



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

2003 Resolutions

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Washington Association of Conservation Districts
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Resolution No: 03-01

Title: Articles XII - Committees and Task Forces

Problem:

WACD needs to be prepared to effectively influence and advise state policy makers including the Governor, state agencies and legislature on issues affecting natural resource conservation in the State of Washington. The President of WACD should have authority to establish task forces to better enable the Association to proactively develop and communicate Association positions to these policy makers.

Recommendation:

Sec. 1 The President of the Association shall have the authority to establish task forces as deemed necessary and establish their type, function, and duration as identified in the Association's operating procedures.

Sec. 2 The officers and directors of the Association shall have the authority to establish committees they deem necessary and establish their type, function, duration as identified in the Association's operating procedures.

DO NOT PASS. Motion Larry Cochran, Palouse CD. Second Lynn Brown, Kittitas CD. **Motion Failed.**



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
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Resolution No: 03-02

Title: Article XII – Committees and Task Forces

Recommendation:

Article XII to be modified and read as follows:

Section 1 – The President of the Association shall have the authority to establish short-term task forces as deemed necessary and establish their type, function, and durations as identified in the Association's operating procedures. ~~The purpose of these task forces shall be to discuss pertinent issues facing the Association and recommend appropriate actions to the officers and directors.~~

Section 2 – The officers and directors of the Association shall have the authority to establish ~~task forces and~~ committees they deem necessary and establish their type, function, and duration as identified in the Association's operating procedures. ~~The purpose of these task forces and committees shall be to discuss pertinent issues facing the Association and recommend appropriate actions to the officers and directors.~~

Section 3 – ~~The President shall name the Chair, members and time limits (as appropriate) for all task forces and committees established under Section 1.~~

DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion Nick Somero, Pacific CD. Second Bob Playfair, Stevens CD.
Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
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Resolution No: 03-03

Title: WACD Annual Meeting Logistics

Problem:

As the role of conservation district becomes increasingly complex, the need for legislative solutions to some of our conservation challenges is becoming necessary. The Washington State Legislative session start in January of every year. In order to get legislation properly drafted and to go through the extensive budget requisition process, districts must be able to plan on local, area and state-wide levels several months in advance of each session. The Washington Association of Conservation District's annual meeting always begins on the Monday following Thanksgiving. Area meetings are held in October. Districts bring forth resolutions to the Area level and they are sent on to the annual meeting for state-wide action. This does not allow for nearly enough time to adequately plan any legislative action based on resolutions and concerns acted on by the membership before the start of session. Coupled with the hardships imposed on our members with beginning the conference on the Thanksgiving weekend, it is clearly evident that the WACD annual meeting is held too late in the year and needs to be moved to an earlier date.

Recommendation:

That ~~Move the~~ WACD seriously consider a move in the WACD annual meeting to a date that would better address the time constraints for legislative action and eliminate the hardships associated with our members having to travel on a major holiday weekend. Area meetings ~~could~~ should also be moved to allow for adequate process time for resolutions and legislative action.

DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion Gerald Scheele, Spokane CD. Second Jim Carney, Pend Oreille CD. Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
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Resolution No: 03-04

Title: Clarification of Factors Used in Calculating WACD Dues

Problem:

In is unclear what revenues and costs are considered when WACD determines the dues assessed to each Conservation District.

Recommendation:

That WACD clarify the factors used in the formula when they determine the dues assessment.

DO PASS. Motion Bob Playfair, Stevens CD. Second Nick Somero, Pacific CD. Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
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Resolution No: 03-05

Title: Funding WACD

Problem:

Procedures to fund WACD for 2004 need to be established.

Recommendation:

WACD will continue the current quota system and quota level for 2004. The WACD President is authorized to appoint a task force to develop a long-term strategy for funding the activities and programs of WACD for the next five years.

DO PASS. Motion Nick Somero, Pacific CD. Second Sharon Call, Kitsap CD. Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
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Resolution No: 03-06

Title: WACD Funding Quotas

Recommendation:

WACD will continue the current quota systems and quota level for 2004

DO NOT PASS. Motion John Preston, Warden CD. Second Sharon Call, Kitsap CD. **Motion Failed.**



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-07

Title: WACD Funding – Activities and Programs Task Force

Recommendation:

President is recommended to appoint a task force to develop a long-term strategy for funding the activities and programs of WACD for the next five years.

DO NOT PASS. Motion by Mark Hitchcock, Skagit CD. Second Sharon Call, Kitsap CD. **Motion Failed.**



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
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Resolution No: 03-08

Title: District Property Taxes

Problem:

Conservation Districts currently are required to pay property taxes on real estate. The real estate is essentially owned by the state, and the taxes are essentially paid with state funds. This property tax takes dollars away from potential projects that could improve the natural resources in Washington State. Currently no other districts (cemetery, school, fire, irrigation, etc.) pay property taxes on real estate.

