

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
1350 McKittrick St., Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday October 17, 2025**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Pete Teigen, Member

OTHERS PRESENT: Lance Brender (Via Zoom), and the following District Staff (In Person): Ryan Williams, Cindy Goodell, Patrick Haggerty, and Valerie Hampton.

Note: Junell and Amy were not present when the meeting was called to order. Junell arrived at 1:36 p.m. and Amy joined online at 2:19 p.m. Official business was conducted after there was a quorum at the meeting.

Dillon Miller, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:32 P.M. Initial agenda items were information only while waiting for a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

CORRESPONDENCE: None requiring official action.

NRCS REPORT – None

CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT – None

FORESTRY TEAM PRESENTATION

Patrick explained that the rest of the Forestry Team was needed at a prescribed burn, so they couldn't participate in the presentation. Unfortunately, the planned event got cancelled today due to wind conditions.

Patrick began with describing some of the larger grant projects the team is managing. The District is in year three of a five-year Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) contract through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Currently there are 21 contracts covering 348 acres. Seven of them are complete, encompassing over 100 acres. Some of the cost share projects are funded through a Conservation Commission matching grant. The NRCS projects are harder, with lots of paperwork that makes small projects less cost effective.

Junell arrived in person at 1:36 p.m. She suggested Dillon continue to chair the meeting.

Patrick continued discussing the RCPP project. He indicated that about \$1.5 million of the \$1.95 million budget has been obligated for individual projects. Washington Department of Natural

Resources (DNR) matching contracts are at about 1,200 acres of the 1,500 promised for the partnership. One more round of applications will be conducted this fall, and Patrick is pretty confident the deliverables will be met. The program has come with a lot of learning. Joe went from no knowledge of NRCS to being a capable planner. Patrick showed a photo of a thinning project site on a steep slope. Most of the material to be removed is not very merchantable, and there is a lot to be cleared out, which is typical of many project sites in this area. There is too much to pile and burn. For this project the contractor trimmed and stacked what he could and is taking it to market to help offset the landowner's costs. The next phase will be a proper timber sale with planning by a consulting forester. The District is now at the point of deciding whether to apply again for RCPP funding.

The Community Wildfire Defense project is a US Forest Service (USFS) grant partnered with DNR with a local focus on fuel breaks. Cascadia's role is working with groups of smaller landowners to put together a bigger collective section for treatment. One such project area is a 500-acre community with a single egress road, with a goal to protect the road integrity and the homes it serves. During a previous fire, the landowners were told they would not be defended because of the risk to residents, firefighters and equipment. Another project included a community meeting for landowners in proximity to a USFS fuel break project. The proposal is to bring the fuel break perimeter down to meet the road on the south shore of Lake Wenatchee and tie that work to private land projects for a larger connected protection area.

In Merry Canyon several hundred acres of treatment are in progress, with similar work in the Mountain Home area. Overall, 44 site visits have been conducted covering at least 700 acres, with a dozen landowner agreements. Community meetings are in progress setting up for more work next spring and fall.

A US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) project focused on the lower Eagle Creek area involves working with a consulting forester to see if a commercial timber sale can be developed for some of the area. It is adjacent to USFS land and is a priority for treatment.

Chelan County Natural Resource Department (CCNRD) contracted with the District for Sub-award work on their federal project for defensible space and home hardening in Cashmere. Research indicates creating 5-foot perimeter hardscapes in high-risk areas is critical to wildfire protection. Signups for this area are getting a slow start. Staff are looking at what might be holding them back. One factor is that under this funding the Fire District makes a priority list and limits projects to that list. A windshield survey indicates that many of the priority sites are in orchards or other locations that aren't as attractive to landowners to do the work. Outreach includes bilingual workshops for landscape contractors, builders, and realtors on new recommendations for home hardening. Cascadia has a direct FEMA grant for the North Shore of Chelan.

Cascadia recently assisted the USFS with project area monitoring. The Wilderness Society provided funds to help backfill for the reduction in federal summer crew time. It was a good

opportunity for team development and staff cross-training while getting the work done and helping a partner agency.

