



“Building Our Even Stronger WACD”

Strategic Planning Work Session
Washington Association of Conservation Districts
April 11, 2011 – 9:30 am to 5:00 pm
Hal Holmes Center - Ellensburg

Session Objective:

- Envisioning an even stronger, even more effective WACD, including strategic priorities, measurable goals, benchmarks, timeline, and actions needed

Effective Associations & Importance:

See presentation slides

A Vision for WACD's Future Accomplishments:

2011

- Net income of \$1.3 million in 2011 vs. \$53,000 in 1980's
- Develop organizational flowchart, procedures, bylaws, internal controls are being implemented in 2011
- Organizational structure flowchart by September 2011
- Clear and defined policy manuals, staff policies and procedures and organization chart by December 2011
- Collectively work together state-wide by 2011
- PMC deed transfer from Skagit County to WACD by 2011
- Clear representation of all member districts by April 12th, 2011

2012

- PMC deed transferred to WACD by 2012
- Creation of identity of WACD vs. Commission and local districts
- Implement communication structure by 2012
- Develop long range (5 year) plan and annual plan of work by 2012
- Monthly Association magazine by 2012

2013

- Washington State to pay for district elections by 2013
- WACD newsletter paid for by advertising by 2013

2014

- Clarify and improve revenue stream by 2014

2015

- Became most influential natural resource group in a non-biased way by 2015
- WACD be the go-to conservation organization of the state by 2015
- Updating RCW 89.08 to meet future needs
- Help interested districts obtain assessments by 2015

WACD Living Timeline:

2010

▪

2008

▪

2006

▪

2004

- In 2004 began budget submittal process
- Hiring of WACD staff – Executive Director & Lobbyist

2003

- Beginning PMC self-sufficiency

2001

▪

Before 2000

- WACD independent voice – before 2000
- First Executive Director of WACD - 1997
- Creation of agreement for PMC – 1992
- Started influencing federal budgets, policies and programming – 1990
- Strengthened conservation partnership
- Assessment authority - 1989

2003

- Beginning PMC self-sufficiency

WACD Mission: (4.11.11)

“WACD is a voluntary non-governmental association to advance the purposes of conservation districts and their constituents by providing leadership, information, representation, products & services.

WACD Vision: (4.11.11)

Natural Resources protected and conserved for future generations

WACD Purposes:

- Provides District supervisors, staff, and partners with timely information, education, training, and leadership
- Represents Conservation Districts at state, regional, and national level
- Serves as a link between Districts and their state and federal partners and other organizations
- Facilitates the resolution of natural resource-related problems
- Serves as a communication link among Districts
- Providing conservation plant materials

Goals Grid (by Fred Nickols)

<p>Achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Defining roles and responsibilities within WACD ▪ 319 funding ▪ Good communication with districts ▪ Effective conservation leadership for association members ▪ Clear and consistent organizational structure ▪ Regular newsletter ▪ CPA audit ▪ Collective unified voice ▪ Transfer of PMC title ▪ Final version of policies and procedures ▪ Better communication between WACD and PMC Admin board ▪ Effective resolution process including prioritization of resolutions (work load) ▪ Clear understanding of WACD priorities for staff ▪ WACD building in Olympia ▪ Policy and budget makers with an open door to WACD ▪ Wise use of natural resources 	<p>Avoid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regulatory authority ▪ Being considered the WSCC ▪ Political partisanship ▪ Being marginalized, people not knowing who we are ▪ Being audited by IRS ▪ Lack of funding ▪ BMP manual ▪ Miscommunication ▪ Lack of influence ▪ Non execution of contracts
<p>Preserve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Credibility ▪ 501(c)(6) status ▪ Funding for conservation ▪ Staff quality ▪ Reputation ▪ Standing with law makers ▪ Positive perception and working relations with public and law makers ▪ Independent WSCC ▪ Legislative influence ▪ Strategic plan and overview and update annually ▪ Diversity of members ▪ Healthy districts ▪ Focus on conservation ▪ Voluntary approach 	<p>Eliminate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Duplication in different organizations ▪ Redundancies in function ▪ Public dissention by individual district (s) about association positions ▪ Supervisor misperceptions about WACD ▪ Bickering and internal conflict (big/small, east/west, rural/urban) ▪ Confusion of the role of staff and volunteers ▪ Lack of understanding as to the WACD functions ▪ Inadequate communication ▪ Lack of cohesiveness as related to lobbying activities and participation

