



# Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Conserving Washington's Natural Resources For Future Generations

Washington State's 45 Conservation Districts play a decisive and distinctive role in helping landowners achieve a high level of stewardship of natural resources on private lands throughout our State. District Supervisors and their dedicated Staff members are the "boots on the ground" that get voluntary conservation practices implemented **on time - and on budget**.



## Conservation Funding Changes from the Administration's Budget:

### Operating Budget

- **\$1M** - restoring WSCC's maintenance level funding
- **\$4M** to enhance local Conservation District Technical Assistance

### Capital Budget

- **Repurposing existing \$5M Dairy Loan Program Funding**
  - \$3M to Non-Shellfish
  - \$2M to fund Dairy Omniprocessors
- **\$1M** to enhance Engineering Design & Implementation

We recognize that this is a particularly challenging budget period. While we fully understand the importance of funding education, transportation, and human services, we strongly believe that it is equally important to conserve Washington's precious natural resources for current and future generations.



The natural wonders of Washington State are a key reason why our citizens want to live, work, and raise their families here. Though we recognize that natural resource funding will always be difficult, we believe it is a critical investment in future generations' quality of life that is just as important as any other funding need.

Accordingly, the Washington Association of Conservation Districts urges the legislature to make the adjustments detailed on the following page to the **Operating** and **Capital Budgets** proposed by the Administration:





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## 2017 - 2019 Budget



• **\$1M to restore the Washington State Conservation Commission's maintenance level funding.** Resources allocated to local CDs by the Commission with its maintenance level funding are critically necessary if Conservation Districts are going to continue operating in every corner of Washington State. The grants provided with this funding are used to pay for essentials like rent, electricity, and a base level of staff capacity.

• **\$4M to increase Conservation Technical Assistance.** As Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) plans presently being developed by VSP counties move from the planning to implementation stage, CDs will need to expand their technical assistance capacity to meet that workload. This Operating Budget funding would enable districts to apply a targeted approach

to incentive-based programs that would make measurable progress towards meeting local and state natural resource priorities.



**\$1M to increase Engineering Design and Implementation.** A critical bottleneck to moving conservation projects to completion is a lack of engineering capacity at the CD level. This Capital Budget funding would get local CDs the engineering capacity they need to accelerate progress on projects critical to state and local conservation

- **Repurpose the \$5M Dairy Loan reappropriation** to increase Non-Shellfish Projects funding from the \$4M proposed by the Administration to \$7M, with the remaining \$2M used to purchase 2 Dairy manure Omniprocessors. This Capital Budget enhancement supports projects in all areas of the state that conserve air and water quality resources, enhance habitat, and preserve viable farms.

For further questions or comments,  
Please contact **Bob Schroeter, WACD Executive Director**  
360.827.5075 • [bschroeter@wadistricts.org](mailto:bschroeter@wadistricts.org)

