
• Property Management & Remodeling
• WADE 2021
• SCC & District Policy Development
• RCPP

• Bidding & Contracting
• Fire Recovery
• Equipment Rental
• Rates & Charges
• NRI Grant Guidelines Webinar
• Heritage Gardens Program
• NACD TA Grants
• Ag Lands Webinar

Issues Resolution in Progress

• Personnel management: issues, turn-over, capacity gaps, transitions
• Inter-district relationships and partnering
• Grant vouchering requirements
• District governance

Wildfire Recovery

Mike Baden and Allisa Carlson worked with SCC financial staff and several districts impacted by the 2020 wildfires to update and refine our wildfire recovery funding allocation procedures and FAQs. The new procedures are planned to be released on July 7th and be available on our website for reference as well.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Implementation

Mike Baden is leading implementation of a Hazard Mitigation Grant that the SCC is receiving from the Department of Emergency Management. Six trainings were completed in the spring:

- 4 - Home Ignition Zone Training (“Assessing Structure Ignition Potential from Wildfires - ASIP”) delivered by National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) trainers,
- 1 - Outreach Strategies for Community Wildfire Preparedness and Recovery co-organized and delivered by Val Vissia, Lincoln County CD, and Laura Meyer on our staff, and
- 1 - Post-Fire Risk Mitigation and Assessment training organized and delivered by the Okanogan Conservation District.

Three more ASIP trainings will be scheduled for this fall as well as an additional; “Outreach Strategies for Community Wildfire Preparedness and Recovery” training. In addition, 16 counties were written into the grant to receive a small amount of funds to conduct a handful of Home Ignition Zone Assessments upon successful completion of an ASIP training with the idea being to “practice what you learn”. This work will begin in the new fiscal year.
**COVID 19 Response**

The Regional Manager team continues to provide timely resources, information, FAQs, and sometimes just moral support to conservation districts as we all navigate the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic. The many resources, FAQs and other information on the SCC’s COVID Resources webpage was recently thoroughly reviewed and updated to streamline access for conservation districts to the most relevant and timely information. The team continues to monitor and review new information and guidance as it released from the Governor’s Office, CDC, and other sources.

**Partnerships & Partnering Assistance**

Most recently, the RM team has assisted with partnering or participated in partner and relationship building efforts with: individual conservation districts, WADE, Center for Technical Development, WACD, DNR, NRCS, Ecology, NASCA, WDFW, NACD, Washington Association of Land Trusts, State Auditor’s Office, RCO, Department of Veterans Affairs, WA Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network, Washington Conservation Society, and Arid Lands Initiative.

Shana Joy, Allisa Carlson, Jean Fike, Alicia McClendon, and Stephanie Crouch all provided logistical support, leadership or presentations for the WADE Conference 2021. The SCC’s GoTo Webinar platform was utilized again this year to host three of the concurrent tracks.

**Chehalis Basin**

Josh Giuntoli represents the Executive Director of the Commission as an ex-officio member of the Chehalis Basin Board (CBB). Since the last report, the Office of Chehalis Basin (OCB) received a budget of $70m for aquatic and flood work in the Chehalis Basin. The budget directs that $33.05m is provided for board-approved projects to protect and restore aquatic species habitat, $33.05m for board-approved projects to reduce flood damage, and $3.9m for operations of OCB and CBB. The Board has been presented options for how the $70m budget can be allocated, and at the June 3 board meeting, a final consensus of voting members was not reached. The Board will take up the budget again at their July 1 meeting.

Chehalis Basin CDs continue to engage in work associated with the Early Action Reaches within the Aquatic Species Restoration Program (ASRP) while continuing to provide valuable on-the-ground work in the Basin. CDs will be playing key roles in the next phase of ASRP as implementation team leads for geographic areas of the Basin. One CD person will serve as an ex-officio participant with the ASRP Steering Committee to represent ASRP project implementation, agriculture, and CDs. Key work continues to be landowner engagement with aspects of the Chehalis Basin Strategy. These private lands partners are critical to the success of flood and fish recovery in the Basin. With the construction window opening in July for instream work on public and private lands, partners are excited to see work to improve natural resource conditions. Josh continues to convene a monthly meeting of Chehalis Basin CDs and partners (lead entity, Office of Chehalis Basin, WDFW, and others) to provide direct updates with each other on work and activity in the Basin.
TO: Conservation Commission Members
   Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Sarah Groth, Fiscal Manager

SUBJECT: July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2020 Audit

Summary:
SCC just completed an audit with State Auditor Office for the period of July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2020. The audit focused on two areas; Shellfish Grant Program and Use of Purchase Cards.

In their report they note in the Shellfish Grant Program and Use of purchase Cards Commission operations complied, in all material respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, and provided adequate controls over safeguarding of public resources.

However SCC does need to make some improvements and adjustments to how we document meals with meetings and light refreshments provided at commission meetings and other meetings as an integral part of the meeting.

We are committed to adjusting our internal approval process and documentation of these expenditures to better align with the Office of Financial Management - State Administrative and Accounting Manual.

Staff Contact:
Sarah Groth, Fiscal Manager

Next Steps (if informational item):
SCC financial and administrative staff are in the process of implementing the recommendations from State Auditors Office and continuing to make improvements on our internal processes and documentation of such expenditures.
TO: Conservation Commission Members  
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director
FROM: Bill Eller, VSP Coordinator
SUBJECT: The Voluntary Stewardship Program update

Action Item  
Informational Item X

Background Summary:  
Staff provides an update on the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP).

Requested Action:  
None. Informational item only.

VSP Update:

**VSP FISCAL YEAR 21-23 BUDGET:** The Legislature funded the VSP for the fiscal year (FY) 21-23 biennium at $8,450,000 - slightly less than last biennia.

The Commission splits the VSP budget into four “buckets:”

1. Allocations to each of the 27 VSP counties for implementation
2. Funding for the state agencies to staff the TP and support the county work groups (WSDA, WDFW, Ecology)
3. Funding for WDFW’s efforts related to HRCD
4. Commission administration of VSP

**1. VSP Budget Allocation for Counties**  
For FY 2021-23, the Commission has allocated to the counties $6,345,000, or $235,000 per county for the entire biennia. These funds are to be used for VSP implementation. This is a 2% reduction from last biennia. Prior biennial funding for the VSP counties was as follows:

- FY 2015-17: $7,290,000 - $270,000 per county for planning
FY 2017-19: $5,940,000 - $220,000 per county for planning
FY 2019-21: $6,480,000 - $240,000 per county for implementation

Funding for the counties is designed to account for 1.0 FTE at each of the 27 VSP Counties, whose duties include:

- Staffing the county VSP watershed work group
- Conducting outreach & education
- Monitoring
- Recording & processing data
- 2 year & 5 year reporting
- Seeking project funding
- Ensuring statutory and Commission contract compliance

For information on specific funding decisions of a particular VSP county, please contact that county directly. County VSP contacts can be found on the Commission’s VSP county directory.

2. VSP Budget Allocation for Agencies
Each agency that participates on the VSP TP (WDFW, WSDA, and ECY) receives funding to staff the TP and to otherwise assist each VSP county with implementation. For FY 2021-23, each agency will receive $190,000 for the entire biennia. This is a 5% reduction from last biennia. Last biennia (FY 2019-21), each agency received $200,000.

3. Funding for WDFW’s efforts related to HRCD
WDFW, in addition to the funds it receives for TP participation, also receives funding for its High Resolution Change Detection (HRCD) program. HRCD serves a portion of the 27 VSP counties, assisting them with their monitoring needs. The Commission has allocated $417,573 to WDFW for HRCD in the FY 2021-23 biennia. This is a 27% reduction from last biennia. Last biennia (FY 2019-21), WDFW received $575,000 for HRCD.

4. Commission Administration of the VSP
This year, Commission staff recalibrated the VSP budget in all areas (as reflected above), and in particular in relation to Commission administration of VSP, in order to better account for the actual costs of the program. As a result, the Commission has allocated $1,117,427 for its VSP administration for the FY 21-23 biennia. This is an increase of 40% from last biennia. Last biennia (FY 2019-21), the Commission allocated $801,000 for VSP administration, but that did not include certain costs, including:

- Hiring a 1.0 FTE – natural resource scientist
- Cost of creation & maintenance of 5YR report template & database
- SCC staff goods & services, travel & meeting costs
In addition, it is anticipated that the VSP FY 21-23 SCC work plan (as described below), will result in increased administrative costs, and the FY 21-23 allocation reflects those increased costs (which include increased travel from the 2 VSP FTEs & increased costs associated with increased work sessions & meetings (joint TP/SAC, quarterly monitoring forums, 5YR report stakeholder feedback & regional VSP meetings)).

