

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING**

**1350 McKittrick St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday November 21, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Junell Wentz, Chair; Dillon Miller, Vic-Chair; Russ Truman, Member (In Person); Pete Teigen, Member (via Zoom).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Amy Bridges, Auditor.

OTHERS PRESENT: Lance Brender (via Zoom), Allisa Carlson, WSCC; Lexi Gardner, NRCS; (in person) and the following District Staff: Ryan Williams, Cindy Goodell, Veronica Arroyo-Perez, and Valerie Hampton (in person); Amanda Newell (via Zoom).

Junell Wentz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:33 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

CONSENT AGENDA - Approve October 15, 2025 Regular District Meeting Minutes, approve October Treasurer's Report and authorize paying bills.

**M/S/C Dillon Miller moved and Russ Truman seconded to approve the Consent Agenda.
The motion passed unanimously.**

CORRESPONDENCE: None requiring official action.

NRCS REPORT – Lexi Gardner reported that after 43 days of furlough, NRCS is back. The original EQIP application deadline was in October. It has been moved to January 15 along with the CSP deadline. The transition back to full operations has been semi smooth, with all fiscal changes delayed until at least mid-December. They have a massive workload catching up on landowner payments, which just opened this week. Expired contracts and CSP payments are the first priority. NRCS staff will be reaching out to applicants in the near future. Scott Scroogies is the new District Conservationist covering Chelan, Douglas and Okanogan Counties. He is housed in the Wenatchee field office. Elly McManus is taking on the Chelan workload and will be in charge when Lexi is on maternity leave next year.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT – Allisa Carlson thanked Russ Truman for meeting with her for his new Supervisor orientation. She noted that the Commission will be helping with presentations at the WACD Annual Meeting in Airway Heights next month. Topics of interest include a presentation on risk from MRSC, a bill proposing the option for districts to go on the general ballot for elections, and a possible requirement for Supervisors to file financial disclosure paperwork that is still being discussed. There will be an election for the Western region District representative to the Commission. Longtime member Dean Longrie stepped down, and there are three candidates running. Supervisors can vote via email by December 3 at 6 pm. There will be

a “meet the candidate” session at the meeting. Agencies are watching for the governor’s proposed budget to come out soon. The Commission included Forest Health, Technical Assistance, and agency technical updates as priorities in their proposal. In staff news, Shana Joy is departing from the Commission.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH TEAM PRESENTATION

Veronica Arroyo-Perez led the discussion to start, with Amanda Newell participating online. Kirk Beckendorf is out of the office and Laura Rivera will be joining later. The team has been expanding its reach to Spanish speaking communities and will have a presence at the annual Horticulture convention this year. The team provided a Kids in the Creek experience for adults this year that was very well received. Other outreach updates include a move to reduce the printed newsletter schedule to twice per year. There will be a soft launch of the monthly e-newsletter in December featuring recipes and holiday traditions. This will be an opportunity to work out some of the challenges before the official launch. More bilingual reels and stories are being offered on social media. Laura Rivera produces most of that content.

Another big project is the bilingual central wildfire website for the general community. One emphasis for its use will be for people who AirBnB and other rentals to share as a resource for guests. Our Valley, Our Future (OVOF) identified the need for a central hub for information, some of which we already have – such as the Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan (CWPP). The District finally has some funding to pull it all together. There are around 50 organizations with wildfire information on their web sites. The effort will include pulling together the links and information. Pete asked if the US Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources and the Resource Conservation & Development council are engaged in the process. There was some money available for this work in the past but nobody wanted to lead the effort or give up control. Ryan noted that the USFS is retiring the site the District paid for and set up on their behalf. He is trying to get the domain name back. The team is working on a plan for management and funding of the site over the long term. OVOF is helping and is motivated to look for funding. The Thriving Together lobbyist is trying to get a line item in the budget for this purpose. The District is helping with logistics, while OVOF is working on other connections such as the local medical community. Russ noted that this resource is listed as a need in the CWPP and the county Hazard Mitigation Plan updates. Pete encouraged staff to use the District’s influence and take the lead. Ryan indicated it is on the task list to plan for after the FEMA grant ends. It could possibly be included as part of the Forest Health funding, and there is interest from other partners to help. The current grant goes through 2028. He may suggest an investment from the Rates & Charges funding because of its local importance.

Laura arrived at 1:50.

