



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Board of Directors Meeting
March 27, 2013
Phoenix Room, Phoenix Inn Suites
Olympia, WA 98501

MOTIONS

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- **Motion:** Jerry Hendrickson moved that the 11/26/12 draft Board of Directors meeting minutes be approved. Kathy Whalen seconded. The motion carried.
 - **Motion:** Bill Knutsen moved that the February 2013 financial report be approved. John Preston seconded. The motion carried with Larry Davis in opposition.
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ACTION ITEMS

- David Guenther had requested that Dave Vogel, WACD Executive Director, provide an update on the status of our strategic plan at each Board meeting. Dave Vogel prepared an update summary that was included in member packets. Dave Vogel reported that many of the elements contained in the April 2011 Strategic Plan have been completed or are in the process of completion. After reviewing the plan, Dave Vogel added a number of new strategies not currently described in the plan that should be considered for addition.

Action: David Guenther asked the Board to review these additional items and be prepared to discuss them at a soon-to-be-scheduled follow-up meeting to update the plan. If there are questions or comments in the meantime, Board members were asked to direct those to Dave Vogel.

- Congressional delegation primary contacts – Wade Troutman believes WACD should have a primary contact(s) for each member of our Congressional delegation for when members are back in-state and we are successful in securing in-district meetings with them. It would save WACD money by not having to fly back to D.C. for meetings.

Action: Wade asked for volunteers in each of the Regions to serve in this capacity. For those interested, please contact Wade and a list will be compiled that WACD can quickly call on when necessary.

Board of Directors Present

David Guenther, President	John Preston, NC Area Director
Alan Stromberger, Vice President	Mark Moore, SC Area Director
Albert Roberts, Secretary-Treasurer	Michael Crowder, SC Area Director
Wade Troutman, National Director	Tom Miller, NE Area Director
Larry Davis, NW Area Director	Eddie Johnson, NE Area Director
Bill Knutsen, NW Area Director	Jerry Hendrickson, SE Area Director
David Hall, SW Area Director	Larry Cochran, SE Area Director
Kathy Whalen, WADE President	

Board Members Not Present

Chris Herron, Past President
Dean Longrie, SW Area Director

Others in Attendance for All or Part of the Meeting

Roylene Rides-at-the-Door, State Conservationist, NRCS
Ray Ledgerwood, Interim Executive Director, Washington State Conservation Commission
George Boggs, Executive Director, Whatcom CD
Lee Hemmer, Supervisor, Foster Creek CD
Jennifer Boie, District Manager, Palouse CD
Jonathan Merz, District Manager, Foster Creek CD
Stephen Cunningham, Supervisor, Central Klickitat CD
Terry Bruegman, District Manager, Columbia CD
Clinton O'Keefe, Supervisor, Palouse Rock Lake CD
Erin Bailey, Associate Supervisor, Palouse Rock Lake CD
Wendy Pare, Supervisor, Skagit CD
Jim Jesernig, WACD Lobbyist
Brad Jesernig, Lobbyist

Staff Present

Dave Vogel, Executive Director
Deb Gregory, Administrative Coordinator

President David Guenther called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. with introductions of Board members and guests.

ACTION ITEMS

WACD Business

- 11/26/12 DRAFT meeting minutes – **Motion:** Jerry Hendrickson moved that the 11/26/12 draft Board of Directors meeting minutes be approved. Kathy Whalen seconded. The motion carried.

- February 2013 financial report – **Motion:** Bill Knutsen moved that the February financial report be approved. John Preston seconded. The motion carried with Larry Davis in opposition.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- PMC Report – Jerry Hendrickson, SC Area Director and PMC Administrative Committee member, reported that the 2012-2013 harvest season went very well. The PMC had a record-setting year with more sales still coming in. It will be remembered as being one without any undue delays or problems.
- President's Report – David Guenther
 - David Guenther had requested that Dave Vogel, WACD Executive Director, provide an update on the status of our strategic plan at each Board meeting. Dave prepared an update summary that was included in member packets. Dave Vogel was pleased to report that many of the elements contained in the April 2011 Strategic Plan have been completed or are in the process of completion. After reviewing the plan, Dave Vogel described a number of new strategies not currently identified in the plan.