VSP COUNTY-COMMISSION CONTRACTS FOR FY 21-23
The Commission uses a contract with each of the 27 VSP counties to ensure VSP implementation through contract deliverables.

The Commission sent to each person listed at the responsible individual in last year’s FY 19-21 county-Commission VSP contract the FY 21-23 contract and cover letter on May 27, 2021. The contract and cover letter were sent by regular mail and by email. The contract and cover letter by email to those technical service provided that the Commission is aware of that implement VSP on behalf of the county.

2 YEAR STATUS REPORTS – DUE AUGUST 31, 2021
Within 60 days of the end of each biennium (August 31), each VSP county is required to “…[P]rovide a written report of the status of plans & accomplishments to the county & to the Commission.” The 2 Year Status report is different from the 5 Year Review and Evaluation Report in a number of ways, but perhaps the most important difference is that the 2 Year Status report is not reviewed and evaluated by the TP, and therefore cannot trigger a county failing out of VSP. The Commission anticipates receiving those reports in August.

5 YEAR REVIEW AND EVALUATION REPORTS
Every five years from the date each VSP county received VSP funding, each county must submit a 5 year report (5YR report) to the county and the Commission. The 5YR report is reviewed and evaluated by the Technical Panel, and the Commission’s Executive Director must consult with the VSP Statewide Advisory Committee in order to determine if she agrees with the assertion of the county in the report that they are meeting their VSP work plan goals and benchmarks. If a county isn’t meeting their goals and benchmarks, they could fail out of VSP.

To date, for this first round of 5YR reports, the Commission has held public meetings on the following county reports (and our Executive Director has approved them all): Kittitas, Mason, Garfield, Asotin, Grant, San Juan, Cowlitz, Pacific, Okanogan, and Benton.

Public meetings and decisions to be held from June through September must still be held or made on the following: Skagit, Whitman, Columbia, Yakima, Douglas, Pend Oreille, Franklin, Walla Walla, Stevens, Ferry, Grays Harbor, Lincoln, Lewis, Spokane, and Adams.

The Commission will conduct an “after-action” assessment of the 5YR report template and database with VSP stakeholders this fall, and has set a first stakeholder meeting for September 29, 2021, at the Hal Holmes Community Center in Ellensburg, Washington (or by webinar attendance).
The Commission currently conducts the following VSP administrative activities, and anticipates continuing to maintain these activities in FY 2123. The activities include:

- Establishing VSP policies and procedures
- Administering funding
- Program review and evaluation
- Review and evaluate 5YR reports (through September, 2021)
- Conducting outreach and education
- Monthly joint VSP TP/SAC meetings
- Author a monthly VSP newsletter
- Maintain multiple VSP web pages
- Collaborate with, train, and support VSP stakeholders, including county work groups

For FY 2021-23, the Commission has established a VSP Work Plan, which includes new activities or changes to current activities that were informed by input received by VSP stakeholders, including the TP, SAC, counties, county work groups, technical service providers, and others. Those include:

- More robust joint TP/SAC meetings
  - Around the state - not just in Lacey
  - Nearby and invited county in-person attendance
  - Dedicated time for county TSP and county work groups to work on 5YR reports and other issues
- Stakeholder listening sessions on 5YR report template and database – “after-action” review
- Quarterly monitoring forums around the state, beginning in October 2021
- VSP regional meetings

The effect of the FY 2021-23 SCC VSP Work Plan is that it is anticipated that the Commission will incur more costs, thereby driving the budget increase for VSP administration by 40% more. Those increases costs are summarized below:

- Additional 1.0 FTE – natural resource scientist & percentages of other support employees working on VSP
- Goods & services for all SCC employees working on VSP now accounted for in the VSP budget
- 5YR report database maintenance & changes
- Travel for the 2 VSP FTEs
- Increased work sessions & meetings (joint TP/SAC, quarterly monitoring forums, 5YR report stakeholder feedback meetings & regional VSP meetings)

Staff Contact:
Bill Eller, VSP Coordinator, 509-385-7512, beller@scc.wa.gov
CTD Work Accomplishments (July 2020 to June 2021)

For previous accomplishments and task completion, please review previous commission packet updates.

Explore more @ www.wactd.org

FY21 Overview: The FY21 year was a very productive time for the CTD. We continued to provide a plethora of virtual resources and training for Distract staff to accommodate the remote workplace setting and introduced a number of community connection forums for planners including cover crop, dairy, farm, and riparian planners. We also coordinated a few major virtual training events with NRCS including Cultural Resources and Environmental Permitting on Work Lands. These events highlighted the value and success of virtual events in accommodating travel, time, and learning. We once again hosted the WADE conference virtually and the CTD conducted all of the coordination for the three-day event with great success. With funding collaboration from WADE and WSCC we also brought in special training events on Facilitation, Virtual Presentation, and Managing Multiple Projects, Programs, and Tasks. Additionally, we were able to provide $5000 in training scholarships for both in-person and virtual trainings, to support staff through a challenging, but opportunistic time. Lastly, we continued to provide direct professional support to Districts across the State with our database, ask an expert, mentorship, and planner resource information. Plus so much more!

Thank you for your continued input and support in shaping our direction! This coming year will be the best one yet!

Certification

CTD Planner Certifications: FY21 saw the first CTD Certified Planners recognized! Seven individuals were successfully certified and recognized among their peers in CTD communications. The CTD Planner Certification Program also saw some big changes in the application process, based on feedback from applicants and the review team. CTD was able to streamline the application process by moving to Smartsheet; this has allowed for a cleaner submission process for applicants and a more efficient review process for the review team. The CTD held a webinar in Spring 2021 to introduce the new application process and answer questions as well as offer pre-application “interviews” to get folks started right and ensure they have everything they need to apply. With applications slow to come in, the CTD leadership team is now exploring ways to increase participation.

Plan Templates: The CTD has enrolled assistance with creation of a Statewide Farm Planning template and helpful links to planning resources/tools. The template provides consistency in statewide planning as well as template availability to those Districts without such resources on hand.
Planner Resources: With ongoing changes and new hybrid (virtual and in-person) work environments, the CTD has continued posting a large number of virtual support tools and training opportunities on our webpage and via GovDelivery. Over the past year, CTD has continually updated our planner resources on the CTD webpage, providing links to new opportunities and content for more effective remote working. A new CTD Training Library was created to help district staff easily locate past webinars and training opportunities by topic.

Connecting Community: The CTD is building and hosting a new series of Networking Forums for different planning disciplines and expertise. Four Networking Forums are already underway: Cover Crop, Farm, Dairy, and Riparian. These Forums will be held quarterly and provide a much-needed space for planners and technical staff to share successes and challenges, ask questions, and connect district staff year-round. CTD actively solicits ideas for new Forums; as a result of this feedback, a new “Smartsheet Networking Forum” will kick off this fall. Additionally, “Building Better: Leadership and Management Learning Community”, is a new series hosted by the CTD in collaboration with WSCC, WADE, and WACD. The monthly learning and sharing network, which will kick off in August 2021, is targeted towards existing and developing District managers/leaders of all levels. All Networking Forum information is available on the CTD website and promoted through the monthly newsletter and special email announcements.

NRCS Planner Designations: FY21 saw some changes to the NRCS nomenclature and updated course requirements for planners. The CTD worked with NRCS to help District staff through the NRCS Planner Designation process, updating CTD materials to reflect changes and communicating to District staff through webinars and email announcements. CTD’s coordination with NRCS is also part of the new Washington Conservation Planning Partnership plan, and the CTD is on-point to help District staff meet NRCS’s goal to certify as many planners as is applicable.

Training

NRCS Collaboration: The CTD successfully worked with NRCS on coordination of training events in FY21 to ensure better organization and placement of CD staff in NRCS trainings. The CTD proposed a 5-year cooperative agreement with NRCS and WSCC to share the cost of a highly needed fulltime Training Coordinator position to exponentially expand the CTD’s reach and impact to help District staff through training, certification, and support processes. While NRCS approved the agreement, funding has not yet been allocated by NRCS. The CTD is being pro-active in finding temporary funding for this vital position and applied for an NACD grant in June 2021. If successful, this grant would provide short-term support for the Training Coordinator for one year while long-term funds are pursued.

National Conservation Planning Partnership (NCPP): The CTD re-engaged in the National Conservation Planning Partnership (NCPP) and attended regular (bi-monthly) web-meetings with the group to discuss national training and certification opportunity for Districts. This has been a great forum for the CTD to both give and receive feedback and ideas for advancing these opportunities nationally and in Washington State. The CTD was also invited by NRCS to work with them in March on their State Conservation Action Plan.

Training Needs Inventory (TNI): The CTD released its annual TNI in close coordination with NRCS in June 2021, with the goal of informing NRCS of District training needs in the coming year. The TNI is
tailored to identify those NRCS training events CD staff need and engage CD staff in the CTD and NRCS certification processes. This information also helps inform and guide CTD-sponsored trainings and Task Order requests. TNI responses are due mid-July, and CTD will provide NRCS with results at that time.

