

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING  
Zoom Meeting ID: 987 6961 1557  
1350 McKittrick St., Wenatchee, WA 98801  
Friday May 16, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dillon Miller, Vice-Chair (In Person); Amy Bridges, Auditor (Via Zoom); and new member Russ Truman (In Person).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Junell Wentz, Chair; Pete Teigen, Member.

OTHERS PRESENT (In Person): Ryan Baye, WACD; Lance Brender, Jennifer Bohnert; and the following District Staff: Ryan Williams and Valerie Hampton.

Dillon Miller, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:50 P.M. He invited everyone to introduce themselves since there were several new people present. Ryan Williams welcomed Russ Truman, who was recently appointed to the Board by the Washington Conservation Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None requiring official action.

**Consent Agenda:** Approve April 18, 2025, Regular District Meeting Minutes, approve April Treasurer's Report and authorize paying bills.

M/S/C Amy Bridges moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Russ Truman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE: None requiring official action.

NRCS REPORT -No one was able to attend the meeting to report, but there was general discussion about the agency's relationship with Districts, major programs, and recent developments. As with other federal agencies, things are still in flux but are beginning to stabilize. In Washington, NRCS lost 29 Probationary employees and there were some voluntary separations. Currently they are not hiring or issuing new task orders, and no travel is allowed. The Farm Bill programs are generally open and the District's Conservation Planner position is back in operation. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds are still being adjusted, and most other funding is frozen for now.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT – Mike Baden

Mike Baden is not available today. He has reminded Districts recently that Annual Plans are due in June. Ryan Baye commented to Russ that the Commission provides orientation to new supervisors and offers various grant programs for Districts.

WACD REPORT – Ryan Baye

Ryan explained that the Washington Associate of Conservation Districts (WACD) is an organization that exists to help Districts. He could talk at length about the legislative process but there was just too much this session. Everyone is hoping to see the final budget soon. He mentioned that the WACD Area Representatives can help with questions, and the Washington Association of District Employees (WADE) conference is a great way to learn and network. Lance asked a few questions about the funding process. Ryan W. described the upcoming All Conservation District meeting and said he would forward the information to Lance. State funding for Districts and natural resource partners faces significant cuts. Wildfire funding was especially hard hit among all agencies. Cascadia will not be impacted as much as some others because some existing federal funding is coming back online, and programs can continue with existing staff but more limited in scope and not as diverse in funding. Other districts will be hurting more. It is hoped that the changes in the statute allowing districts to request higher levels of Rates & Charges will help offset the reduction in available grant funding. Ryan W. will provide more information in upcoming meetings.

## GRANTS, CONTRACTS and COST SHARE

Contracts and Grant Applications for Consideration at the May 16, 2025 board meeting					
Grant Applications					
Granting Agency	Title	Amount		Activities	Action Needed
Grant Contracts					
Granting Agency	Contract Title	Duration	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
ILAs/MOUs/MOAs/Contracts					
Agreement Entity	Agreement Purpose	Duration	Financial Commitment	Activities	Action Needed
Blue Pine Fuels LLC	Fuels treatment contractor	04/21/2025 to 06/02/2025	\$ 40,000.00	Fuels treatment work as part of defensible space fuels program	Approve Executive Director to Sign Contract
Ecological Services	Beaver Dam Analog and Planting Assistance	04/01/2025 to 11/30/2025	increase to \$113,750	Amendment to increase the number of days for crew assistance	Approve Executive Director to Sign Contract Amendment
Landowner Agreements/Cost Share					
Landowner Name	Project Funding Source	Cost Share Rate	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
Landowner Cost Share/Contract Payments					
Landowner Name	Project Funding Source	Cost Share Rate	Amount	Activities Completed	Action Needed
Rachel Burgoon	WSCC-NRI	50%	\$ 119.38	Cover crop (340)	Approve cost share payment
Rachel Burgoon	WSCC-NRI	60%	\$ 776.14	Sprinkler system (442)	Approve cost share payment
ILAs/MOUs/MOAs/Contracts color codes		No color is neutral cashflow			
		Rust color is CCD paying somebody else			
		Green color is CCD receiving money			

Most grants that are ending soon are in finishing up mode. There are few new projects. There was a discussion on the benefits and challenges of Beaver Dam Analogs (BDAs). There will be more than 500 BDAs to monitor in the coming years.