Action: David Guenther asked the Board to review these additional items and be prepared to discuss them at a soon-to-be-scheduled follow-up meeting to update the plan. If there are questions or comments in the meantime, Board members were asked to direct those to Dave Vogel.
 - Envirothon funding – John Baugher, Vice Chair of the Clark CD, sent a letter to David Guenther urging the Board's continued funding and support of the Envirothon Committee's activities. David Guenther responded to that email with a letter to Mr. Baugher which was included in member packets.
- Legislative Report – Jim Jesernig, WACD lobbyist, reported that the session is now past the midway point. The Majority Coalition Caucus (MCC) had originally planned to release their budget on 3/27/2013, but have now postponed release until at least the week of April 1, and maybe longer, to provide an opportunity to secure votes. Jim reported that there is a major shift occurring in the way the Legislature develops its budget. Jim emphasized that members need to focus on a singular message when meeting with their legislators and that is Conservation Districts are the most efficient and effective delivery system for getting conservation on the ground on time and on budget. Jim complimented the work that Dave Vogel and Jason Tross, Communications Consultant for the Conservation Commission, have done in preparing the budget one-pager included in member packets.

- WACD, thanks to Sara Hemphill of King CD, is hosting a legislative reception on Thursday, March 28, from noon to 2:00 p.m., in conference rooms A & B of the John A. Cherberg Building on the Capitol Campus. Staff are hoping for a good turnout by legislators and their staff. Included during the reception will be a virtual tour PowerPoint presentation showcasing projects around the state.
- WACD Pathway Forward/Three Director Talks Update – Dave Vogel and Ray Ledgerwood recapped what has occurred on these issues since the annual meeting. The Commission took an action at their January meeting to have all future discussions and actions by the three directors occur in a public open forum. Further, that the Commission should act as that forum or “convener”. Ray Ledgerwood has been working hard during this interim time to convince the other agency directors on the merits of this proposal. As a follow-up to the all Districts meeting held in Ellensburg on February 20-21, the Commission has scheduled a second meeting on May 20-21. More details will be forthcoming from the Commission. A survey on the pathway forward recommendations is being developed to include stakeholder comments from constituents of the Departments of Ecology, Agriculture and Commission, and will include outreach to EPA and NRCS stakeholders. It will be very important for the Districts to comment on all 11 recommendations. Even if a district does not like or agree with a particular recommendation, Ray asked that everyone give careful thought to each of them and respond accordingly.

Several Board members asked that Ray:

- Ensure that stakeholder input is factored into the final recommendations.
- Include defined agency roles and responsibilities in the final recommendations.
- Ensure that the process be an open and public process.
- WACD Resolutions Status Report – Included in member packets is an update on the status of each of the resolutions passed at the November annual meeting and those that were acted on by NACD at the San Antonio, TX meeting. Wade Troutman reported that of the five WACD resolutions requiring action consideration by NACD, we were successful in getting four of the five passed. The one that did not get favorable approval was 12-12, the 329 Residue Management Practice for Direct Seed. The issue will likely be reintroduced as another resolution at the 2013 WACD annual meeting. Ray Ledgerwood provided a hand-out on the status of those resolutions requiring action by the Conservation Commission.
 - Congressional delegation primary contacts – Wade Troutman believes WACD should have a primary contact(s) for each member of our Congressional delegation for when members are back in-state and we are

successful in securing in-district meetings with them. It would save WACD money by not having to fly back to D.C. for meetings.

Action: Wade asked for volunteers in each of the Regions to serve in this capacity. For those interested, please contact Wade and a list will be compiled that WACD can quickly call on when necessary.