**NRCS Training Events:** Due to the on-going restrictions associated with COVID-19, training was modified to virtual formats. The CTD kept in regular contact with NRCS and posted new information on the CTD website regularly. Additionally, with the long-term uncertainty associated with holding in-person training, the CTD continues to advocate with NRCS to consider/create more web-based training events into the future.

The CTD worked with NRCS to bring much-needed courses to District staff including:

- **Environmental Permitting on Working Lands** training module was held virtually in April 13, 14, 20, 21, and was tailored for both District and NRCS staff implementing BMPs in working environments. The CTD worked with WSCC and NRCS staff to successfully secure a task order to help fund development of this course, which hasn’t been offered in over a decade. The event was recorded and can now be accessed on-demand for staff at any time. All course materials are posted on the CTD website.
- **Cultural Resources, Part 2,** was held in a hybrid format May 17-20, with field days completed regionally in early June. The Cultural Resources, Part 2 course is required for all Level III (Certified) planners and is an important offering to help District staff complete certification requirements. The classroom portion was held virtually, with a session each morning over the course of a week; the field portions were held in small groups, with appropriate safety protocol.

Additional trainings that CTD is working to coordinate CD staff seats in FY22 include:

- **Nutrient Management Planning (NMP)**
- **Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning (CNMP)**
- **Soil Health & Sustainability for Field Staff**
- **Monarch Field Day**
- **CREP Training**
- **Advanced Forest Health**
- **Working Effectively with American Indians**
- **Conservation Planning, Part 2,** which is a critical training for all planners, is under a process to create and offer this foundational course in a hybrid format that can be accessed by staff at any time. This will hopefully onboard new planners quicker, and educate interns, supervisors and others as needed.

The CTD continues to strengthen their training partnership with NRCS and hopes that these web-based modular trainings will also serve as a pilot for ongoing collaboration with fully online and hybrid web-classroom training opportunities.

**Other Training Events:** The CTD coordinated with WADE again this year to provide both technical track content and virtual platform hosting/moderation for the 2021 WADE Conference. The conference was held virtually June 14-16, 2021.

With the 2021 WADE conference held virtually again this year, there was a lesser need for the scholarship funds that typically pay for the conference registration. Instead, the WADE Board approved
appropriation a portion of the $20,000 WADE scholarship fund provided by the WSCC to the CTD to provide unique training events. The funds provided three free, unique training events to District employees including: Managing Multiple Priorities, Projects, and Deadlines (April 28, Fred Pryor); Facilitation Training (May 25-26, Ray Ledgerwood), and Virtual Presentation Skills (Cathy Angell, May 27). The latter was a special event for WADE presenters that was recorded, and an encore presentation scheduled in early September for all District staff. WADE also provided 20 $250 scholarships administered by the CTD to support staff time to present/attend the virtual WADE conference.

The CTD continued to curate and host monthly webinars focused on timely topics. The webinars have been well-received and well-attended (30-40 attendees per webinar on average) and are advertised on the CTD website, newsletter, and through special email announcements. The CTD co-hosts additional outside virtual training opportunities through NRCS and others, as appropriate. Additionally, we continue to send out guidance on working remote, conducting virtual site visits, and links to virtual training opportunities to help staff stay focused and relevant in this new working environment. The CTD is always soliciting input and ideas for trainings through the newsletter and website.

With the increase in virtual presentations including webinars, training events, and meetings, the CTD has curated and created content to support virtual presenters. This includes a tips handout, presenter orientation events/videos, and access to presentation training events. It is our goal to improve the quality of presentations to increase audience enjoyment and learning. The CTD sent out an announcement to all Districts informing them of the virtual resources available and offering additional support for planning, creating, and hosting virtual events.

All the recorded webinars and trainings hosted by the CTD are now housed on the CTD website in the CTD Training Library. The Library is sorted by topic and includes a brief description, the recorded session, and links to any accompanying training materials.

Training Scholarships: Due to good budgeting, the CTD was able to provide 20 $250 training scholarships to support District staff time in relevant training events completed by the end of June 2021. Training scholarships are a priority for CTD and are once again included in our FY22 budget.

New Employee Resources: The new employee resource page on the CTD website is continuously being updated with new webinars and information, including a new employee check list for both individuals and Districts to use. The goal is to have all new employee resources in one place so they can get going with training, training plans, certification, and orientation. The new page includes a portal to the CTD database.

**Communication and Outreach**

*Website:* The CTD website ([www.wactd.org](http://www.wactd.org)) continues to serve as a source of information to CD staff and is updated regularly. The CTD has worked to keep the website updated, improving aesthetics, clarity, and navigation of the site while continually updating content and ensuring relevance of the site. New changes are also announced in the CTD newsletter.

*Outreach:* CTD continued work on a cohesive marketing plan to increase recognition and impact for CD staff as well as better engage both internal and external partners. Our goal is to increase awareness of the CTD as a central provision of training and expertise and increase the collaboration with partners on
events and resources. A communications survey helped inform improvements for CTD content and guide the marketing plan in development. Moving forward, a dedicated Partnership Engagement Plan will enable strategic communications and engagement with partners and others.

Newsletter: The CTD monthly GovDelivery newsletter continues to gain new subscribers (currently we have more than 450 subscribers) and is also located on the CTD website for those not on GovDelivery. In addition to the monthly newsletter, the CTD is using the GovDelivery platform as a way to get immediate, time-sensitive news and information out to staff.

Technical Expertise and Science Program

Expertise: Experts are identified as needed for engagement in programs, policy and training around the state (examples include: Ecology Voluntary Clean Water Guidance for Agriculture Advisory Group, DOE Drinking Water Standard review, Dairy Nutrient Advisory Committee, WDFW riparian habitat guidance, and more). The CTD database continues to prove effective in identifying and nominating expertise as appropriate.

Science: While the work is not currently a funded budget item, the CTD is still supporting work around the State on special Discovery Farms program projects to advance the application of consistent science and monitoring efforts. There has been statewide buy-in to the DF program from partners and CDs continue to be involved in the national DF program through regular communications and annual meetings. Through this process, statewide QAPP and SOP’s have been developed with guidelines specific to projects, but which can be used in the future as templates for any CD.

Quality Assurance

While this was not a funded area of work in FY21, the CTD still holds value of development of a statewide Quality Assurance program for individuals and Districts. The CTD did offer quality assurance assessments and planning product review upon request and was able to assist in a quality assurance review to ensure the highest quality products coming out of Districts.

CTD Coordination

Database: The database (run under Caspio) continues to provide assistance in locating staff expertise for engagement in workgroups, show metrics on expertise and certifications, and grow to a central database for all organizations to utilize. A self-service portal for employees is available on the CTD website which allows CD staff to update their personnel profiles, track completed trainings, and more. The CTD regularly sends reminders to folks to update their information and expertise in the Database.

Budget: Whatcom CD administered the budget and reporting monthly to the CTD. Billing guidelines and procedures ensure that work expectations match billing vouchers and that budgets are quickly updated on a monthly basis. The CTD is using Smartsheet to assist with budget and task tracking.
The CTD spent considerable time in FY21 updating its Charter and creating an annual and long-range plan of work including metrics of success and short-term tasks and deliverables. The entire plan was input into Smartsheet for regular review, reflection, and revision. The sheet also tracks Gantt chart timelines, budget, staff time, and deliverables for a cohesive and interactive management across all CTD members. The FY22-23 budget and plan of work are available upon request.

**Leadership:** The CTD held its Annual Update and Feedback Session, inviting all District staff from across the state for an overview of our FY21 activities, and to provide feedback for our FY22 annual plan of work. That meeting was held virtually on March 31, 2021.

The CTD Leadership Team also held its annual meeting with WSCC Staff in May to provide a summary report of accomplishments over the last year, and to solicit feedback and input on priorities for the coming year. The upcoming biennium budget request was shared, and a base operating and scaling options presented.

The CTD Leadership Team and partners (NRCS, WADE, WSCC) continue to meet monthly to ensure tasks are on track.

The CTD continues to prioritize recruiting new members to both its leadership and working teams. The CTD has requested the assistance of the Commission staff in helping get the word out the district managers who may recognize potential new members in their own staff.