The team has been having conversations with partners on who should host the site, and would like to hear from the Board. Options include a section within the District site or a standalone web site with its own branding and either hand off management of the site or keep it in house. One challenge is how to make visitors aware of the information availability. Pete said he is OK with either a CD site or a standalone, but believes partners such as the Chamber of Commerce and local cities could help support it. Billboards, radio, theaters, and other advertising were suggested to drive online traffic and awareness. Community Wildfire Defense grants have

supported previous work and may be available. OVOF has a workgroup to get input from many participants. Russ asked how the Board can assist staff to get it done. Laura responded that input on where to host the site, seeking funding and getting the work out to the community when it launches would be very helpful, as well as feedback on the web site and how it works will also help. The proposal is not ready yet. The expectation is the site will help drive people to the District for services, and its long term presence is a positive. Pete asked about a ballpark figure for annual maintenance. Ryan said he could see a contract of staff person to head a working group, test the links and update information. That part would not be much, but the ongoing campaign might be more. Pete suggested that since Wenatchee Outdoors does this work, they may have some insight into what to expect.

Lance arrived online at 2:05 pm

Continuing with the presentation, the team reported that recent updates and content such as stories and reels are getting good social media feedback. They showed some of the photos from the photo contest for the 2026 calendar and discussed the high quality of the submissions along with the benefits of photographer permission to use them in District publications. 200 calendars will be printed in English, along with 100 in Spanish to be ready in December.

Other outreach includes STEM nights at local schools, tree fruit events and the conservation fair. Staff also attended Fiestas Mexicanas, Dia del Nino, Salmon Fest, and a Rotary club event. They are interested in promoting farmers in the Apple Blossom Parade. Ongoing programs include Wheat Week, Kids in the Creek, -Forest and -Snow, and the After School program. Funding is mostly from Department of Ecology, with some from the Conservation Commission. The No Child Left Inside and Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group funds are gone, and the Community Foundation and BWET are nearly done. They are trying to diversify to keep programs going. The Watchable Wildlife grant through WA Department of Fish & Wildlife is adding bioacoustics to their trail camera placements to capture sound as well as wildlife images. Kirk is looking to get some software to help edit the footage. The information gathered has been a great addition to monitoring data for the habitat project sites where cameras are placed. Currently this program is only offered at Mission View Elementary. The school district has limited funding for the intensive staffing needed. It would be great to expand if funding were available. The team is trying to get creative on managing the funds. If there is a water quality focus, more DOE funds can be used. Students can participate in restoration plantings, etc. The Community Foundation recently awarded a new \$10,000 grant for Kids in the Forest.

Staff coordinated bilingual Defensible Space trainings with the fire districts for contractors, landscapers, builders and similar interest groups. The Native Planting 101 program presenters are well known and the annual series is well attended. Staff want to add a Native Planting workshop to the conservation fair focusing on sustainability and adaptability.

Laura recounted the newer Adults in the Forest event held on a Sunday with the local CAFÉ group at Columbia Breaks in Entiat. Some participants came from as far as Quincy. Participants were enthusiastic, and expressed that they'd like to continue the events and bring friends to join in. The event was inclusive, but most of the CAFÉ attendees were Hispanic. It was fully bilingual and a family event. Staff noted that getting adults out for this kind of event can have a

big impact. Junell observed that the content would seem to be universally appealing, and Russ said he went to a Kids in the Forest day and it was amazing. He was really impressed with everyone involved. Junell thanked the team for their presentation.

GRANTS, CONTRACTS and BUDGET REVIEW AND APPROVAL, LANDOWNER AGREEMENTS AND COST SHARE (see chart)