- WACD National Director Alternate - WACD's Executive Committee has reviewed the Bylaws relative to WACD's National Director position and the naming of an alternate. The current Bylaws state in Part XI, Section 4 that the President shall serve as alternate for the National Director unless another person has been appointed to serve by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is considering the appointment of an official alternate and asked the Board if they were in agreement with doing so. The Board's consensus was that the Executive Committee should proceed based on the language contained in the approved Bylaws.

Partnership Reports

- Roylene-Rides-at-the-Door, NRCS:
 - The continuing resolution for the federal budget did pass taking federal agencies through the end of the federal fiscal year (September 30). The continuing resolution maintains the sequestration of funds amounting to a 5% cut for all programs. Some programs will take an additional 2.5% cut. Roylene reported that Washington State is in better shape than many of the states. NRCS will only have half the money they previously had for agreements – about \$150,000 currently projected. Roylene's staff is taking a hard look at where they're at and will be preparing a deficit plan. They are concerned about 2014.
 - For those districts impacted by lease costs, Roylene will need a letter from each with their decision on whether to stay in their current location or whether they will be moving into other facilities. Roylene distributed fact sheets listing impacted districts and outlining district options and deadlines.
 - Cooperative Working Agreements (CWA) – Due to Farm Bill legislation changes since 1996 and other statutory and policy updates, it is appropriate that NRCS and CDs update their operational agreements. New CWA's will be developed for each NRCS field office and the local CDs by July 1, 2014.
 - Pacific Salmon Habitat Partnership – This year's Pacific salmon program was rolled out as a pilot. NRCS tested it and ran sign-ups for the money.

They received a total of 20 applications, but once applicants found out they needed to install larger buffers under NOAA standards, they decided not to participate. Only ended up with four participants as a result. Roylene's staff will be doing a second sign up by April 15 which will include some new criteria.

- In the North Yakima basin, EPA conducted a water quality study. NRCS took a hard stand on the EPA report and asked them to withdraw it as NRCS believes that they interpreted a tech note incorrectly. While EPA did not withdraw their report, it did result in improved communications with EPA. Roylene was pleased to have received a letter from EPA that producers will implement their practices to NRCS standards. She believes NRCS is now moving in a more positive direction with EPA as a result of their stand on EPA's Yakima Basin report.
- Kathy Whalen, President, Washington Association of District Employees (WADE) – Kathy reported that the next Board meeting will be held in Leavenworth at the Sleeping Lady Conference Center prior to the WADE conference kick-off. She said this presented a perfect opportunity for Board members to stay and participate in WADE to see the types of training offered to district employees. She encouraged all Board members to seriously consider this opportunity. Scholarship applications for the conference are due by Friday, March 29.
- Ray Ledgerwood, Interim Executive Director, WSCC –
 - SB 5770, Direct Deposit for Districts – Bill is moving smoothly through the legislative process and seems likely it will pass and get sent to the Governor for signature.
 - The WACD Technical Employees Work Group and WSCC is very close to getting a certification program in place for dairy nutrient management.
 - Supervisor elections and appointments – The Commission will be seeking participants to form a group to vet ideas for how to change the process, including members of the WACD Past Presidents Task Force.
 - Ray proposed a meeting between WACD and WSCC leadership to discuss overlapping roles and responsibilities.
 - Ray is offering to host a meeting between leadership after the legislative session to discuss how the 2013 legislative process went.
 - Commission staff meets every Monday morning to check in on what's coming up during the week.

- Commission leadership meets every Tuesday morning with WACD leadership and NRCS for a partnership conference call.

Area Director Reports

South Central

- Michael Crowder reported that for both Benton and Franklin CD's a major focus has been to implement projects funded by the Category 3 allocations from the Conservation Commission.