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**CTD Contact Information**

For more information on the CTD activities, please contact:
CTD contact: Nichole Embertson, Chair
info@wactd.org

For more information, please visit: [www.wactd.org](http://www.wactd.org)
# CTD Work Plan and Budget FY22

**Task 1 - Certification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Area</th>
<th>FY22 Budget Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management:</strong> Manage current certification processes including review and approval of applications, update of certifications (as needed), total program structure and support, and promotion of individual certification programs. Increase number of informational webinars, one-on-one support for applicants, more frequent application review and approval.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development:</strong> Develop new certification disciplines via demand based on survey response: Forestry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Program:</strong> Create and coordinate Certification specific Tracks at WADE; develop and support CEU tracking program; design CEU labeling system for training; support Certification leads on CEU review; develop and provide a mentoring program for those in certification program. Host quarterly peer communication/support forums for dairy, farm, and riparian planning staff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partner Certification:</strong> Keep District staff up to date on NRCS Planner Designation process (webinars, post materials, provide feedback).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentoring and Assistance:</strong> Develop mentoring program to support Certified Planners with on the job training and peer support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support Tools:</strong> Maintain training plan template. Create plan template for example dairy and forestry plans.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Allocation for Task 1 - Certification:** $15,000.00

**Task 2 - Training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Area</th>
<th>FY22 Budget Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training Coordinator:</strong> Provide funding support for a dedicated training coordinator to develop and coordinate training events, liaison with NRCS and other agencies on training opportunities, manage training database for CD's, and other tasks as applicable. This position funding is shared with NRCS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training Event Coordination:</strong> Coordinate with NRCS on development of TO's, organization and registration of NRCS training events. Coordinate training activities including participation in pertinent workgroups (NRCS employee development committee, WADE, and others).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training Event Development:</strong> Develop and conduct NRCS and CTD lead training events (webinar and in-person) based on demand/need.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training Support:</strong> Complete annual training needs inventory (TNI) to help guide future training events. Maintain Training pages on CTD website. Collect and promote (as appropriate) relevant training events of value to CD staff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Allocation for Task 2 - Training:** $86,000.00
### Training Grants
Develop process and provide a Training Grants program to provide small grants to those Districts that want to create/host a training/workshop for other staff in the region to learn, collaborate, and share technical knowledge to take back to their home Districts.

| Training Grants | $4,000 |
---|---|

### Training Scholarships
Provide $ via scholarships (award and application) to support individuals to complete requirements for NRCS Conservation Planner Designations and CTD Certification as indicated on training plan (20 @ $500).

| Training Scholarships | $8,000 |
---|---|

### Mentoring and Assistance
Develop mentoring program to meet all technical staff needs including: existing planning staff, new staff and certified planners, individuals mentoring staff through relevant training events.

| Mentoring and Assistance | $6,000 |
---|---|

### Task 3 - Communications and Outreach $20,000.00
**Communications**: Enhance and maintain communications system including newsletter, emails, calendars, website, and others. Commission meeting reporting. Branding of CTD. Outreach to outside partners.

| Communications | $8,000 |
---|---|

**Partner Engagement**: Enact partner engagement plan to engage partner agencies in CTD activities/communications to improve relationship and opportunities to Districts/partners.

| Partner Engagement | $5,000 |
---|---|

**Outreach**: Outreach and promotion of CTD in relevant partner meetings (WADE, WACD, NACD, NCPP, etc.) to share/receive CTD information.

| Outreach | $7,000 |
---|---|

### Task 4 - Technical Assistance $10,000.00
**Technical Expertise**: Coordinate with WSCC on engagement of CD technical experts in federal, state and local policies and programs related to conservation activities (i.e., monitoring, scientific review, stakeholder groups, etc.).

| Technical Expertise | $2,000 |
---|---|

**Science**: Support statewide Science, Research, Implementation, and Effectiveness Monitoring Program. Includes supporting Washington Discovery Farms Program.

| Science | $1,000 |
---|---|

**Small Grants Program**: Provide competitive funding for small grants (up to $2,500) to Districts wanting to conduct value added research/demonstration/monitoring projects in their area. Projects will be conducted using Discovery Farms project standards and templates for project design and tracking.

| Small Grants Program | $2,000 |
---|---|

**Quality Assurance**: Implement Quality Assurance & Quality Control (QAQC) for conservation planning, including development of internal plan review process, plan implementation review process, and provision of corrective technical assistance as needed. CTD available to better respond to Quality Assurance issues that arise, validate planning efforts, or identify additional training needs and implement them.

| Quality Assurance | $5,000 |
---|---|
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 5 - CTD Coordination</th>
<th>$44,000.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Database and Software:</strong> On-going development, maintenance, implementation, and query/request response. Software support subscriptions: Survey Monkey, PollEverywhere, Caspio, GoToMeeting/Webinar/Training, Dropbox, G Suite, Smartsheet.</td>
<td>$ 5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administration:</strong> Administration, budget, billing, contracts, and reporting.</td>
<td>$ 5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership:</strong> Participation in regular CTD Leadership Team meetings. Participation in annual face-to-face CTD Leadership visioning meeting. CTD leadership representation at pertinent partner and WSCC meetings.</td>
<td>$ 34,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Annual FY22 Budget</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 175,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 2021 **NACD Summer Conservation Forum** is in Chicago, July 24-27. More information [here](#).

**Biden Administration Proposed Budget.**
A 16 percent increase for USDA. NACD Comments on the proposed budget are [here](#).

In the conservation portfolio, the President’s FFY22 budget proposes funding $886 million for Conservation Operations, a $50 million increase to the account funding conservation planning and technical assistance. The budget requests $774 million for the Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) program within Conservation Operations.

The **National Conservation Planning Partnership (NCPP)** held Leadership Training virtual sessions on June 22 and 24th. Sessions were recorded and there will be 30 days after the event to view the professional trainers and longer for the other two segments.

**NACD Pacific Region**
- NACD Pacific Region next **bi-monthly zoom meeting on July 6** at 4:00 PM Pacific time.
- Pacific region has embarked development of a **STRATEGIC PLAN**. Pacific is the first and only region to initiate such an effort. Having sideboards and targets for our activities will help us move the dial in getting more conservation on the ground.
- Our joint **NACD REGIONAL MEETING OF SOUTHWEST AND PACIFIC** is an in-person meeting on August 30-31 at the Snow King Resort in Jackson, Wyoming. The agenda and logistics are under development, so watch for future information. Visit [www.conservewy.com](http://www.conservewy.com) for updates. As this will be the first in-person in a long time for many of us, it’ll be a grand opportunity to re-engage, talk face-to-face with colleagues, and see some spectacular scenery.

**NACD Forestry Resource Policy Group** – The **NACD Forestry Resource Policy Group’s (RPG)** hosted a joint webinar series with the National Association of State Foresters, June 22, 2021. Fifty minute sessions covered: marketing, engaging underserved groups, carbon sequestration, and characteristics of woodland owners and links are below:

- [https://youtu.be/aRh3krf0xJ8](https://youtu.be/aRh3krf0xJ8)
- [https://youtu.be/Hr4GLPU14z4](https://youtu.be/Hr4GLPU14z4)
- [https://youtu.be/oXUvMEWzAvA](https://youtu.be/oXUvMEWzAvA)

Playlist link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hr4GLPU14z4&list=PL1zOUTEjoqu-XAZW3zbgKmY7W7FtIPhM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hr4GLPU14z4&list=PL1zOUTEjoqu-XAZW3zbgKmY7W7FtIPhM)

**Issues of Interest**
- Coleman Garrison, who has been our NACD Government Affairs lead, went to the Irrigation Districts Association as of May 31, 2021. Mary Scott will be assuming at least some of Coleman’s former responsibilities.
- NACD is hiring consultants to work on upcoming Farm Bill.
- Even though Capitol Hill is still essentially close, but some NACD staff are back in the office.
- Forest Service chief Vicki Christiansen is retiring. She is former Washington state forester.

Submitted by Doug Rushton, WACD representative on NACD board
I hope everyone is surviving this heat!

It has been tough here in Spokane, and from the reports the rest of the state hasn’t been much different. Hopefully we will see some cooler temperatures soon, we need the break and some rainfall!

On the business side, though, we have a few programs we’re working on and would love to hear your ideas.

The first is the Western Water Strategy being developed at the national level. Federal and state agencies, including us, have been asked to provide input and ideas on how we can best conserve our water resources to increase our drought resilience; make available water-related information so well-informed decisions on water use can be made; and determine viable conservation practices to reduce agricultural water use.

Next up is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program’s Conservation Incentive Contracts (CIC). CICs are an option that blend EQIP and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) by providing financial assistance to adopt conservation enhancements on working landscapes. Although they aren’t available in Washington this year, they will roll out nationally in 2022.

Then, there’s urban conservation, which is a huge priority for us! In many ways, our urban farmers are a big untapped resource for our conservation efforts, and we’re working hard to develop a program that supports their unique circumstances.

I bring these three programs up because as our trusted partners and colleagues, your thoughts, ideas, and opinions mean a lot to us. Please reach out to my staff or me if you want to discuss anything. We are always willing and eager to hear you out.

