

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
Zoom Meeting ID: 987 6961 1557
1350 McKittrick St., Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday June 20, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Junell Wentz, Chair; Dillon Miller, Vice-Chair; Russ Truman, Member (In Person); Amy Bridges, Auditor; Pete Teigen, Member (Via Zoom).

OTHERS PRESENT (In Person): Lexi Gardner, NRCS; and the following District Staff: Ryan Williams, Cindy Goodell and Valerie Hampton.

Junell Wentz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:32 P.M. She invited everyone to introduce themselves since there were several new people present.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None requiring official action.

Consent Agenda: Approve May 16, 2025 Regular District Meeting Minutes, approve May Treasurer's Report and authorize paying bills.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved and Pete Teigen seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE: None requiring official action.

NRCS REPORT – Lexi Gardner

Hannah Tomlinson was named Acting District Conservationist after Sarah Troutman changed to part time and is no longer eligible to hold the position. Lexi reported on six recent new contracts, mostly in Farm Bill programs. The area workload is daunting, with 26,000 acres to survey for current projects. Conservation Planner Elly McManus continues to excel and is attending apprenticeship training next week. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds are paused for the remainder of the fiscal year.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT – Mike Baden – not available.

GRANTS, CONTRACTS and COST SHARE

Contracts and Grant Applications for Consideration at the June 20, 2025 board meeting					
Grant Applications					
Granting Agency	Title	Amount		Activities	Action Needed
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	Conservation Partners - Western Grazing Lands	\$300,000-500,000		Provide technical assistance, host workshops, and other activities with more emphasis on livestock producers.	Approve Grant Application
Grant Contracts					
Granting Agency	Contract Title	Duration	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
WSCC	WSCC Master Contract	07/01/2025-06/30/2027	N/A	This is the master agreement that all WSCC grants fall under. This will include our riparian, forestry, implementation, irrigation efficiencies, and others	Approve WSCC Master Contract
Department of Ecology	Improving Wenatchee Watershed with Restoration and Livestock Practices	10/01/2025-09/30/2028	\$500,000.00	Technical assistance, outreach, youth education, riparian restoration and livestock BMPs	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract Amendment
ILAs/MOUs/MOAs/Contracts					
Agreement Entity	Agreement Purpose	Duration	Financial Commitment	Activities	Action Needed
Blue Pine Fuels Inc	Fuels Treatment	30-Jun-25	\$15,000	Increase fuels treatment contract to a total of \$55,000 (\$15,000 increase)	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract Amendment
Lichen Land & Water	Design - Amendment 2	Ends November 30, 2026	\$ 41,411.00	Increase contract amount to include wetland delineation and juvenile fish monitoring	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract Amendment
TRIB PUD Habitat Subcommittee	Roaring Creek Implementation		\$ 330,000.00	This is match construction funding for Roaring Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project. Stream restoration, Stage 0, etc.	Approve Executive Director to sign Grant Agreement
Landowner Agreements/Cost Share					
Landowner Name	Project Funding Source	Cost Share Rate	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
Barnhart	WSCC Forest Health	90%	\$ 8,500.00	Increase budget for activities from \$3825 to \$8500	Approve Cost Share Amendment
Oro and Diana Starcher	25-mile Creek DWPP	100%	\$ 9,000.00	1.25 acres of riparian, BDA structures	Approve Landowner Agreement
Dave Case	25-mile Creek DWPP	100%	\$ 9,000.00	0.5 acres of riparian, BDA structures	Approve Landowner Agreement
Jeff Berman and Josette Pelletier	25-mile Creek DWPP	100%	\$ 9,000.00	6.5 acres of riparian, BDA structure	Approve Landowner Agreement
Matt Jones	WSCC NRI	50%	\$ 1,750.00	Decrease budet for activities from \$5967.20 to \$1750. Removed irrigation pipeline, sprinkler system, hedgerow, and microirrigation from contract. Increased money allotted for cover crops from \$630 to 1750. Net change: -4217.20	Approve contract ammendment
Kristina Bowman	WSCC NRI	55%	\$5,382.80	shift in funds within contract- no net change in funds	Approve contract ammendment
Landowner Cost Share/Contract Payments					
Landowner Name	Project Funding Source	Cost Share Rate	Amount	Activities Completed	Action Needed
Barnhart	WSCC Forest Health	90%	\$8,500.00	Seeding and thinnig	Approve Cost Share Payment
Carlson	WSCC Forest Health		\$685.00	Forest Health Thinning	Approve Cost Share Payment
James Chedister	WSCC RCPP	22%	\$9,535.07	Forest Health Thinning	Approve Cost Share Payment
Chelan Douglas Land Trust	WSCC Forest Health		\$25,523.74	Forest Health Thinning	Approve Cost Share Payment
Mazie	WSCC Forest Health	47%	\$9,925.50	Forest Health Thinning	Approve Cost Share Payment
Tierra Learning Center	WSCC Forest Health		\$25,337.99	Forest Health Thinning	Approve Cost Share Payment
Lisa Hanson	WSCC RCPP	53%	\$3,738.84	Forest Health Thinning	Approve Cost Share Payment
Wenatchee River Institute	WSCC NRI	100%	\$2,891.20	Conservation cover, microirrigation, tree/shrub establishment	Approve Cost Share Payment
Tricia & Jim Coley	WSCC NRI	50%	\$1,500.32	Tree/Shrub establishment	Approve Cost Share Payment
Tricia & Jim Coley	WSCC NRI	55%	\$7,071.53	Micro-irrigation, Pasture/Hay Planting	Approve Cost Share Payment
Kristina Bowman	WSCC NRI	55%	\$5,382.80	Cover crop, Sprinkler system, compost facility	Approve Cost Share Payment
Junell Wentz	WSCC NRI	50%	\$13,688.17	Conservation cover	Approve Cost Share Payment
Matt Jones	WSCC NRI	50%	\$1,750.20	Cover crop	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 of the listed actions are amendments to existing contracts and agreements, or new landowner agreements that facilitate the use of remaining grant funds for the biennium, as well