Goal Grid Use:

- Revising, maintaining, evaluating, or considering new policies, programs, priorities
- Use In annual planning
- Justify our positions when talking with other organizations
- Focus priorities

Criteria for Selecting a WACD Priority (priority order)

- Enable WACD to fulfill its mission and/or vision, strategic plan
- Benefits Conservation Districts
- Is achievable (time available, and timing)
- Does it get conservation on the ground
- Spoken as one voice for state in the best interest of conservation
- Keeps districts operating
- Consensus among the WACD leadership group (O&D)

District Expectations of WACD:

- Good, timely communication
- Lobbying services
- Unity
- Change policy through resolutions
- Education
- Training
- Good conservation grade plants
- Leadership
- Influence and representation
- Respectable leadership in relationships
- Supervisor and leadership training
- Technical training opportunities
- Represent district interests
- Well ran organization that achieves success for districts

Note: consult with district managers, partners, and supervisors on ideas for expectations of WACD

WACD Strategic Priorities: (lines of business)

- Legislative & influence
- Information exchange
- Public outreach
- Products & services
- Partnering
- WACD operations

Measures of Success & Measurable Goals:

Strategic Priority	Measures	Goal
Legislative & influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding ▪ Legislation and policy influenced (passed or defeated) ▪ Resolution success ▪ # of legislators and organizations that want to work with us (applaud our efforts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in funding, legislation and policy influence, resolution success and the number of legislators and organizations that want to work with us
Information exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WACD Directors contacts with districts reported back to O&D ▪ Volume of communication exchange (among districts & WACD) (consider a survey) ▪ % of membership responding to requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in WACD Directors contacts with districts reported back to O&D; in the volume of communication exchange and the % of membership responding to requests
Public Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of subscribers to electronic newsletter ▪ # of public communications ▪ # website "hits" ▪ # of people reached & change of behavior ▪ # of people wanting to be involved in districts ▪ # of events and attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in the number of subscribers to electronic newsletter; in the number of public communications; in the number of website "hits"; in the number of people reached & change of behavior; the number of people wanting to be involved in districts; and the number of events and attendance
Products & Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of plants sold ▪ PMC profit ▪ # of new and return customers ▪ Attendance at WACD Conference ▪ # and quality of products and Services offered ▪ Talking points produced and successful outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in number of plants sold; in PMC profit; in number of new and return customers; in the attendance at WACD Conference; the number and quality of products and services offered; and the talking points produced and successful outcomes
Partnering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of signed agreements ▪ # of existing and new partnerships & results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in the number of signed agreements; in the number of existing and new partnerships &

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leveraging of resources, products, services ▪ Success of our partners 	results; in the leveraging of resources, products, services; and the success of our partners
WACD operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear and defined policies, procedures ▪ # of district issues resolved or addressed ▪ # of satisfied and involved districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By 2016 WACD will be an efficient and financially stable organization

Benchmarks, Timeline, & Actions:

Legislative & Influence

Measurable Goal: By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in funding, legislation and policy influence, resolution success and the number of legislators and organizations that want to work with us.