Finally, we are dealing with the drought related issues. We’re in the process now of figuring out how we can best interact with National Headquarter’s natural disaster requirements while still meeting the needs our local customers. More information will be made available as decisions are made.

Until then, I hope all of you have found a cool place to withstand this heat!

Roylene Comes At Night
NRCS Washington State Conservationist
Area Conservationist Update

Jonathan George, East Area Conservationist and Joe Williams, West Area Conservationist, are moving on from NRCS-Washington.

Jon is heading to Nevada to be the American Indian Liaison for NRCS. He will be assisting with conservation work with the 32 tribes in the state and building program participation and trust with the tribal communities.

Joe has taken the position of USDA-NRCS National Soil Health Division-West Region Team Leader and Regional Soil Health Specialist based out of the West National Technology Support Center in Portland, Oregon. Joe serves on the Soil Health Division Leadership Team. He currently supervises six Regional Soil Health Specialists throughout the country, as well as provides technical service to Alaska, Washington and Oregon.

Central Area

By Austin Shero
Central Area Conservationist

Partners from across the area have been assisting NRCS complete required status reviews for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). This has been a large undertaking throughout central and eastern Washington. This assistance is greatly appreciated!

Budgets for two new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) selections are beginning to take shape. Both NRCS and the sponsoring partners are getting very excited to engage with producers in the coming months, and put great conservation on the ground!

A large, robust and diverse group continues to meet and develop funding strategies surrounding the Odessa Aquifer. This group has been meeting for quite some time, and a great deal of momentum is building around proposals to address resource concerns, solve water issues, and improve farming activities around the continually depleting aquifer.

Funding opportunities are challenging for a project of this size, but the group is taking a very broad based approach involving multiple agencies, local groups, and state government to target several different funding sources. It is exciting to see this group continue to grow and build.

West Area

By Bobby Evans
Acting Area Conservationist West Washington

NRCS is very excited to announce that the Programmatic Biological Assessment for the South Puget Sound Prairies has been submitted to US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) for formal consultation.

The action area covers conservation planning on the farms, ranches, and private forestland across portions of Thurston, Pierce, Lewis, and Grays Harbor Counties. The document will formally establish best management practices and avoidance measures for potential impacts to various listed species such as Mazama pocket gopher, Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly, Marbled Murrelet, and Oregon spotted frog, as well as their designated critical habitats.

Once consultation is complete, NRCS will receive a Biological Opinion from USFWS which will streamline NRCS conservation practice implementation. This is colossal, as consultation for individual projects that effect listed species and designated critical habitat in this action area is currently required. The programmatic consultation will substantially reduce staff time for both NRCS and USFWS, as individual consultations take several months to complete.

The Programmatic Biological Assessment is the direct result of a multi-year agreement between NRCS & USFWS. Many thanks to NRCS State Conservationist, Roylene Comes At Night, as well as USFWS State Supervisor, Brad Thompson, for their support of this groundbreaking partnership!
Programs Update
By Keith Griswold
Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

Here is a FA Obligation Rate comparison between FY20 to FY21. The data is current as of June 22, 2021 at 8 a.m.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>FY20 Contracts</th>
<th>FY20 Obligations</th>
<th>FY21 Eligible High Applications</th>
<th>FY21 Pre-Approved or Approved applications</th>
<th>FY21 Contracts</th>
<th>FY21 Allocation</th>
<th>FY21 Obligations</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>$13,359,972</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>$11,683,815</td>
<td>$2,848,922</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCPP-EQIP</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>$7,347,731</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCPP-CSP</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$422,652</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQIP</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>$20,827,500</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>$27,846,391</td>
<td>$7,512,388</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>$41,957,855</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>$40,218,706</td>
<td>$10,361,310</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tribal
By Robin Slate
State Tribal Liaison

NRCS is in the process of reviewing and updating the National Tribal Consultation Policy and guidance on how NRCS works with Tribes in a number of different ways. This can include: formal consultation between Tribal leadership and national NRCS staff; Tribal leadership and State Conservationists; Tribal program managers and State Conservationist; and Tribal managers and State Tribal Liaisons and other NRCS staff.

A national team of State Tribal liaisons from each region in the country is developing and offering monthly talking circles that USDA staff across the country, bringing current issues and other learning opportunities for their work with Tribes and their communities. These talking circles are supported by NRCS nationally and include several USDA agency staff across the nation.

NRCS Washington is very pleased that the Confederated Tribe of the Colville Reservation is partnering with and hosting the Working Effectively With American Indians training for USDA and conservation district staff. More details upon request.

Partnerships
Washington Conservation Planning Partnership
By Nick Vira
State Partnership Liaison

Conservation leaders from the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC), Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD), Washington Resource Conservation and Development Council (WA RC&D), Conservation District Employees and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), have come together to form the Washington Conservation Planning Partnership (WCPP). Members include Shana Joy - WACD; Nichole Emberton – Whatcom Conservation District; Bill Blake – Skagit Conservation District; Harold Crose – Grant Conservation District; Ryan Anderson – WA RC&D; Tom Salzer – WACD; Jenifer Coleson and Nick Vira – NRCS.

One purpose of this partnership is to get an action plan to reinvigorate conservation planning and then to implement this plan over the course of the next couple of years in concert with the national level actions aimed at same objective. Our goal is advancing voluntary conservation on private lands. The WCPP convened over the spring and developed a state plan which was submitted to the National Conservation Planning Partnership (NCPP) leaders for their review and comments. Please contact Nick Vira with any questions on this effort. Stay tuned!

Public Affairs
New state public affairs specialist in town
By Nate Gallahan
Public Affairs Specialist

I'm excited to announce that I have been hired full time as the state public affairs specialist, starting July 18! This new roll will allow me greater flexibility and authority needed to improve the communications infrastructure across the state.

Over the course of my career with NRCS-Washington, I look forward to contributing to my core mission areas of community outreach, media relations, organizational communications, and crisis communications.

As for a bit of background, I'm a retired Air Force public affairs specialist. I've worked in communications at all levels ranging from local Air Force bases to being on the personal communications team for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the principal military advisor to the president.

While I know a great deal about communications, I don't know that much about conservation, agriculture, and the environment. This is a big reason why I'm looking forward to listening and learning from all of you and my communications counterparts across Washington. I just ask for your patience and understanding if I ever have the wonderful opportunity of working with any of you.

Again, this is an exceptionally exciting opportunity for me. If any of you have any ideas, concerns, or just want to talk conservation, please don't hesitate to reach out. There are many great things ahead!
Ecological Sciences
By Bonda Habets
State Resource Conservationist

NRCS has created a new registry for Technical Service Providers (TSP)s. Therefore, TechReg will become inactive July and August during this transition. Field offices can refer producers to Larry Johnson for a list of TSPs for relevant Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)s. The CAPs have been revised to include not just a conservation activity plan but implementation of conservation practices. More guidance will be coming later this year. Washington has few TSPs and many categories have none. Once certified a TSP can submit for Washington, Idaho and Oregon.

CAPs revision will include the existing “plan” but some CAPs add another category for TSPs to complete the “design and implementation” of conservation practices.

NRCS-WA has submitted contribution agreements for USDA Program staff biology assistance for USDA Farm Bill Program implementation. A new agreement with Wash. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife for their WDFW private land biologists time on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) SAFE areas, a Pheasant Forever, Inc funded Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI) biologist in Waterville, and a new contribution agreement with Pheasant Forever, Inc will fund three biologists in each NRCS-WA Area; Olympia Area Office, Ephrata Area Office and Ritzville Field Office.

NRCS Ecological Science conservation practices, who's National updates are being adopted for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, Oct 1 are 595 Integrated Pest Management, 490 Tree and Shrub Site Preparation, CAP 112 Prescribed Burn Plan, 315 Herbaceous Weed Treatment, 511 Forage Harvest Management, 512 Hayland Planting, and 610 Salinity and Sodic Soil Management. Plus, interim Conservation Practice, 808, Soil Carbon Amendment will also be adopted for use in FY22.

NRCS staff are actively working to acquire their Conservation Planner Certification by a January deadline. The Farm Bill wanted to ensure that all NRCS Planners were trained. All previous planner certifications expire in January. Many Conservation District staff are working on these requirements as well. COVID made trainings creative but all trainings have had a three year window to allow staff to complete.

The Farm Service Agency’s CRP deadline was extended so they are not expected to get the offers for producers until end of July. Producers will contact NRCS to request a conservation plan and be responsible for the final signature, as well as those signatures from remote landlords. The deadline for FY21 completion is Sept 20. Since 6 weeks are not adequate for this workload, we are hoping that NHQ is preparing for an interim conservation plan for Sept 30 and if similar to 2020, NRCS will do most of the CRP workload after October 1 and have a completion date of December 13. FSA plans to assist with producer signatures.