Board member Russ Truman has been helping with the Prescribed Burn Association. Several pile burning days are to be conducted this fall, such as in the fuel break around Forest Ridge. There is an opportunity to get the community involved in those events to both help with the work and increase public education and awareness.

For Make a Difference Day on October 25 the District will host an event chipping debris from projects and conducting biochar workshops to demonstrate use of the kilns.

Almost all these programs are supported by federal funds. The state wildfire resilience funds go to DNR and were reduced significantly in the new biennial budget. Local programs are really hurting for money for cost share and other work. Cascadia's was \$2.1 million last biennium and is now about \$80,000. Most of the funding was cut for the equitable fuels crew, the local home hardening program, and Kids in the Forest. There are a handful of projects that are landowner led. The Prescribed Burn Association funding for facilitating, setting up the tool trailer, and maintaining knowledge resources was through the state. Forest health partners are doing tours with legislators to help them see the challenges and are hoping for support in future budgets. The goal is to tell the story of how it is impacting landowners and the region at large. The District is doing a better job collecting data and documenting the work accomplished to tell the story.

The federal shutdown is limiting what can be done on existing projects. For example, on one site the contractor is moving equipment in but he can't do the work during the shutdown because he won't get paid. The landowner may just elect to do it without reimbursement to stay on track.

Russ noted that back in June there was discussion on putting together guidelines for operating the kilns. Joe did great job developing them. Ryan said some of the documents are being run past the lawyers and making sure they clearly define the steps, and what the partners do. The District is currently the fiscal sponsor and needs to limit its liability. Patrick added that they are getting good templates and hopefully the partners will be signing on to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Russ said he hopes it will be ready for the next meeting.

There is currently enough funding to keep the forestry team rolling but they are having to shift gears. Ryan reiterated there is only about \$80,000 for the next two years to work outside of Peshastin-Plain area. The contract with CCNRD at least helps keep more work happening even though it is limited to the Cashmere area. Ryan is looking to secure base funding to keep the programs in place and apply for grants for project money.

Patrick is participating on the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team for the local fires. They will coordinate with DNR and NRCS to look at the post fire risks for the affected area. The District may be able to do Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) projects through NRCS funding for some landowners, and offer technical assistance for others on tree survival,

flood risk, etc. Burn severity maps produced as part of this process help define where risks are and where outreach is needed. Staff are also looking at water quality effects for areas like Roaring Creek and hoping the District can install some BDAs to help with silt, etc. There are plans to put in some requests for small funding to help with that. Typically the District gets more interest in preparedness programs during fire events. There will be outreach to specific areas where funding is available but it will be limited. It is still important to show funders the need, such as numbers from waiting lists and requests for services. Russ said it seems like NRCS should be leading the recovery efforts for private lands, especially in the Mission Creek drainage with its unstable soils. It was noted that steep terrain limits what can be done based on modeling of potential risk. Also, NRCS previously couldn't do anything on USFS land. They recently signed an MOU that would allow it - but they have to bring non-federal funds to the mix. There are no state funds available, so it would be very limited on how to make them happen.

Amy joined the meeting via Zoom at 2:19 p.m.

A proposal is in the works to develop a roles and responsibilities Memorandum of Agreement with DNR for post fire activity in Chelan County. The USFS expectations are fairly clear and DNR is getting clearer, but the rest is a hodgepodge. Mostly it is agency people talking to each other – Patrick, Chelan County Public works, the Public Utility Districts, etc.- reviewing where there are infrastructure risks or other specific threats. The plan would include having community meetings to try and make people aware of the risks and what to watch for.

Districts are not legislatively mandated to do anything specific but are often expected to fill an education role to assist private landowners and interface with agencies. There has been fairly consistent post fire funding through the Commission in the past, but it will not be available this year due to budget cuts. The work is relatively inexpensive but effective: help landowners understand what can be done, let them express concerns, and help guide the most productive responses such as the timing of reseeded.