Contracts and Grant Applications for Consideration at the November 21, 2025 board meeting					
Grant Applications					
Granting Agency	Title	Amount		Activities	Action Needed
Grant Contracts					
Granting Agency	Contract Title	Duration	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
Washington State Conservation Commission	Hinterlands Conservation Easement Sub-award - Contract #K2650	October 15, 2025 to December 31, 2028	\$130,000.00	Staff support, stewardship planning, appraisal, and property survey for Hinterlands Conservation Easement	Approve contract agreement
Department of Natural Resources	Post-Fire Coordination and Assistance 2025	October 28, 2025 to June 1, 2026	\$30,000.00	Conduct post fire site visits, public meetings, 2 long-term watershed recovery assessments and convene a working group to define post-fire roles in Chelan County	Approve Executive Director to sign agreement
CCNRD	Upper Wenatchee Home Hardening	June 03, 2025 to May 31, 2026	\$ 221,148.15	After negotiating and coming to terms in September Chelan County NRD decided they wanted to run the project themselves.	Cancel approved agreement and grant budget
CCNRD	Lake Wenatchee Home Hardening	June 03, 2025 to June 04, 2026	\$ 43,500.00	After negotiating and coming to terms in September Chelan County NRD decided they wanted to run the project themselves.	Cancel approved agreement and grant budget
Grant and Contract Budgets					
Grant or Contracting Entity	Contract Title	Duration	Amount	Description of Purpose for this action	Action Needed
PUD Tributary Committee	Roaring Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project	11/15/2025-12/31/2028	\$330,000	Budget amendment is required to adjust the salaries, benefits, overhead and contract funding amounts.	Approve amendment to grant budget
Department of Natural Resources	Post-Fire Coordination and Assistance 2025	October 28, 2025 to June 1, 2026	\$30,000.00	Approve initial budget plan for this agreement.	Approve grant budget
Landowner Agreements/Cost Share					
Landowner Name	Project Funding Source	Cost Share Rate	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
David Thacker	NRI	75% and 60%	\$ 4,755.45	Irrigation pipeline, sprinkler system, conservation cover	Approve and sign Cost Share contract
Erica McConnell	NRI	75%	\$ 11,507.34	Sprinkler system- aprinkler heads, filter, valves	Approve and sign Cost Share contract
Junell Wentz	NRI	75% and 60%	\$ 20,000.00	Sprinkler heads, conservation cover, and tree shrub establishment	Approve and sign Cost Share contract, Junell Abstain
Bruce Spencer (Big Springs Ranch)	NRI	60%	\$ 3,582.00	Wildlife habitat plantings	Approve and sign Cost Share contract
Bruce Spencer (McEldowney Rd)	NRI	60% and 75	\$ 6,187.26	Wildlife habitat planting, tree/shrub establishment, sprinkler system, irrigation pipeline, microirrigation	Approve and sign Cost Share contract
Fraker	DOE239	100%	NA	Planting and beaver dam analogs, PALS, weed control	Approve Landowner Agreement for District Implemented Project
Marchione	DOE239	100%	NA	Planting and beaver dam analogs, PALS, weed control	Approve Landowner Agreement for District Implemented Project
Willa Hale	RGP and CCNRD DWPP	100%	NA	Planting and weed control	
Landowner Cost Share/Contract Payments					
Landowner Name	Project Funding Source	Cost Share Rate	Amount	Activities Completed	Action Needed
Jackie Haskins	CC22 RCPP	80%	\$6,000.00	Land clearing, tree & shrub pruning, woody debris treatment	Final signature on CPDS contract, approve Form 11 Assignment of 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	

Ryan indicated he had added a few things to the documents since the version that was sent for review, including more budget detail. He also noted that the Upper Wenatchee Home Hardening grant was cancelled by Chelan County. There were a few costs already incurred, but he decided not to pursue them and was able to cover them through the Forest Health grant. The Cashmere area agreement is still in place to complete 30-40 home hardening projects. The District is rolling out the Natural Resource Investments projects. Junell is on the list and will need to abstain. The Board agreed to act on her contract as a separate motion. Ryan described the easement project briefly, which includes staff support as well as seeking surveys and appraisals. The DNR agreement is to approve a budget for planning a Memorandum of Agreement. The partners work well together but the MOA will clarify in writing what each entity will do for post fire response.

Junell's contract was removed from the contract list for separate consideration.

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

Dillon Miller presided for the following motion:

M/S/C Pete Teigen moved and Russ Truman seconded to approve Junell Wentz's cost share agreement. Junell abstained, and the motion passed.

Junell resumed chairing the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Board Meetings: Discussion on the 2026 Regular Meeting schedule and consideration of Alisa's availability as well as conflicts with the Commission's meetings the same week of the month as the current schedule. The Board will revisit the topic in December.