M/S/C Russ Truman moved and Amy Bridges seconded to approve the Contracts and Cost Share payments as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

## OTHER BUSINESS

**Annual Plan:** Ryan W. presented the draft Annual Plan of Work for the Board's review. It includes updated photos and a more reader-friendly look. The proposed budget is a little smaller, reflecting the expected reduction in available new grant funding but maintaining existing staffing levels and increasing the wildfire treatment area.

M/S/C Amy Bridges moved and Russ Truman seconded to approve the Annual Plan of Work. The Motion passed unanimously.

**Rates and Charges Renewal:** The current rate plan will expire in 2026. The Board can look at submitting a proposal to renew it, or decide not to pursue it. The current rate is \$4.63/parcel for everyone except commercial forest land. The funding can be used to support specific programs and for filling in gaps between projects or supplementing smaller projects. A new rate study is needed since a few things have changed in the 10 years since the first one was completed. FCS Group did the previous study. They have also been under contract to produce the tax roll that is provided to the County each year for collection.

The study involves developing a budget and running it through a process to consider other funding sources and determine how much more is needed to support the workload, then calculating that amount per parcel. There are also considerations for which land uses will benefit from the various programs. Some programs benefit certain parcels more than others, but most offer countywide benefits. Ryan was asked if the study could be done in-house. Ryan said that he has done them before, but in addition to the higher workload there is a perception that a third party is more objective. A budget will need to be developed as a starting point. Ryan would like to include some community outreach as well as input from the county in the development of a new rate system. The proposed programs can include things like outdoor education and wildfire home hardening. Russ asked if FCS would do the outreach. Ryan thinks it would be best for the District to do it. He suggested getting assistance from the marketing consultant that has been helping with the recent outreach development.

There was further discussion about potential rates, noting that inflation alone would place the current rate at \$6.25 to maintain similar funding. With the recent uncertainty in various funding sources, it would be helpful to have some stable funds. Almost all of the District's ag grants are federally funded, and it's risky to have a majority of funds coming from the same source. Washington state doesn't have a log of ag programs that are appropriate to this area. It's also important to consider what is politically possible. Specific programs can get support from the public if people like them. Further discussion included how the system could be structured to support targeted programs and can include an inflation factor.

Options could include specific items such as \$3/parcel to support ag cost share or \$.50/parcel for home hardening incentives. The programs could help with new methods or practices that NRCS can't fund, such as overhead watering for integrated pest management. There could be rolling application periods without the complications of state fiscal year timelines. Recent outreach to pear growers has revealed an urgent need for assistance.

Ryan believes the community values work that would be done as part of the outreach would be valuable information even if it is not ultimately used to support a Rates & Charges proposal. It is



good to know what people value about the District. He would like the whole Board to receive the information and consider it before proceeding. He'd like to get some ideas in place and then start the process in the fall if the Board wants to continue.

**Executive Director's Report** – Ryan noted that the state fiscal year ends in June. There will be a lot of payments going out. The Washington Conservation Corps is ending the AmeriCorps program. This will affect Veronica, the District's individual placement intern. The state will continue paying the salary but participants will only get a prorated education award. The rate the District is paying will stay the same until June 30 and will probably go up July 1 if the program is not reinstated. If not, the District may be able to hire Veronica directly.

Ryan spent a week in Yakima, and saw some good projects. He has been participating in strategic planning with the Commission and was at the meeting where Russ was selected for the appointed position. The DNR representative on the Commission is leaving. The Governor's appointee is typically a tribal representative, and there is a potential for a Yakama Nations representative. Other discussions included the riparian grant program and the grant manual updates. The WADE conference is coming up in three weeks. Quite a few staff will be attending. Up to \$1,000 per district will be provided to attend the June 12 strategic planning meeting. Further discussion included the WACD process for proposing legislative priorities at the Area Meetings and the Annual Meeting.

**Next Meeting:** The next Regular Meeting will be Friday, June 20. Topics will include proposed Operations Manual changes and Associate Members.

The meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

**Summary of Official Actions:**

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved the following contracts, agreements and cost share payments:

**ILAs / MOUs / MOAs / Contracts:**

Blue Pine Fuels – Fuels treatment for defensible space project;

Ecological Services – Amendment to increase crew days for Beaver Dam Analog installation and Planting assistance/maintenance.

**Cost Share Payments:**

Rachel Burgoon - Cover crop and sprinkler system.

Approved the Annual Plan of Work.

CHAIR



RECORDER