Management & Strategy
By Peter Bautista
Assistant State Conservationist for Management & Strategy

Budget
State Resource Assessment Budget process for FY22 is scheduled for the July to August time frame.

Civil Rights
June was Pride Commemorative Month!

COVID
Both FPAC and USDA policies on official travel remain mission critical and time sensitive travel only.

We are anticipating “Return to Work (Office) Plan” by the USDA - FPAC sometime in late July 2021.

Human Resources
Currently we are recruiting for two vacant Area Conservationist positions in the West (Olympia) and East (Spokane).

Training
Washington State Bulletin WA 360-21-03 – Fiscal Year 2022 Training Needs Inventory has been posted to the Washington SharePoint site. This bulletin provides guidance on submitting requests for Fiscal Year 2022 training needs for employees and partners. Questions regarding this bulletin should be sent to your supervisor or Chas Scripter, Training Officer.
NRCS News

Working together for wetlands
By Amelia Ingle
NRCS-WA Public Affairs Administrative Assistant

SPOKANE VALLEY, Washington – Water rushed back into an expanse of farmland in Pend Oreille County last month that hadn’t been flooded since it was diked for agricultural use years ago.

The reduction of the on-site dike was just one of the many projects undertaken by an alliance of agricultural organizations including NRCS, Ducks Unlimited, Lincoln County Conservation District, the Department of Ecology, and numerous permitting agencies. With the help of funds from NRCS’ Wetlands Restoration Enhancement Partnership (WREP), they hope to transform this newly acquired easement from a dry, flat field to a flourishing wetland habitat and establish long-term conservation and wildlife practices and protection.

“NRCS is excited about the development of the restoration and especially the progressive working relationship with the ...

Continue reading here.

Ask the Expert: Understanding the U.S. Drought Monitor; a Q&A with Brian Fuchs

Are drought conditions affecting your agricultural operation? The U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) is a resource producers can use to help determine how to best respond and react to a drought as it develops or lingers.

The USDM is an online, weekly map showing the location, extent, and severity of drought across the United States. It categorizes the entire country as being in one of six levels of drought. The map is released on Thursdays and depicts conditions for the week.

The USDM provides producers with the latest information about drought conditions where they live, enabling producers to best respond and react to a drought as it develops or lingers. In some cases, the USDM may help a producer make specific decisions about their operation, such as reducing the stocking rate because forage is not growing. For others, it may provide a convenient big-picture snapshot of broader environmental conditions.

The USDM incorporates varying data – rain, snow, temperature, streamflow, reservoir levels, soil moisture, and more – as well as first-hand information submitted from on-the-ground sources such as photos, descriptions, and experiences. The levels of drought are connected to the frequency of occurrence across several different drought indicators. What makes the USDM unique is that it is not a strictly numeric product. The mapmakers rely on their judgment and a nationwide network of 450-plus experts to interpret conditions for each region. They synthesize their discussion and analysis into a single depiction of drought for the entire country.

USDA uses the Drought Monitor to determine a producer’s eligibility for certain drought assistance programs, like the Livestock Forage Disaster Program and Emergency Haying or Grazing on Conservation Reserve Program acres. Additionally, the Farm Service Agency uses the Drought Monitor to trigger and “fast track” Secretarial Disaster Designations which then provides producers impacted by drought access to emergency loans that can assist with credit needs.

Learn more about the U.S. Drought Monitor.

USDA Seeks New Partnerships to Safeguard, Restore Wetland Ecosystems

USDA is investing up to $17 million for conservation partners to help protect and restore critical wetlands on agricultural lands through the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP). USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is prioritizing proposals that focus on assisting historically underserved producers conserving wetlands.

Click here for more information.
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members
Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

FROM: Shana Joy, District Operations & Regional Manager Coordinator

SUBJECT: Governance Sub-Committee Report

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Summary:
In December 2020 the Commissioners tasked the Governance Sub-Committee to “craft governance policies for the State Conservation Commission by the end of calendar year 2021.” The Committee is pleased to introduce a draft Governance and Commissioner Expectations Policy today, attached. The Committee requests that Commissioners review this draft and share any feedback with Committee members prior to August 15th to inform a final policy document. Two additional draft policies are anticipated to be introduced at the September 2021 meeting: Commission Compensation (an update of current policy) and Commission Meetings (new policy).

Staff Contact:
Shana Joy, sjoy@scc.wa.gov or 360.480.2078

Background and Discussion:
As SCC staff have been working over the last year to review existing agency policies and fill policy gaps, governance was identified as a gap in our policies. In December 2020, Commissioners appointed and tasked the Governance Sub-Committee to “craft governance policies for the State Conservation Commission by the end of calendar year 2021.”

Governance Sub-Committee Members are:
David Giglio, Commissioner
Jeanette Dorner, Commissioner
Sarah Spaeth, Commissioner
Carol Smith, Executive Director
Alison Halpern, Policy Assistant
Sarah Groth, Fiscal Manager,
Jean Fike, Puget Sound Regional Manager
Shana Joy, Regional Manager Coordinator

The Committee has met four times to date to make progress on this task and is pleased to introduce a draft *Governance and Commissioner Expectations Policy* today.

**Next Steps (if informational item):**

The Committee requests that Commissioners review the draft *Governance and Commissioner Expectations Policy* and share any feedback, questions or concerns with Committee members prior to August 15th to inform a final policy document. Committee work will continue through the summer as well as interaction with the Attorney General’s office, as appropriate, to present a final version of the *Governance and Commissioner Expectations Policy* in September with a Committee recommendation for adoption at that time. Two additional draft policies are anticipated to be introduced at the September 2021 meeting: *Commissioner Compensation* (an update of current policy) and *Commission Meetings* (new policy). The Committee is on track to complete the work assigned to them before the end of the year.
PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to establish agency governance policy and commitments, provide additional clarity and establish standards of behavior and expectations for service of the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) Board of Commissioners.

BACKGROUND
The WSCC is established and authorized under RCW 89.08. Several specific sections of this RCW guide and authorize the policies established herein:

**RCW 89.08.030**
“The commission shall consist of ten members, five of whom are ex officio. Two members shall be appointed by the governor, one of whom shall be a landowner or operator of a farm. At least two of the three elected members shall be landowners or operators of a farm and shall be elected as herein provided. The appointed members shall serve for a term of four years.

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.

The director of the department of ecology, the director of the department of agriculture, the commissioner of public lands, the president of the Washington association of conservation districts, and the dean of the college of agriculture at Washington State University shall be ex officio members of the commission. An ex officio member of the commission shall hold office so long as he or she retains the office by virtue of which he or she is a member of the commission. Ex officio members may delegate their authority.

The commission may invite appropriate officers of cooperating organizations, state and federal agencies to serve as advisers to the conservation commission.”

**RCW 89.08.050**
“It shall have authority to delegate to its chairman, to one or more of its members, to one or more agents or employees such duties and powers as it deems proper…”
“The commission shall organize annually and select a chairman from among its members, who shall serve for one year from the date of his selection…”

POLICY
Governance

Board of Commissioners Purpose
The Board of Commissioners represents, leads, and serves the agency and holds itself accountable to it by committing to act in the agency’s best interests and by ensuring that all Board and agency action is consistent with law and the agency’s policies. The Board’s purpose is to assure that the agency achieves its goals and that it operates according to its values.

The Board and its Commissioners are committed to effectively governing the agency, testing all of its decisions, maintaining Commissioner relationships with each other, evaluating the Executive Director, training new Commissioners, working with staff and subcontractors and serving its constituents.

Governing Commitments
The Board will govern lawfully, encourage full exploration of diverse viewpoints; act with integrity as ethical leaders, focus on governance matters rather than administrative issues; observe clear separation of Board and Executive Director roles, make all official decisions by formal vote of the Board; and govern with long-term vision.

The Board will function as a single unit. The opinions and personal strengths of individual Commissioners will be used to the Board’s best advantage, but the Board faithfully will make decisions as a group, by formal vote. No officer, individual, or committee of the Board will be permitted to limit the Board’s performance or prevent the Board from fulfilling its commitments.

The Board is responsible for its own performance and commits itself to continuous improvement. The Board will assure that its Commissioners are provided with training and professional support necessary to govern effectively, including ethics training. After attending conferences or events, Commissioners will report back to the Board at the next regular meeting about what they have learned.

The Board will carry out a summative self-assessment with full, honest and timely participation by all Commissioners. The assessment will include evaluation of the Board as a whole.