CONSENT AGENDA - Approve September 19, 2025 Regular District Meeting Minutes, approve September Treasurer's Reports and authorize paying bills.

M/S/C Russ Truman moved and Junell Wentz seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

GRANTS, CONTRACTS and COST SHARE (see chart next page)

Contracts and Grant Applications for Consideration at the October 17, 2025 board meeting					
Grant Applications - Advisory					
Granting Agency	Title	Amount		Activities	
NACD	TA Grant	up to \$175,000		Support ag TA and workshops focussing on 1) habitat enhancement 2) Integrated Pest Management and 3) Irrigation efficiencies. Some forestry TA may also be included	
Grant Contracts					
Granting Agency	Contract Title	Duration	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
Washington Resource Conservation and Development Council	Chelan Fuel Reduction Demonstration Project	9/15/2025 to 06/01/2026	\$ 25,000.00	10 acres of fuel treatment in North Chelan County, prescribed burn and workshop	Approve Executive Director to sign Grant Sub-award
WA DNR	North Cascades and Okanogan PBA Support	10/10/2025 to 06/01/2025	\$68,576.73	27K for Cascadia PBA and 27 K for North Cascades PBA to coordinate and implment burns . 6500 for OCD and 6500 for Cascadia CD to partipate and help coordinate	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract
Chelan PUD Tributary Habitat Committee	Roaring Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project	9/15/2025 - 10/1/2028	\$330,000.00	Construction of the Roaring Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Roaring Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project	9/16/2025 to 09/15/2028	\$470,000.00	Construction of the Roaring Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project	Approve Executive Director to Sign Contract
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Wenatchee and Okanogan Thermal Infrared Surveys	09/16/2025 to 09/15/2028	\$200,000.00	Partial funding to complete infrared overflights of the Wenatchee and Okanogan Watersheds	Approve Executive Director to Sign Contract
Douglas PUD Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee	Wenatchee and Okanogan Thermal Infrared Surveys	09/16/2025 to 09/15/2029	\$258,000.00	Partial funding to complete infrared overflights of the Wenatchee and Okanogan Watersheds	Approve Executive Director to Sign Contract
ILAs/MOUs/MOAs/Contracts					
Agreement Entity	Agreement Purpose	Duration	Financial Commitment	Activities	Action Needed
Ecological Services	Amendment 1	10/15/2025- 6/01/2026	\$27,700	Sub-award through DNR Prescribed Fire Contract - supports facilitation of burns for the Cascadia PBA	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract Amendment
Ecological Services	Amendment 2	09/15/2025- 06/01/2026	\$15,250	Sub-award through BLM Sub-award - supports facilitation of burns for the Cascadia PBA in Union Valley	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract Amendment
Ecological FIRE Services (N.Cascades PBA)	North Cascades and Okanogan PBA Support	10/15/2025- 6/01/2025	\$27,801.33	Coordinating North Cascades and Okanogan PBA, Education and Outreach Events, Supporting implementation of burns for private landonwers	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract
Okanogan CD	North Cascades and Okanogan PBA Support	10/15/2025- 6/01/2025	\$6,575	Education and Outreach for Okanogan and North Cascades PBAs, TA to landonwers	Approve Executive Director to sign Contract
Landowner Agreements/Cost Share					
Landowner Name	Project Funding Source	Cost Share Rate	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
East Side Rebuild	SFF	100%	\$10,000	Purchasing a spreader and flail mower that will be added to the Farm Tool Library	Approve Cost Share Agreement
Wenatchee River Institute	NRI	100%	\$ 2,000.00	Putting raised beds in the community garden	Approve Cost Share Agreement
Bishop	DOE239	NA	\$ 9,500.00	Planting and beaver dam analogs, weed control	Approve Landowner Agreement for District Implemented Project
Bowman	DOE239	NA	\$ 6,500.00	Planting and beaver dam analogs, weed control	Approve Landowner Agreement for District Implemented Project
Lisa Hanson	RCP State	100%	\$7,000.00	Brush Mangagment	Approve Cost Share Agreement
Landowner Cost Share/Contract Payments					
Landowner Name	Project Funding Source	Cost Share Rate	Amount	Activities Completed	Action Needed
ILAs/MOUs/MOAs/Contracts color codes		No color is neutral cashflow			
		Rust color is CCD paying somebody else			
		Green color is CCD receiving money			