Representation at WACD Annual Meeting: The Board can authorize an Associate Supervisor to vote at the business meeting. A district cannot cast more than five votes, so if members are planning to attend online they need to coordinate who is voting. Pete asked that Ryan talk with Lance about any topics of concern that may come up at the meeting.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved and Pete Teigen seconded to authorize Lance Brender, Associate Supervisor to vote on behalf of Cascadia CD at the 2025 WACD Annual Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Election and Conservation Fair: Ryan discussed options for the location, day of week, activities, partner inclusion and election timing. Junell's position will be up for election next year. A possible date is Saturday, March 21. The Commission is looking at promoting March 17 statewide as Conservation Day.

Rates and Charges Renewal: Ryan reported that he selected FCS Group for the rate study based on their experience.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Ryan Williams

Legislative Outreach: Ryan described an OVOF roundtable he attended two weeks ago with legislative representative to discuss wildfire, industrial symbiosis, and early learning. He had 15 minutes to talk about District programs and the impact of loss of funding. The legislative committees are all saying not to expect any new money, potentially the exception of wildfire. Representative Steele has an idea to put forward some community projects, perhaps with capital funding for wildfire projects. He likes to have ideas on hand in case an opportunity arises to include something in a budget. If the Commission gets their request, it will probably only translate into about \$88,000 per district. The criteria will come out in January. Ryan and Patrick will put together a draft based on last year's questions to be ready.

There was a brief discussion on the WACD resolutions and committee recommendations.

There will be a holiday party on December 9 – invitation to be emailed.

Jones Shotwell: The Jones Shotwell project is under construction. The District is getting ready to write a giant check from the up-front funds previously requested. The funds have been waiting temporarily in a higher interest account until the progress payment request is submitted. The District can use that interest income to help with education programs and other District priorities.

Holiday Policy and Operations Manual Updates: The current list includes 11 paid holidays. Ryan has seen some interesting ideas from other entities. One has 6 core holidays, and staff can "float" the day the other 5 are taken. There can be some conflicts with this practice. Staff currently have to get permission to take alternate holidays. Updates are needed to the Operations Manual and Ryan wants to get input ahead of bringing them for consideration. There could be limits on when the alternate can be taken such as within the same pay period. Russ suggested considering whether a rule about taking the alternate within the same month might make recordkeeping and management more difficult. However, if too many are floating days, they may all want to take them at once or cause other scheduling issues. Other potential changes include purchasing limits and procedures, and potential tools. Ryan is consulting with Snohomish CD on options and ideas.

There was no further Board Member comment or discussion.

Next Meeting: The next Regular Meeting will be Friday, December 19.

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved the following:

Grant Contracts and Budgets:

Washington State Conservation Commission Hinterlands Conservation Easement \$130,000 for staff support, stewardship planning, appraisal and property survey.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Post-Fire Coordination and Assistance \$30,000 for site visits, public meetings, long-term watershed recovery assessments and to convene a working group.

Chelan County Natural Resource Department (CCNRD) – cancel Upper Wenatchee Home Hardening and Lake Wenatchee Home Hardening contracts. After negotiating the terms in September, the department decided they wanted to run the projects themselves and cancelled the contracts.

Grant and Contract Budgets:

PUD Tributary Committee – amendment to adjust salaries, benefits, overhead and contract services categories within grant budget;

DNR Post-Fire Coordination and Assistance 2025 initial budget plan;

Landowner Agreements & Cost Share:

Thacker \$4,755.45 irrigation pipeline, sprinkler system, conservation cover;

McConnell \$11,507.34 sprinkler system, sprinkler heads, filter, valves;

Spencer – Big Springs Ranch \$3,582.00 wildlife habitat plantings;

Spencer – McEldowney Rd \$6,187.26 wildlife habitat planting, tree/shrub establishment, sprinkler system, irrigation pipeline, microirrigation;

Fraker Landowner Agreement for District Implemented Project (DIP), planting and beaver dam analogs, Post Assisted Log Structures (PALS), weed control;

Marchione landowner agreement for DIP, planting and beaver dam analogs, PALS, weed control.

Cost Share Payments

Jackie Haskins \$6,000.00 RCPP Cost share – land clearing, tree & shrub pruning, woody debris treatment.

Approved Board Supervisor Cost Share Contract

Junell Wentz NRI \$20,000.00 Sprinkler heads, conservation cover, tree/shrub establishment. (Dillon Miller chaired this portion of the meeting, Junell Wentz abstained from voting);

Authorized Lance Brender, Associate Supervisor to vote on behalf of Cascadia CD at the 2025 WACD Annual Meeting.

CHAIR_____

RECORDER_____