Recommendation:

~~WACD work with legislators to add an exemption to property taxes for conservation districts in 89.08.~~

WACD work with individual CD's to interact with proper jurisdictions to add an exemption to property taxes for CD's.

DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion Paul Nee, Pierce CD. Second Bob Playfair, Stevens CD.
Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-09

Title: Landowner Protection

Problem:

Many private landowners are reluctant to allow Conservation District Staff on their property to collect data via state or federal grants, due to the fear that information collected could come back in the form of additional environmental regulations. Many landowners feel that data collected through state and federal grants could be used to adversely effect future operations. ~~Procedures to fund WACD for 2004 need to be established.~~

Recommendation:

That the Washington Association of Conservation Districts work with other affected parties to provide protection to private landowners who grant landowner permission on their property.

Comments:

This resolution is brought forth by the Pacific Conservation District to provide security to the private landowners of the State of Washington. Landowners are reluctant to participate or provide access to property due to the threat of further, onerous environmental regulations that could adversely affect the current legal, authorized and permitted operations of landowners across the state.

DO NOT PASS. Motion Nick Somero, Pacific CD. Second Bob Playfair, Stevens CD. **Motion Failed.**



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-10

Title: Fulfilling Conservation District Engineering Needs

Status:

In 1999 the Conservation Commission decided to not continue contracts with the Natural Resources Conservation Service for engineering services, instead establishing a mechanism to provide engineering assistance and coverage to conservation districts through district-employed Professional Engineers. Districts were directed to form “clusters” to share engineering resources. Many districts preferred to contract engineering services rather than employ a staff engineer. The advice from the Commission was that the work of district technicians could not be covered by a Professional Engineer that was not employed by a district or cluster of districts. It has since been determined that this advice was inaccurate.

Problem:

The practice of clustering districts to share the services of a single Professional Engineer has proven challenging in some areas. Many engineers are housed a considerable distance from some of the districts they serve. It is uncommon for a single engineer to possess the breadth of expertise and experience needed by a cluster of districts. The supervision of the engineer, who is employed by one district but serves multiple districts, is awkward.

Recommendation:

That WACD work with the Conservation Commission should allow to develop a policy allowing conservation districts to receive engineering grant funding to contract for engineering services as an option to participating in a cluster that employs an engineer.

DO NOT PASS. Motion Paul Nee, Pierce CD. Second Bob Playfair, Stevens CD. **Motion failed.**



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-11

Title: WACD Participation in Farm Bill Process

Background:

The agricultural community is intimately involved in environmental stewardship of the land and its natural resources. In order to sustain this effort, farmers and ranchers must remain profitable to continue stewardship of their lands. The current Farm Bill takes steps to reward farmers and ranchers for their efforts to conserve, enhance, and restore our natural resources. However, without a strong voice from the conservation community, future Farm Bills may not adequately consider the balance required between support for commodities and support for conservation efforts mandated by society.

Recommendation:

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts in conjunction with the National Association of Conservation Districts ~~should provide input~~ would continue to offer a strong voice to the appropriate agencies and ~~representatives~~ appropriate elected federal officials on conservation issues in the next Farm Bill.

DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion John McLean, Foster Creek CD. Second Margaret Tokach, Stevens County CD. Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-12

Title: Technical Assistance Funding for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Status:

With input from a special committee the Conservation Commission awards grants to conservation districts to provide technical assistance for implementation of the CREP program.

Problem:

It is not practicable to operate a successful conservation district CREP program with funding that is sufficient to employ less than a half-time staff person. The CREP is a very complicated program involving multiple agencies. In order for the program to function, some districts must perform many of the responsibilities of the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, yet the districts do not receive compensation for this additional workload. Some districts consistently receive large CREP Technical Assistance grant awards sufficient to employ as many as four staff members, while others consistently receive small grant awards that fund less than a quarter of a CREP position. Furthermore, the criteria used to determine CREP Technical Assistance grant awards varies from year to year.

Recommendation:

The Conservation Commission revise its criteria for awarding CREP Technical Assistance grants in a manner that allows each CREP district to be eligible to receive a minimum grant award sufficient to employ at least a half-time staff person to administer the program and that WACD work with the Conservation Commission and NRCS, and the Legislature to increase funding for CREP Technical Assistance.

DO PASS. Motion Steven Keirn, Clark CD. Second Brit Ausman, Asotin CD. Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-013

Title: Work to establish irrigated soil rental rates for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Problem:

The Washington State Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program does not currently have a soil rental rate for irrigated land. This had led to significantly reduced interest amongst agricultural producers with irrigated land along eligible streams.