Ryan discussed the contracts and agreements presented for approval, including one with the North Central Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) that was signed on October 15th. He reviewed the grant contracts along with the corresponding budget worksheets. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) grant includes funding for gathering additional infrared data, which is used to help select project sites. The work itself will be completed through a piggybacked state procurement contract via DNR.

Russ recused himself from the voting on the Ecological Services contracts – he has been helping to write burn plans for the landowners and with implementation of the plans. The contracts are essentially sole source due to the specialized nature of the work and lack of other qualified contractors.

There is also a contract with Ecological FIRE Services, a separate company, and one with Okanogan CD to support PBAs. They were selected in advance because DNR required that the planned subcontractors be named in the agreement.

The Board agreed to vote on the table of grants, contracts and agreements as presented except for the Ecological Services contracts, which will be considered separately.

M/S/C Amy Bridges moved and Russ Truman seconded to approve the revised list of Grant Contracts and Detailed Budgets, Agreements and Cost Share agreements as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

M/S/C Junell Wentz moved and Amy Bridges seconded to approve the Ecological Services contracts as presented. Russ Truman abstained, and the motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

WACD Resolutions: Ryan discussed the resolution process and the ideas that had been under consideration to present at the Area Meeting. He suggested that Board members discuss the WACD budget process with other supervisors and leadership rather than limiting their options through a resolution. There were no other proposed resolutions to bring to the Area Meeting.

Rates and Charges Renewal: Ryan reported on his discussions with individual county commissioners regarding the upcoming rate renewal options. It seems possible to get an increase, as they were supportive of hearing a proposal and potentially at least an inflation increase. They would like to hear more about the District's plans. A rate study is needed to support a new request. FCS Group quoted \$22,000 for the study, with room to negotiate virtual meetings rather than incurring the travel costs for all on-site consulting. They have many years' experience with similar work for a variety of public entities. Burke's projected travel costs were lower, and they estimated \$20,000 for the study but they are less experienced at doing the work.

A number of options for the approach to the expiring rate system were provided in Ryan's report to the Board. They include a wide range of possible actions, such as setting a \$24,000 cap on consulting costs, or deciding to propose no rate increase and not conduct a study. The commissioners can do what they want regardless of what is presented to them. They could extend the current rate for an additional number of years or add some to it for inflation. A new rate of \$6.25 would represent an increase from roughly \$192,000 annually up to \$262,000 or about a \$70,000 per year increase, less the initial study and outreach costs. The study would probably show a much higher rate needed, but the District could choose to only ask for a lower amount because of economic and political constraints. The study would be ready sometime in March. The rate request can be for as little as one year or up to 10. Cascadia has previously requested two five-year rate terms. A built-in inflation escalation could also be requested. There

was further discussion on how inflation adjustments might work, and how to factor in uncertainty. The five-year plan and beyond can be incorporated into the process of developing the rate proposal, including getting community input. This information can be brought to the commissioners to illustrate support for the District's work and future plans. It would facilitate defining local goals and how the funding would help accomplish them, rather than the perception that this is a strategy to replace state and federal funding. The Board can decide how much, if any, of the rate that is recommended by the study to ask for in the rate proposal. The estimated cost for the values survey is \$5,500, and the outreach campaign would be mostly a staff time investment.

M/S/C Junell Wentz moved and Amy Bridges seconded to authorize the Executive Director to 1) enter into a contract for a rate study to investigate options for a new proposal to the County, 2) engage a consultant to develop a community values survey and 3) conduct an outreach campaign if a rate increase is pursued. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Ryan Williams

Ryan noted there is new funding for home hardening projects and asked if the Board was still OK with delegating authority to him for the landowner cost share agreements. There are three contracts with CCNRD for this work, ranging from \$1,700 to \$2,200 per site. There is also burn plan cost share to reimburse landowners for consultant and other prescribed burn costs with a cap of \$2,500 per agreement. Delegating authority to the Executive Director allows the District to be more responsive between Board meetings.