as cost share payments for completed projects. The new Master Agreement with the Conservation Commission for the next biennium is also included in the list, along with a grant application and two new funding agreements.

M/S/C Pete Teigen moved and Russ Truman seconded to approve the Application, Contracts and Cost Share payments as presented. Junell Wentz abstained due to her cost share project payment being included in the list. The motion passed with all other votes being unanimous.

OTHER BUSINESS

Operations Manual: Ryan reviewed several proposed changes to the Operations Manual, mainly in the employee leave policies to bring them in line with allowable insurance coverage while in unpaid leave status.

M/S/C Amy Bridges moved and Dillon Miller seconded to approve the edited Operations Manual as interim with final changes to be brought to the July meeting. The Motion passed unanimously.

Rates and Charges Renewal: The Board continued discussion from the previous meeting regarding the expiring rates and potential renewal in 2026. The question of the need for a rate study was reviewed, and it was generally agreed that a study is needed, especially if the decision is made to request an increase in funding. The programs and budget the current rate was based on have changed a lot in 10 years. Inflation alone would increase the rate from \$4.63 to \$6.25/parcel. The estimated cost of the study through FCS Group is \$23,000. Ryan was asked about doing the work in-house. He indicated that he could do it, but it's a lot of work, and the perception of objectivity and credibility is much greater with an outside consultant. He said that if the Board decided to move forward, he would ask around to see if there are other reputable contractors who could provide an estimate. He asked FCS Group for an estimate as a starting point because they have experience with rate studies for multiple local government types and a history of not only the initial rate establishment for Cascadia but also preparing the annual tax roll parcel data that the District has to provide to the County.

Ryan previously mentioned a community values survey as part of the information gathering to be done early in the process. He included funding for this in an upcoming grant application because the information would be useful in other ways as well. The budget development for Rates & Charges aims to identify what a fully funded program looks like for steady funding. Other sources of funding are then considered, and what's left is the portion to be supported by the charges. The rate schedule is calculated based on that figure. He envisions that the Board would decide on what rate they want to request and then conduct extensive outreach to promote the proposal.

One program that is a good example of what can be funded with Rates and Charges is outdoor education. Virtually all funding was lost for this work in the budgets for the next fiscal year. There are no state grants to apply for as of now. This affects almost all of Kirk's time as well as portions of other staff. He projects that at least \$100,000 in funding would need to be replaced.