Recommendation:

WACD work with the Washington State Conservation Commission and the USDA Farm Services Agency to develop necessary program rules to allow for the establishment of irrigated soil rental rates for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

DO PASS. Motion Ivan Oberg, Okanogan CD. Second Lynn Brown, Kittitas CD. Motion Carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-14

Title: CREP Availability

Problem:

CREP is currently only available on streams with endangered species in the state of Washington. Other states have used CREP on all streams. Cattlemen and Farmers who do endangered species on their property are still required to meet strict requirements by DOE. Without the CREP incentive dollars it is very difficult for the non-ESA producers to meet the requirements of DOE.

Recommendation:

WACD work to have CREP made available on all streams

DO NOT PASS. Motion Lee Hammer, Foster Creek CD. Second John Preston, Warden CD.
Motion Failed.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-15

Title: Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Weed Control

Problem:

Noxious weeds are not being effectively controlled on a significant portion of lands enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). This is caused by a number of problems, including but not limited to the property being controlled or managed by absentee land owners, unfamiliarity with noxious weed control requirements, and or disregard for the requirements imposed by the Program. Because of our association with Federal conservation programs and our role as providing resources to land owners, this reflects negatively on Conservation Districts and conservation efforts as a whole throughout the state

Recommendation:

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) work with Farm Service Agency (FSA) State office and State Weed Board to help enforce the weed control requirements mandated in the federal CRP contracts.

DO NOT PASS. Motion by Steven Keirn, Clark CD. Second Scott Walz, Clark, CD. **Motion Failed.**



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
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Resolution No: 03-16

Title: WDFD Land Management - Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) has purchased a large amount of private land in the state for wildlife habitat. These lands are remote, rugged and have little commercial value. They are also interspersed with other private lands.

Problem:

With the acquisition of private lands, WDFW has also purchased the resource issues that go along with this land. These issues include weed problems, fire fuel loading and poor forage quality. In order to be a good neighbor, WDFW needs to take care of these issues to not adversely impact adjacent property. The problem is that WDFW doesn't have the manpower or financial resources to adequately deal with these problems. Chemical or mechanical weed control can be costly, especially over the large area that needs to be covered. WDFW is considering using fire as a management tool to improve wildlife habitat. However, burning causes air quality problems and is a tool that the local farming communities have reduced significantly and if used are required to follow burn calls and encouraged to perform spring burns to reduce emissions and air quality impacts. Many of WDFW rangelands in Asotin County have stands of native grasses in "wolffy" conditions resulting in very poor forage for elk herds. This can contribute to both reduced elk numbers and forcing elk onto private lands.

The science of rangeland management and grazing is well established. WDFW lands could be grazed by cattle in a manner that protects riparian habitats, maintains high quality native rangelands and their associated species and also increases the palatability of rangeland grasses for elk.

Recommendation:

WACD encourage WDFW and Corp of Engineers game management lands to utilize managed grazing as a tool to reduce fire fuel load, control weeds and improve forage value.

DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion Larry Cochran, Palouse CD. Second Paul Nee, Pierce CD.
Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-017

Title: Funding To Buy Into Seed Orchards

Problem:

NIPF land makes up almost half of the private forestland in Washington State and has been high-graded to the point that most of it lacks genetic potential or seed source to regenerate without planting. Washington State DNR has orchards for trust land and they use the miniscule amount of USFS funds received to provide token seed or seedlings to the Douglas Fir growers of Western Washington.

Recommendation:

~~Stevens County CD requests~~ That WACD secure from the Conservation Commission funding necessary to buy into established Seed Orchards or new ones being established or a process for acquiring certified seed. Species should include Ponderosa Pine, Western Larch and Lodge Pole Pine for the East-side seed zones and Lodge Pole Pine for the Western Washington zones.

DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion Bob Playfair, Stevens CD. Second Kelly Neimi, Cowlitz CD.
Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-18

Title: Funds for Fish Blockage Culverts on Cooperators' Forestland

Problem:

As NMFS and USF&W have listed salmon and steelhead as 'endangered', it has effectively forced the Washington Legislature into the 'takings language' of the Forest and Fish Report (HB2091). The hoped for EQIP funding is not materializing, and cooperators are suffering from these regulations.

Recommendation:

Have WACD petition the Conservation Commission to secure through their appropriations process, or from the Salmon Recovery Board, sufficient funds for Conservation Districts to use in replacing fish blockage culverts on cooperators' forestland

DO NOT PASS. Motion Bob Playfair, Stevens CD. Second Paul Nee, Pierce CD. **Motion Failed**



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No: 03-19

Title: Non-industrial Landowner Regulatory Approval of Templates and Alternate Plans and Reasonable Stream Typing Procedures

Problem:

Private forestlands are critical to maintaining healthy forests in Washington. All citizens benefit from healthy, fast-growing forests, so, therefore, should be expected to help provide the proper seed for reforestation which occurs every 50-70 years, not something the present owner may directly benefit from.