M/S/C Junell Wentz moved and Amy Bridges seconded to authorize the Executive Director to review and approve cost share agreements within the home hardening and prescribed burn programs. Russ Truman abstained. The motion passed.

Associate Supervisor: Lance Brender has expressed interest in becoming an Associate Supervisor. The Board asked him a few questions and expressed their appreciation for his attendance at meetings and interest in learning about the District's programs and operations.

M/S/C Junell Wentz moved and Amy Bridges seconded to appoint Lance Brender as Associate Supervisor. The motion passed unanimously.

WACD Annual Meeting: The WACD Annual Meeting is December 1-3 at Northern Quest in Spokane. Russ and Lance are interested in attending. Ryan will work with them to register for the event.

Next Meeting: The next Regular Meeting will be Friday, November 21.

The meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved the following Grant Contracts and Detailed Budgets, Agreements and Cost Share payments:

Grant Contracts and Detailed Budgets:

Washington Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) \$25,000 fuel treatment, prescribed burn and workshop;

WA Department of Natural Resources \$68,576.73 \$27,000 each for Cascadia and North Cascades PBAs to coordinate and implement burns, \$6500 each for Cascadia and Okanogan CDs to participate and help coordinate;

Chelan PUD Tributary Habitat Committee \$330,000 construction of Roaring Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project;

WA Recreation and Conservation Office \$470,000 construction of Roaring Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project;

WA Recreation and Conservation Office \$200,000 partial funding to complete infrared overflights of the Wenatchee and Okanogan Watersheds;

Douglas PUD Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee \$258,000 partial funding to complete infrared overflights of the Wenatchee and Okanogan Watersheds.

ILAs / MOUs / MOAs / Contracts:

Ecological FIRE Services \$27,801.33 Coordinating North Cascades and Okanogan PBA, education and outreach events, implementation of burns for private landowners;

Okanogan CD \$6,575 Education and Outreach for Okanogan and North Cascades PBAs, TA to landowners.

Cost Share and Landowner Agreements:

East Side Rebuild - \$10,000 cost share for spreader and flail mower for farm tool library

Wenatchee River Institute - \$2,000 cost share for raised beds for community garden;

Bishop - \$9,500 District Implemented project agreement including planting, beaver dam analogs, and weed control;

Bowman - \$6,500 District Implemented Project agreement for planting, beaver dam analogs, and weed control;

Lisa Hanson - \$7,000 cost share for brush management..

Approved two Ecological Services contract amendments:

Amendment 1 \$27,700 sub-award to support facilitation of burns for Cascadia PBA;

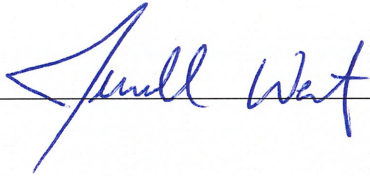
Amendment 2 \$15,250 sub-award to support facilitation of burns for Cascadia PBA in Union Valley;

Authorized the Executive Director to 1) enter into a contract for a rate study to investigate options for a new proposal to the County, 2) engage a consultant to develop a community values survey and 3) conduct an outreach campaign if a rate increase is pursued;

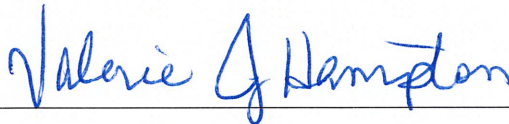
Authorized the Executive Director to review and approve cost share agreements within the home hardening and prescribed burn programs;

Appointed Lance Brender as Associate Supervisor.

CHAIR

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Mull", written over a horizontal line.

RECORDER

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Valerie J. Hampton", written over a horizontal line.