He will bring proposed letters for South Douglas CD and perhaps Foster Creek for the Board to consider sending regarding support for Douglas County student participation in Cascadia's programs.

Additional program areas that could be supported include ag practices and home hardening. Local control is important, as it allows a focus on the needs specific to the area. It also allows implementation timelines that accommodate growing seasons, off-season work and crossing fiscal years.

Other factors include the Board's concerns about raising taxes and fees for landowners. Ryan suggested having a subcommittee meet to discuss the details and report back to the full Board. That process should probably start this fall.

Cost Share Policy: Ryan presented Resolution 2025-05 to set the cost share rates for the next biennium. It applies only to Commission grants, but Ryan and the staff will work on a policy proposal this summer to bring other program cost share rates in line for greater consistency.

M/S/C Russ Truman moved and Dillon Miller seconded to approve Resolution 2025-05, FY 26-27 Cost Share Policy. The Motion passed unanimously.

Review RCW89.08 – The Board reviewed and discussed the Conservation District enabling statute, in particular the powers and duties of the Board. They discussed the annual election of officers and decided to defer action until the July meeting.

Executive Director's Report – Ryan Williams

Office Copier - The lease on the current copier is ending in September. After reviewing the options, Ryan believes purchasing a new machine and entering a contract for maintenance would be the best plan for the District's needs.

New Grants - Although there will be less money for grants this year, the District will be able to apply for funds to continue its programs at least on a limited basis. For example, a one year Sustainable Farms and Fields proposal is planned for about \$70,000. The work will include continuing the technical assistance and outreach to pear growers and adding apples and vineyards. Other components may include biochar kiln outreach workshops with orchardists and a loan or rent program for them to try the equipment to see if they like it. The Eastside Rebuild organization continues to build its farm tool library. They are seeking a funding for attachments to a walk behind BCS tractor for loan to small farmers.

Biochar Kiln – A PBA member used a kiln following a prescribed burn this spring. They doused and spread the biochar, and checked the site as recommended, but despite following all the safety procedures a small fire was sparked that required suppression. There was no burn ban in effect at the time. The District is reviewing landowner instructions and pulling all PBA equipment from field locations for the duration of fire season.

Optional Long Term Care Policy – Washington Counties Insurance Fund, the District's coverage pool, is offering a new policy for Long Term Care as part of its optional coverage for employees. The District has until June 30 to opt in. Valerie would like to look into whether it would be something the District wants to make available to staff. The policy would be outside the District's core plan, contracted and paid for directly by each employee who wants to participate. It would not be administered as a payroll deduction. Valerie asked if a Board member could be appointed to review the program and recommend whether to offer it. Amy offered to check out the company and review the plan.

M/S/C Pete Teigen moved and Dillon Miller seconded to approve offering the Long Term Care policy, pending review and approval by Amy Bridges. The Motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: The next Regular Meeting will be Friday, July 18. Topics will include Operations Manual changes and Associate Members.

The meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved the following applications, contracts, agreements and cost share payments:

Application: National Fish & Wildlife Foundation for livestock technical assistance.

Grants:

Washington State Conservation Commission Master Agreement FY26-27;

Department of Ecology contract amendment for a restoration and livestock practices project beginning 10/1/25.

ILAs / MOUs / MOAs / Contracts:

Blue Pine Fuels – Increase fuels treatment for defensible space project;

Lichen Land & Water – Amendment to add wetland delineation and juvenile fish monitoring;
PUD Tributary Habitat Subcommittee construction match for Roaring Creek floodplain reconnection project.

Cost Share Agreements/Amendments

Barnhart forest health budget increase, Starcher riparian & BDAs, Case riparian & BDAs, Berman/Pelletier riparian & BDAs, Jones decrease amendment, Bowman practice change.

Cost Share Payments:


Barnhart seeding & thinning, Carlson thinning, Chedister thinning, CDLT thinning, Mazie thinning, Tierra thinning, Hanson thinning, WRI cover, microirrigation, tree/shrub.

Approved the edited Operations Manual as interim with final changes to be brought to the July meeting;

Approved Resolution 2025-05, FY 26-27 Cost Share Policy

Approved offering an optional Long Term Care policy to staff pending review and approval by Amy Bridges.

CHAIR



RECORDER