Recommendation:

Request that WACD support non-industrial landowners for regulatory approval of Templates and Alternate Plans, along with reasonable stream typing procedures now being negotiated by the Washington Farm Forestry Association and the DNR's Small Landowner Office.

DO PASS. Motion Kelly Neimi, Cowlitz CD. Second Bob Playfair, Stevens CD. Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No. 03-20

Title: CREP Cost Share

Problem:

The United States Congress through the United States Department of Agriculture enacted the Conservation Reserve Program (CREP) in 2001. This program is intended to provide assistance to landowners that convert farmland to riparian buffers for the protection of aquatic resources. The companion portion of the CREP was a State of Washington commitment to provide matching funding on a 90% federal to 10% state participation. The State of Washington further committed to providing 100% of the cost share for practices not authorized through USDA and providing maintenance funds for the first 5 years of the CREP stand establishment.

Many landowners have signed contracts to commit land to the program and have already performed some of the site preparation and initial phases of the program. Now the State of Washington has failed to fund their participation as initially passed by the Legislature. This breach of commitment has left many landowners with substantial investment and uncertainty if they can complete the projects as prescribed. There is also uncertainty if the federal participation will be honored if the landowner cannot complete that portion that the State of Washington was supposed to share cost.

THE WHOLE CREP EFFORT AND THE TRUST AND HONOR OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS IS IN JEOPARDY. Landowners and the Conservation Districts have made a commitment to conservation and now the State of Washington is renegeing on their commitment.

Recommendation:

~~WACD Legislative Committee and Leadership should immediately contact the Governor of the State of Washington, Leadership in the Legislature, and State Agencies to correct this very serious breach of conservation commitment.~~ WACD supports CREP funding as a high priority legislative issue.

DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion Lynn Brown, Kittitas CD. Second Kelly Niemi, Cowlitz CD. Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No. 03 - 21

Title: Forest and Fish Provisions to the State of Washington Forest Practices Act in 1999.

Problem:

The Legislature of the State of Washington passed the Forest and Fish Provisions to the State of Washington Forest Practices Act in 1999. The rules went into effect in March 2000.

These far reaching regulations had a staggering effect on small landowners. It was estimated that overall 19% of their forestland would fall into riparian buffers. Individual landowners could essentially lose everything. Recognizing this, the Legislature included in the law a provision called the "Forestry Riparian Program." This mandated the State of Washington to reimburse small landowners a percentage of their loss when they harvested adjoining timber. Now the State of Washington has failed to adequately fund the program. This has resulted in breach in the commitment that was made during the promulgation of the legislation.

The breach in commitment to conservation by the State of Washington is causing a distrust and unwillingness of non-industrial forest landowners to implement conservation practices. The lack of trust is causing frustration that results in the conversion of forest and farm land into other uses.

Recommendation:

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts goes on record as supporting the adequate funding of the Forestry Riparian Easement Program and that the Legislative committee and the Executive Committee of WACD be instructed to take appropriate actions.

DO PASS. Motion Kelly Neimi, Cowlitz CD. Second Nick Somero, Pacific CD. Motion carried.



Washington Association of Conservation Districts
2003 Resolutions

Resolution No. 22

Title: Forest Health

Problem:

There are several million acres of forests “at risk” in Washington State. These risks are due to overstocking, encroachment by shade tolerant species, fire suppression, and other factors. These forests are subject to uncharacteristic mortality from insects and disease. Dead trees and overstocking contribute to uncontrollable wildfires that damage air quality and water quality, while destroying the wildlife habitat, homes and adversely affecting soils. While these problems occur across all ownerships, they are more prevalent on federal and state managed lands.

Since the early 1950’s there has been legislation that authorizes the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to take action to decrease this hazard. No action has been taken due to lack of funds and a lack of public pressure. This law is now outdated and impractical to administer. The DNR embarked on a rewrite of the law in 2002 but lacked a clear vision of what the law should do.

Recommendation:

That the WACD encourage the Legislature to pass a modern forest health statute with the following attributes.

- Require the Commissioner of Public Lands to take the leadership role (through DNR) on forest health in Washington State over all forestland ownerships.
- The plan should be a tiered approach including education, information, coordination, and regulatory actions.
- Authorize and encourage the Commissioner of Public Lands to enter into cooperative agreements with state agencies, tribes, and federal land management agencies to promote and maintain healthy forests.
- Establish cost-share programs and funding to assist small landowners in combating forest pathogens, when required by state regulation.
- Assure private landowner property rights by restricting agency access without written landowner permission.

DO PASS. Motion Bob Playfair, Stevens CD. Second Margaret Tokach, Stevens CD. Motion carried.