Board Job Description
The Board’s job is to represent, lead and serve the agency and to govern by establishing expectations for organizational results, expectations for quality operational performance, and monitoring actual performance against those expectations. The Board will:

- Set agency external-facing policy
- Evaluate Board performance.
- Hire the Executive Director and evaluate their performance.
- Adopt and keep current a long range strategic plan and monitor performance against the plan.
- Review and accept the periodic report of the State Auditor.
- Adopt and monitor implementation of biennial operating budgets.
• Review and approve biennial and supplemental budget requests, and new legislation to the Governor and state legislature.
• Appoint two conservation district supervisors to each conservation district board.
• Work with the Office of the Attorney General to support the WSCC in its work.
• Support implementation of the Conservation Accountability and Performance Program.
• Set election rules for conservation district elections (Chapter 135-110 WAC)

Board Officers
The officers of the Board of Commissioners (Board) are those listed in this policy. Their duties are those assigned by this policy, and others required by law.

Chair
The Chair provides leadership to the Board of Commissioners, ensures the faithful execution of the Commission’s processes, exercises interpretive responsibilities consistent with the spirit and intent of the Commission’s policies, and normally serves as the Board of Commissioners’ spokesperson. The Chair has the following specific authorities and duties:
- Monitor Commissioner actions to assure that they are consistent with the Board’s own rules and policies:
  - Chair Commission meetings using the authority normally vested in the Chair as described in Robert’s Rules of Order;
  - Conduct and monitor Commission meeting deliberations to assure that Board discussion and attention are focused on Board issues, as defined in Board policy;
  - Assure that Commission meeting discussions are productive, efficient, orderly, and respectful;
  - Lead the Commission’s annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director;
  - Execute all documents authorized by the Commission, except as otherwise provided by law or delegation of authority;
  - Appoint members of all Commission committees and sub-committees with the ratification of the full Commission.
  - Represent the Board as its official spokesperson about issues or topics decided by the full Board.

Vice-Chair
The Vice-Chair serves in the absence or inability of the Chair to perform the specific authorities and duties of the Chair.

Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson (replaces policy no. 05-02)
A nominating committee will be formed for the purpose of recommending candidates for the office of chairperson and vice chairperson for action by the governing body at the December Commission Meeting.

The nominating committee will include members of the Commission Board and partners. The term of office for the chairperson(s) and vice chairperson(s) shall be two years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Only the three elected, two appointed, and ex-officio member representing Washington State University (WSU) shall be eligible for the office of chairperson or vice chairperson. Ex-officio
members representing the regulatory Departments of Ecology, Agriculture, Natural Resources and WACD shall be ineligible to serve as chairperson or vice chairperson.

**Procedure**
A nominating committee of 3 Commissioners will be formed annually by the Board at the September regular Commission meeting for the purpose of recommending candidates for the offices of chairperson and vice chairperson.

At the next regular meeting following the September meeting, the nominating committee shall present recommendations to the full Commission board and request action. While the recommendation of the nominating committee is not binding on the full Commission board, it will be carefully considered prior to board action.

The newly elected chairperson and vice chairperson will begin service at the next regular or special meeting of the Conservation Commission, typically occurring in January of the following year.

**Executive Committee** (replaces policy no. 05-03)

**Purpose and Structure**
The purpose of the Executive Committee is to provide feedback and guidance, upon request and as appropriate, to the Executive Director between regular meetings of the full Commission Board and to make any decisions as are formally delegated to the Executive Committee by the full Commission Board. The chairperson and vice chairperson, will collectively be called the Executive Committee of the Commission. The Executive Committee shall serve as a standing committee of the full Commission Board with no expiration.

**Duties**
Duties of the Executive Committee may include but are not limited to:

- Provide feedback and informal guidance, upon request and as appropriate, to the Executive Director on agency matters between regular Commission meetings,
- Remain informed of legislative developments and provide feedback to SCC staff on pending legislation that may be contentious and urgent,
- Review and provide input into draft agendas for commission meetings

Additional responsibilities of the Executive Committee may also be assigned by action of the Commission. The Executive Committee shall report out its activities, as appropriate, to the full Commission board at the next regular Commission meeting.

**Committees or Sub-Committees**
The Board may create committees or sub-committees if they are deemed helpful to assist the Board in the performance of its responsibilities. If committees are established, they will be used exclusively to support the work of the Board at the direction of the Board.

- Committees will not be used to direct, advise, assist, or oversee the staff. Committees will have no authority over staff and may exercise demands on staff time and organizational resources only to the extent authorized by the full Board and Executive Director.
- Committees will customarily prepare recommendations for consideration by the full Board.
- Committees may not speak or act for the Board unless specifically authorized to do so. The responsibilities and authority of all committees are carefully stated in writing to
assure that committees fully understand their duties and extent of authority, and to assure that committee work will not usurp or conflict with the Board’s own authority or conflict with authority delegated to the Executive Director.

- All Board committees are considered to be ad hoc, or temporary, unless specifically authorized by the full Board as a standing committee. The date for the termination of each committee is listed for each committee. Committees may be renewed or reauthorized upon their expiration, but unless the Board acts to renew the committee’s existence it shall cease to exist upon the date specific.

- Format for Board Committees will follow:
  - Name
  - Purpose and Charge
  - Membership
  - Reporting Schedule
  - Term
  - Authority over Resources

**Advisors to the Board of Commissioners** (replaces policy no. 05-07)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Farm Service Agency, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Forest Service are recognized as an important contributor to Conservation Commission meetings. Even though they are not a regular member of the Commission, the following policy shall serve as a guide for their participation in the meetings.

- They may attend all meetings and executive sessions by invitation.
- They may not make motions or vote.
- They may be recognized by the chairman and enter discussion on any subject in the same manner as any regular Commission member.

Additional short-term or topic-specific advisors may be invited to participate in Commission meetings, agency initiatives or projects at any time.

**Commissioner Expectations**

**Attendance and Engagement**

Commissioners will make every effort to attend all regular and special meetings of the WSCC. To ensure that the WSCC’s meetings are conducted with maximum effectiveness and efficiency, Commissioners will spend such time as may be needed in advance of the meetings to review meeting materials, interact with the agency, organization, or region of conservation districts represented as may be needed on topics appearing on each agenda in preparation for and to enable fully engaged participation in each meeting.

If a Commissioner must be absent for a meeting, the Commissioner is expected to notify the Chairperson and Executive Director as soon as possible. A substitute delegate may participate on behalf of ex-officio Commissioners only. Any substitutes are expected to adhere to and uphold all policies, procedures, and expectations of the WSCC and the Commissioner for which they are acting as a substitute. Every effort will be made to provide timely meeting materials and information to identified substitutes but it is the primary responsibility of the appointed Commissioner to ensure the substitute is fully prepared to attend the meeting.

**Code of Conduct**
The Commissioners will conduct themselves lawfully, with integrity and high ethical standards, in order to model the behaviors expected of staff and to build constituent confidence and credibility. The Commission will conduct its official business with social and fiduciary responsibility that encourages public trust. Commissioners will maintain awareness of, abide by and uphold all WSCC policies and procedures.

To build trust among Commissioners and to ensure an environment conducive to effective governance, Commissioners will:

- Communicate openly and respectfully with one another, agency staff, and the public;
- Listen to understand one another, staff, and the public;
- Support the Chair’s efforts to facilitate an orderly meeting;
- Focus on issues rather than personalities;
- Exercise honesty in all written and interpersonal interaction, never intentionally misleading or misinforming each other;
- Make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the organization and one another;
- Maintain confidentiality appropriate to sensitive issues and information that otherwise may tend to compromise the integrity or legal standing of the Commission, especially those matters discussed in executive session.

Commissioners will not attempt to exercise individual authority over the agency or staff.

- Commissioners will not attempt to assume personal responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints;
- Commissioners will not personally direct any part of the operational organization;
- Commissioners will respect decisions of the Board and will not undermine those decisions;
- Commissioners will not publicly express individual negative judgments about Executive Director or staff performance. Any such judgments will be expressed in executive session;
- Commissioners will refer any requests for access to the agency’s records to the SCC Public Records Officer;
- Commissioners will serve the interests of the entire organization. Commissioners recognize this responsibility to the whole to be greater than:
  - any other responsibility a Commissioner may have as a member; and
  - Ties based upon membership on other boards or staffs.

**Communication and Representation**

Each Commissioner will strive to serve as a communication conduit with the agency, organization, group, or region of conservation districts represented. Each Commissioner should bring relevant news from their constituents to the WSCC in a timely manner and carry WSCC news and information back to their constituents as well.

**Representing the Commission**

Only the designated spokesperson(s) for the agency will provide formal or informal comments to the press or media on behalf of the agency or Board. In the circumstance where Commissioners participate in meetings or events where it may not be clear from which perspective or which organization they are representing, all Commissioners will make it very clear that while they do serve as a Commissioner, they are not speaking on behalf of, or representing the agency unless formally designated to do so by the Chair or Executive Director. Commissioners may be
involved in numerous aspects of natural resource conservation in roles outside of their service as a Commissioner; it is essential that when speaking as a Commissioner to ensure that the policies and formal positions adopted by the full Board and agency are represented accurately and are not undermined.