Benchmark	Timeline	Actions
Full funding for districts	Every two years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legislative days ▪ Efficient use of funds ▪ Increase supervisor participation in Olympia
Washington State pay for elections	By Dec 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change RCW 89.08 or acceptance of our current election process
Update District Law – RCW 89.08	By Dec 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bylaw task force check RCW 89.08 for possible out of date and needed changes
Resolutions & policy	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritize on need and workload (tier 1, 2, 3) ▪ Report back to districts
# of legislators with a working knowledge of conservation districts	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
# of supervisors with working relationship with legislators	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

Information Exchange

Measurable Goal: By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in WACD Directors contacts with districts reported back to O&D; in the volume of communication exchange and the % of membership responding to requests

Benchmark	Timeline	Actions
Communication Structure in place	By Dec 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive committee to directors to districts back to directors to Executive committee
Survey districts	By Dec 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure survey to reflect success of communication and areas for improvement
Newsletter	By Dec 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should include current events, issues, activities affecting districts Sent monthly one page and sites (digital) and PMC news
Webinars	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinar training for supervisors
Magazine	???	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Public Outreach

Measurable Goal: By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase the number of subscribers to electronic newsletter; in the number of public communications; in the number of website "hits"; in the number of people reached & change of behavior; the number of people wanting to be involved in districts; and the number of events and attendance

Benchmark	Timeline	Actions
Launch e-newsletter	By Jan 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers and directors form committee with outline to direct public outreach plan (July 2011) Hire public relations firm to develop marketing plan (September 2011) Develop e-newsletter distribution list (include districts, partners, non-government organizations, etc.) (December 2011) Develop e-newsletter to be launched (January 2012)
Press Release	By Jan 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop distribution list (marketing firm) (December 2012) Monthly releases (January 2012)
# of Hits to Website	By Jan 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put counter on WACD website (January 2011) Track hits quarterly and report back to Officers and Directors meetings
Conduct annual follow survey	By Jan 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop benchmark survey to be used annually Report findings at officers and directors meeting (March 2013)
Communication Strategy Developed	By Jan 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Products & Services:

Measurable Goal: By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in number of plants sold; in PMC profit; in number of new and return customers; in the attendance at WACD Conference; the number and quality of products and services offered; and the talking points produced and successful outcomes

Benchmark	Timeline	Actions
5% more plants from previous year	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase conservation district buy in
10% more customers from previous year	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase marketing efforts in mailing, conferences, etc.
Increase number of those involved in legislative hearings	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop reputation of providers of reliable information on legislative leadership
Get 50% of Supervisors at annual meeting	By April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide scholarships ▪ Contact chairs to encourage supervisors to attend (all districts represented)
Training Activities	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the activities of the Technical Proficiency & Planning Committee (added 9/2011)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

Partnering

Measurable Goal: By April 2016 have a demonstrated increase in the number of signed agreements; in the number of existing and new partnerships & results; in the leveraging of resources, products, services; and the success of our partners

Benchmark	Timeline	Actions
Number of signed agreements	By April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Officers and directors aware of WACD signed agreements and deliverables
Database created	By April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Database to include supervisors and employees of all other affiliations and organizations to create a fluid partnership possibilities
Leverage created	By April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilize database to open up new possibilities
Success of partners	By April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent commission ▪ NRCS national policy ▪ WADE training ▪ Talk with NRCS, WSCC, WADE about needs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

WACD Operations

Measurable Goal: By 2016 WACD will be an efficient and financially stable organization

Benchmark	Timeline	Actions
Personnel policy Manual	By May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft completed ▪ Review and approval by O&D
Organizational flowchart	By May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 options considered
Clear and defined procedures manual and bylaws	By Nov 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bylaws committee working on bylaws revisions (chaired by Roberts) ▪ Procedures manual developed by subcommittee (chaired by Guenther) ▪ Legal review of entire "package"
Policy Manual	By 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collection of past and current policies into a comprehensive policy manual
PMC deed transferred	By Dec 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action register and timeline developed ▪ Leadership by Larson, L. Brown, Niemi, Herron, Guenther
Strategic Plan for "ONE WACD"	By Dec 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft strategic plan (goals, benchmarks, timelines – financial, staff, board) ▪ Annual review at September Officers and Directors meeting ▪ Leadership by Vice President
# of district issues resolved or addressed	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Before each officers and directors meeting, have directors request input from their districts ▪ Staff address issues identified from input
# of satisfied and involved districts	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Request from WACD to each district on being subscribed to newsletter
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

Organizational Recommendations for WACD:

- Executive Director would track accomplishments in the 6 areas and report back to Officers & Directors & districts
- Officers and directors meetings – suggest that we spend time on high priority items – look at increasing the meeting time or have a webinar to review strategic direction
- Area directors collect information from districts on issues to work on and recommendations to WACD, something going well that needs shared. Get district minutes to area directors

Other WACD Organizational Recommendations (for Officers and Directors consideration)

Issue to Resolve	Desired Outcome	Recommended Actions	Timeline	Leaders	Status
1. Officers & Directors Liability Coverage	Officers and Directors have adequate coverage for liability, errors and omissions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine what we have now in liability coverage for WACD board members and employees 2. Go out to bid for liability coverage – WACD Officers, Directors, and employees 3. Budget adjustment and approval by O&D 	By end of May		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contacted Enduris ▪ Looked at policy and will need to add a rider for staff ▪ Have contacted Enduris - District Supervisors have coverage as Supervisor. Enduris gray on verbiage on coverage with 501(c)(6) activities.
2. WACD procedure for when asking Districts to take an action – statewide importance	All districts would be on the same page for any statewide call to action - WACD speaking as one voice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine our current policies on the subject 2. Would then poll the districts about the proposed action 3. Using poll results, O&D would meet to make an informed decision about the request of districts to take action 	Complete procedure by end of November 2011 and then On-going		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If current resolutions and policy is clear – don't poll ▪ No current procedure to follow for a statewide call to action by WACD
3. Organization Framework including Governance Responsibilities & Organizational Chart	Would provide a guide to how to conduct business within WACD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop draft summary of governance responsibilities including roles and responsibilities, expectations, lines of communication (board members, employees, member districts) 2. Develop draft organizational chart 3. Reviewed by O&D, revisions made as needed and approval 4. Share with member districts 	Complete by end of May 2011		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coming in May (see strategic plan notes) ▪ Resolution approved by members at annual meeting
4. MOA – Districts & WSCC & Ecology	Have Ecology, districts, WACD, and WSCC completing a new agreement based on the needs for water quality in state and the respective responsibilities of Ecology, districts, WSCC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summary of which districts have taken action and what action 2. WACD O&D meet to discuss next steps 3. Meet with Ecology, WSCC to begin work on new agreement -use input from districts regarding elements to be included 4. Send draft MOA to districts for comment and recommendations 5. Complete MOA for signing by each district 	Complete by end of June 2011		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Done at this point ▪ Districts are meeting to determine if they will terminate (or not) the current MOA
5. WACD Personnel Manual and Job Descriptions	All employees have current and up-to-date job descriptions, evaluations, and have read and acknowledged (signing) the WACD Personnel Manual	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the development of the WACD personnel manual including the job descriptions 2. Reviewed by O&D and Executive Director, revisions made as needed 3. Legal review and back to O&D for approval 4. Meet with all employees to review WACD Personnel Manual, job descriptions and signing acknowledgements by employees 	By end of May		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ O&D has approved a preliminary personnel manual developed by committee (see strategic plan notes) ▪ Still needs additional review by O&D and staff (see recommended actions) ▪ Draft done and sent to O&D and staff for review 4.12.11 ▪ Need recommendations by tracking