Benton:

- 10,000 acres of Irrigation Water Management
- 1 - 1,000 horsepower variable frequency drive motor and pump
- 16,000 Lineal feet of fencing
- 4 irrigation conversions

Franklin:

- 10,000 acres of Irrigation Water Management
- 5,200 Acres of noxious weed control
- 2 waste storage ponds
- 1 manure transfer pipeline

North Yakima:

- North Yakima completed a 4,600 acre perpetual conservation easement for a cow calf operation among their Category 3 funding opportunities.
- Mark Moore reported that in Kittitas County, spring seeding has been put on hold due to weather issues.
- Kittitas has put \$500,000 into fire recovery.

North Central

- John Preston reported that Grant, Moses Lake and Warden have officially consolidated into one district, now called Grant County Conservation District. Marie Lotz has been appointed to serve as the District Manager. The District has also hired two new positions. After the first of May, the District will be moving their office to a new location that is more centrally located in the district boundary.
- John McLean reported that there is some extensive erosion control work in progress as a result of the fires in the Cascadia CD.
- Okanogan CD will be looking at moving into different office space as a result of the NRCS lease costs.
- Lee Hemmer from Foster Creek reported they have restored many fire lines. Lee introduced Jonathan Merz as the new District Manager for Foster Creek.

Southwest

- Thurston CD receives an assessment through the county. Thurston County's Commissioners elected to take 28% of the CD's money away to establish Shell Fish Protection Districts. Fortunately for Thurston CD, they have applied for several grants to help replace the assessment money they will lose.
- Mike Nordin has been named as the new District Manager for Pacific and Grays Harbor CDs.

Northwest

- Larry Davis reported that after 13 years into Whatcom's CREP program, they will plant their one millionth tree on April 20.
- One supervisor position was up for election this year. The sitting supervisor was unopposed in the election so their term was automatically renewed.
- George Boggs received the National Employee of the Year Award from the National Conservation District Employees Association at the NACD annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas in January.
- Larry has been to one CD Board meeting this year in Skagit. He participated in their annual partnership breakfast and then attended their meeting.
- Larry noted that Wendy Pare from Skagit CD has been working with the PMC staff on realigning WACD's financial report. Wendy has been doing great work on this effort.
- Larry has been following up with Acting NRCS Chief Jason Weller on a 2011 WACD resolution acted upon at the National Association meeting, entitled "Power to the People".
- Larry is looking to establish relationships with tribes in his represented area.
- Bill Knutsen reported that the Puget Sound District Caucus will be meeting this evening immediately following the Board meeting. Those interested are welcome to attend. The group has been meeting regularly to resolve issues around the sound and interact with other agencies that are engaged in the clean-up of Puget Sound.

Northeast

- Eddie Johnson reported that the area is still doing clean up and restoration due to a storm last summer.

- The energy program in Lincoln County has been very popular with more requests than money available.
- Eddie noted that several districts have asked if there could be a gentlemen's agreement to bring back the grassroots process where supervisors can move and second during committee meetings rather than putting all decisions in the hands of the committee during the annual meeting. Eddie is hoping that process could be brought back at the 2013 annual meeting.
- Tom Miller reported that Spokane CD isn't being affected by the NRCS lease issue as they have a long-term lease in place with Spokane County.
- Ag production is increasing seeding of 1700 no till acres. That has been growing steadily. Will probably be getting some new equipment.
- Spokane CD has a county assessment which helps immensely.

Southeast

- Jerry Hendrickson provided a copy of a report from Asotin County on all of the activities within their area. Their intent is to hand this report out during legislative days.
- Larry Cochran reported that Jennifer Boie is the new Palouse CD District Manager.
- Palouse's recent district election has been appealed to the Conservation Commission as there are questions as to whether it was done in accordance with state law and WAC. The Commission will decide if the election must be re-done.
- Clinton O'Keefe noted that in Palouse Rock Lake, there is a lot of direct seed money going out. More contracts than money available.
- Also in Palouse Rock Lake, there is a lot of riparian fencing being done.

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 17, 2013 beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the Sleeping Lady Conference Center in Leavenworth. WACD's budget will be the topic of discussion.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Gregory
 Administrative Coordinator
 Washington Association of Conservation Districts