Ethics and Conflict of Interest (incorporates language from SCC policy no. 13-02)
The Ethics in Public Service Act, RCW 42.52 applies to all state employees and officers. All Commissioners are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Ethics Act (RCW 42.52) and rules (WAC 292-110), applicable agency policies and procedures, and for making choices that exemplify an adherence to the highest ethical standards. Detailed information on issues related to state ethics, including interpretations and clarifying examples of the Ethics Act and rules are available at the Executive Ethics Board's website www.ethics.wa.gov.

Commissioners are expected to avoid conflicts of interest involving all matters considered by the Board. A conflict of interest exists when a Commissioner is confronted with an issue in which the Commissioner has, or appears to have, a personal or financial interest or an issue of circumstance that could render the Commissioner unable to remain objective and focus upon the agency’s interest.

To assure that there is no perception of impropriety or unethical behavior, Commissioners will recuse themselves from any discussion or decision which directly involves or affects them. A Commissioner will recuse him/herself by notifying the Chair of the potential conflict of interest and leave the room when the issue in conflict is voted upon.

If a Commissioner does not recuse him/herself when it may be improper for them to participate in discussion or decisions, other Commissioners or the Executive Director, have the right and obligation to request that the Commissioner recuse him/herself.

Commissioners should notify the Chairperson and Executive Director of any actual or potential violations of this policy. When in doubt, Commissioners should consult with the designated Ethics Advisor (Executive Director) or the Human Resources Office.

Process for Addressing Violations by Commissioners
The Board and each of its Commissioners are committed to faithful compliance with the provisions of the Board’s policies. The Board recognizes that failure to deal with deliberate or continuing violations of its policies risks the loss of confidence in the Board’s ability to govern effectively. Therefore, in the event of a Commissioner’s extraordinary, willful and/or continuing violation of policy the Board shall address the issue and may use the following process with every attempt made to resolve the issue at the lowest possible level:

1. Conversation in a private setting between the offending Commissioner and the Chairperson or other individual Commissioner;
   a. If the Chair’s compliance is in question, the Vice-chair will be notified.
2. Discussion in an executive session between the offending Commissioner and the full Board if in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
3. Removal by the Board from any leadership or committee positions to which the offending Commissioner has been appointed or elected.
4. Censure of the offending Commissioner as a means of separating the Board’s focus and intent from those of the offending Commissioner.
5. Removal from the Board. For ex-officio Commissioners, a request may be made to the agency or organization that has appointed the Commissioner in question to appoint
another representative for their agency or organization. For Governor appointed Commissioners, a request may be made to the Office of the Governor to consider making a new appointment.

**Ethics Violations**
The Executive Director is designated as the agency's Ethics Advisor who coordinates and manages the agency's ethics program. The Ethics Advisor is the agency's liaison to the Washington State Executive Ethics Board. The Ethics Advisor may:

a. Assess the application of conflict of interest laws and regulations to the information reported and counsel those Commissioners with regard to resolving actual or potential conflicts of interests or appearances.

b. Counsel Commissioners concerning ethics standards and programs.

c. Assist Commissioners in understanding and implementing agency ethics programs.

The Executive Ethics Board has the authority and responsibility for investigating alleged violation(s) of the Ethics Act. Anyone may file an ethics complaint against a state employee or officer. Complaint forms are available on the Executive Ethics Board's website. Complaints may be filed anonymously or the complainant may choose to remain confidential. Ethics complaints may be filed directly with this Board at the following website: [https://ethics.wa.gov/online-complaint-form](https://ethics.wa.gov/online-complaint-form).
Decision Making

Board Decision Making
The Board will make decisions:

- Through a formal vote of the full Board in an open and public meeting.
- After seeking out the most complete and accurate information and perspectives from all sides of a situation.
- After providing opportunity for and consideration of public comment.

Action items brought to the Board, to the greatest extent possible, will be initially introduced at an open and public meeting and then acted upon, if the Board chooses to act, at the next or a future open and public meeting.

Board and Executive Director Relationship
The Executive Director is the Board’s primary contact with Commission staff. The Board does not work directly with individual staff members on the operations of the organization. The Executive Director may direct staff to communicate with Commissioners as needed.

The Board will direct the Executive Director only through official decisions of the full Board.

- The Board will make decisions by formal, recorded vote in order to avoid any disclarity about whether direction has been given.
- The Executive Director is neither obligated nor expected to follow the directions or instructions of individual Commissioners or committees unless the Board has specifically delegated such exercise of authority.
- Should the Executive Director determine that an information request received from an individual Commissioner or a committee requires a material amount of staff time or is unreasonable, the Executive Director is expected to ask that the committee or the Commissioner refer such requests to the full Board for authorization.

Staff Accountability
The Executive Director is responsible for all matters related to the day-to-day operations of the agency, within the values expressed by the Board in policy. All staff members are considered to report directly or indirectly to the Executive Director.

- The Board will never give direction to any contractor hired by the Executive Director regarding a contract with the Executive Director or to any employee other than the Executive Director.
- The Board will not participate in decisions or actions involving the hiring, evaluating, compensation, disciplining or dismissal of any contractor hired by the Executive Director or any employee other than the Executive Director.

Authority of the Executive Director
The Board will provide direction to the Executive Director through written policies and/or formal vote of the full Board. The Executive Director is authorized to establish any administration policies or procedures, make any decisions, establish any practices and develop any activities that the Executive Director deems appropriate to achieve the work of the agency. The Executive Director is not expected to seek Board approval or authority for any decision falling within the Executive Director’s area of delegated authority.
July 15, 2021

TO: Conservation Commission Members

FROM: Carol Smith, SCC Executive Director

SUBJECT: Clarification of WSCC’s Voluntary Approach

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Action Item: X
Informational Item: 

Summary:
At the 2019 Centennial Accord, Governor Inslee committed to the tribes that he would instruct state agencies to implement site potential tree height buffers wherever possible. Since then, there has been a series of state/tribal meetings to further develop this commitment. There are separate discussions for regulatory vs. non-regulatory actions. WSCC has been very active in the non-regulatory discussions and absent from the regulatory meetings. Recently, WSCC has been asked to approve language in the regulatory pathway. We are seeking a decision from the Commission regarding our participation in regulatory matters.

Requested Action (if action item):
Approve direction for WSCC regarding our involvement in the state/tribal riparian work,

Staff Contact:
Carol Smith (csmith@scc.wa.gov)

Background and Discussion:
In the state/tribal riparian discussions, WSCC has participated in work products relating to non-regulatory topics, including voluntary incentives, monitoring, and funding. WSCC has not participated in discussions or product development involving regulation. Our reasons include:

- Our agency’s mission is “to conserve natural resources on all lands in Washington through voluntary and incentive based programs in collaboration with conservation districts and other partners.” Our mission does not include regulatory activities.
- Working with conservation districts, we’ve been able to make greater strides in improving land stewardship and environmental conditions across Washington State using the voluntary incentive approach. As one of many examples of how successful this work can be, we’ve
restored over 925 miles of riparian habitat through CREP with an average buffer width of 142 feet. This amount is roughly 10 fold or more greater than similar work done by regulatory agencies.

- Many landowners will not work with regulatory agencies. While regulatory agencies are able to conduct some work with landowners on a voluntary basis, there is a significant component of citizens who will not work with these agencies. These landowners can only be successfully reached by local, non-regulatory entities such as conservation districts. Working collaboratively, in trust, with landowners without fear of regulation, is crucial to continued progress towards exemplary land stewardship. Landowners who embrace best management practices willingly, as opposed to required, play an important part in stewardship and as a role model to others. These landowners are more likely to maintain their practices and seek innovative ways to improve land management. The trust that the conservation district family has with landowners is crucial and we are concerned about undermining that trust by being involved in regulatory actions.

- Voluntary stewardship actions help regulatory agencies, such as WDFW and Ecology, accomplish their environmental goals.

- WSCC has no regulatory authority, expertise, or extra capacity.

However with the recent request for our approval of work products relating to riparian regulation, we seek input from the Commission as to whether or not WSCC should be involved in the regulatory discussions or continue to limit our involvement to non-regulatory topics, such as voluntary incentive programs, funding, and monitoring.

**Recommended Action and Options (if action item):**

Approve the following draft motion: WSCC’s mission is “to conserve natural resources on all lands in Washington through voluntary and incentive based programs in collaboration with conservation districts and other partners.” Consistent with our mission and the need to remain separate from regulatory actions, the Commission directs WSCC to limit participation in the state/tribal riparian process to non-regulatory pathways.

**Next Steps:**

If the motion is approved, WSCC staff will work with the Executive Committee of the Commission to send out a letter to the Governor’s Office. WSCC will continue to participate in the non-regulatory aspects of the state/tribal work and will refrain from participating in the regulatory topics.