6. Communications & Calendaring	Effective communication on events, coordination of attendance and representation and critical information needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a system for communicating important events, coordinating attendance and representation, and sharing critical information needs among Officers and Directors. eg. monthly 	By end of May 2011		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (see strategic plan notes) ▪
7. Maintaining the IRS Section 501(c)(6) status	WACD operating according to 501(c)(6) status and proper filing of tax returns	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet with 501(c)(6) accountant to review tax return and information needed to stay current with 501c6 status 2. Gather tax return, information and requirements 3. Review tax return, information and requirements with O&D and determine any procedures needing to be changed 4. Proper filing of tax returns 	By end of June		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Albert working on the tax returns....comparing and will complete work and bring to May meeting
8. WACD Policy & Operations Manual	All WACD policies collected and fully executed Documents collected	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. existing policies collected including PMC, past resolutions, and operations 2. analysis of gaps, identification of needed policies 3. formation of team to develop draft policies and manual for O&D consideration 4. adopt interim policy manual by O&D, revisions needed 5. review with all member districts at area meetings for any comment or questions, incorporate revisions as needed 6. adopt by full membership at WACD Annual Meeting 	By end of June 2011 for policies needed for tax return By end of September 2011		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (see strategic plan notes) ▪ Personnel manual drafted, needs review and approval ▪ Bylaws task force request to make a recommendation of operations manual ▪ Utilize the examples from other states ▪ David Guenther would chair operations part and coordinate with Albert
9. WACD Bylaws Update	Have updated bylaws being used by organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather the organizational items prepared above 2. Committee formed to examine the by-laws regarding any recommended bylaw revisions to put in concert the policies with the bylaws 3. Hire attorney specializing in 501(c)(6) organizations to review bylaws, organizational documents and tax return information 4. Create resolution for members action at area meetings and review bylaw amendments with all member districts at area meetings for any comment or questions, incorporate revisions as needed 5. adopt by full membership at WACD Annual Meeting 	By end of September		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (see strategic plan notes) ▪ Bylaws task force working on this... ▪ Resolution approved to form a committee for bylaw review, president will be appointing
10. Meeting Procedures	Would have timely and correct meeting agendas, minutes, financial reports	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop procedure for putting agenda together including how to add items to the agendas 2. Clarify expectations for minutes, budget and financial report distribution and timing 3. Consider pre-meeting if needed 	By end of May 2011	John & Deb & President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10 days out materials for board meeting ▪ Minutes by 10 days after

11. Accounting Procedures Manual	Would have clear, efficient, and transparent budget and financial reporting process for WACD being implemented	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Committee formed under leadership of treasurer to examine the WACD budget and financial reporting procedures and develop recommendations (include past treasurer, PMC member, supervisors and/or employees with accounting background) 2. Draft budget and financial procedures for consideration by O&D 3. Review and revise accounting procedures manual based on procedures 4. Send budget (if major revision) back to membership 	By September 2011	Albert Roberts, Monte Marti, John Larson, PMC member, plus xx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lori and Albert working on this ▪ Member approved existing budget, still working on procedures with new treasurer
12. Strategic Plan	Clear long range strategic plan for the WACD including strategic priorities, goals, benchmarks & timeline staffing needs, funding needs based on input from all 47 districts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a recommended process, steps, and timeline for developing the strategic plan including input from district supervisors and employees 2. Review with O&D, revisions if needed and approval 3. Strategic planning input from district supervisors and employees, WSCC and other partners 4. All District chairs and O&D work session to develop draft strategic plan 5. Districts review and revisions as needed 6. Complete, adopt by membership, and implement Strategic Plan 	By November 2011		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (see strategic plan notes) ▪ In progress
13. Annual Plan	Plan prepared annually as a road map for WACD, would include priorities, actions, people responsible, time and money budgets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a recommended template for annual planning 2. Review with O&D, revisions if needed and approval 3. O&D work session to develop working annual plan 4. Send to district members. 	By November 2012 and annually		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (see strategic plan notes) ▪ In progress
14. WACD Committee Structure	Xx committees functioning and bringing issues and recommendations to the O&D	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine needs and recommended committees to match the needs of the member districts 2. Develop a white paper on committee structure, expectations – eg legislative – could consider strategic areas 	Start in 2011 with a few committees		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Executive, PMC, Forestry committees existing
15. WACD and WSCC Working Relations, Priorities and Expectations	WACD and WSCC are performing at a high effectiveness and efficiency by coordinating lead management on priority work items	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize a face to face meeting every six months of WACD and WSCC leaders to clarify relations, lead responsibilities on priorities, expectations, sharing staff and workload. 	Each six months	WSCC Executive Director & Chair, WACD Executive Director and president	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talking every Tuesday, but do need an opportunity for candid discussion between WSCC & WACD leaders ▪ Use quarterly leadership meetings or existing meetings