

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
1350 McKittrick St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday December 19, 2025**

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Lance Brender (via Zoom); and the following District Staff: Ryan Williams, Mark Ingman, and Valerie Hampton (in person); Cindy Goodell and Elizabeth Jackson (via Zoom).

Junell Wentz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:34 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

CONSENT AGENDA - Approve November 21, 2025 Regular District Meeting Minutes, approve November 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 – none

CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT – none

RIVERSCAPE TEAM PRESENTATION – Mark Ingman

Mark started with a photo from the Stehekin area of the recent storm aftermath and briefly discussed the ways the District's work not only helps restore normal flood plain function but also helps reduce the potential for flood damage after a significant fire. The landowner that Cascadia worked with on post-fire flood control near Stehekin had some blowouts on his property, but not the part where Cascadia worked.

The recent adoption of the name "Riverscape" for the aquatic programs team is a recognition that the work extends beyond the banks of the stream. There is still a strong riparian focus, but the program is quite a bit broader than that, extending from the aquatic zone to the upland area. The beaver dam analogs (BDAs) are patterned after a program out of Utah State University looking at how to address hundreds of sites that need restoration efficiently and in a cost-effective manner. The thrust of their design is riverscapes - entire sections of waterways and the surrounding land, rather than narrowly in-stream. It uses primarily low-tech methods including BDAs, Post-Assisted Log (PAL) structures and native vegetation restoration. 2020 was the pilot

phase, and since then the District has been scaling up funding and staff for the work. In 2022, 76 structures were installed in the Chumstick and Entiat drainages. They started with a simple wicker-weave design. 2023 saw an expansion with 113 “double BDAs” – taller installations with more woven material. They were attractive enough that two beavers colonized some of the structures – which Mark pointed out gets the District out of having to maintain those structures. New methods & equipment such as a griphoist and log movers further increased the capacity for scaled up installations. The crew is also using the District’s existing water jet tool that was purchased years ago to help install the pieces. There have been many hours of brush cutter work to reduce reed canary grass and complete other site prep. The team has progressed to “triple BDAs” that are closer to what a beaver would build. They include more and larger posts, more weave material and a taller profile. It is expected these will require less maintenance. With over 500 structures in the region, the partners don’t want to have to go back and do deep maintenance every year. It remains to be seen how the different installations fared in the recent high flows.

In 2025 the team built 200 new structures and performed maintenance on 220 existing sites with fresh weave, sealing, and weed treatment. Over 100 cubic feet of weave material was trucked in, which helped keep the crews moving along. One of the goals is to use waste from other project sites to make useful structures – using wildfire fuel to build habitat. This year old Tyee Fire material was cut for habitat posts. Some components of the work are not actual structures, but rather intentional wedging and jamming to create a more natural complexity rather than pinning the posts.

One of the main challenges is labor. It is over 95% of the cost between construction and maintenance. Along with the District staff, the overall effort has included the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC), Team Rubicon, and partner agency crews. With half a million dollars in work to do, the District couldn’t accomplish it all on our own. Utilizing the WCC helps provide career training and contributes to the pipeline for future employees in the natural resource field. The Forest Health team has used Team Rubicon previously for upland fuels reduction. This volunteer veterans’ organization assists with a variety of international projects, often involving disaster response. This was their first stream health/riparian project, and the participants said they really enjoyed the work.

Another consideration for the team is “what is scalable?” Planning includes efforts to work with landowners in geographic clusters or seek bigger projects to make the effort make sense and produce more in cumulative positive effects. They are now looking at what could be done to treat 300’ sections at a time.

Options to work on federal lands are slow at the moment, but there are a few larger private parcels like those managed by the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (CDLT). Pete asked how things were progressing with the US Forest Service, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for proposed work and the outlook for the near future. Mark said their process has slowed. They have had delays due to permitting, cultural resources and design challenges. The District is doing what it can with local partners to keep it moving. Roaring Creek seems to still be in their plan.

The design project for Roaring Creek is currently at 30%. The recent fire was a temporary setback, but with the planned restoration work the area will be better able to survive the next fire. The goal is Stage 0 restoration to encourage natural progression - add dams, widen the trench, allow the stream to start meandering, and include BDA type structures as well as return beavers to the area. Eventually the stream will achieve a more natural, truly complex character. The project is engineered to kickstart the process and try to achieve the full restoration result in one effort, without additional intervention. The 1.5 miles of stream is home to wild steelhead, and this will be the first Stage 0 restoration project in the state to involve salmon or steelhead. Juvenile fish can do well if there is good water flow and available food. Machinery use is planned during construction, not to level the whole floodplain, but to modify sections of it to allow a more natural floodplain to develop. Bidding is scheduled for next fall with construction in 2027. The last engineered project sponsored by the District was in 2019.

In other projects, the District is using a streamflow restoration consultant to develop a detailed monitoring plan, with methods to document new work, and record why it was done. The plan includes BDAs, riparian and streamflow restoration with an app that field staff can use to enter new data. A culvert replacement on Eagle Creek is being planned that will open up two miles of habitat. Thermal infrared imaging is needed to identify the best locations for projects. Funds have been secured to contract for a flight covering the areas of interest in both Chelan and Okanogan counties, helping to make the cost more efficient for both districts.

The Board thanked Mark for the interesting and detailed information. Junell noted that it will be interesting to see how the stream work holds up and which areas the beavers like best.

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

Contracts and Grant Applications for Consideration at the December 19, 2025 board meeting					
Grant Applications					
Granting Agency	Title	Amount		Activities	Action Needed
Grant Contracts					
Granting Agency	Contract Title	Duration	Amount	Activities	Action Needed
Bonneville Power Association	Roaring Creek Design Support	03/01/2026 - 02/28/2027	\$129,518.00	Roaring Creek Design and permitting funding	Approve Executive Director to Sign Agreement
Chelan County PUD	Kate Miller Design	1/2/2026 - 6-1-2026	\$15,000.00	Matching to fund website	Approve director to sign agreement
US Fish and Wildlife Service	Wenatchee Slopes Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Wildfire Resilience Project	10/01/2025-09/01/2028	\$45,454.00	Funding to continue restoration of the Balsamroot burn scar	Approve Executive Director to Sign Agreement
ILAs/MOUs/MOAs/Contracts					
Agreement Entity	Agreement Purpose	Duration	Financial Commitment	Activities	Action Needed
Kate Miller Design	Wildfire Preparedness Website	1/2/26 - 6-1-26	up to \$30,000	Brand design and website development a hub with before, during and after a fire information and resources.	Approve executive director to sign agreement
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
Natasha Staton	WSCC RCPP	53%	\$11,900.00	Thinning on 5 acres	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

Grants include additional design support for Roaring Creek through Bonneville Power Administration and US Fish & Wildlife funds for continued restoration of the Balsamroot burn scar. The contract is for the web site design, and there is one cost share payment for a thinning project.

The matching funds from Chelan County PUD are for the wildfire information web site for the region, to gather data and links to the more than 60 organizations in the area that provide information and resources. The bids for developing a bilingual site were coming in at over \$30,000. This is a priority for the Our Valley, Our Future community plan. They secured PUD matching funds to kickstart the web site and help with ongoing maintenance. They are hoping to launch the site in May.

M/S/C Russ Truman moved and Dillon Miller seconded to approve the list of Grant Contracts and Detailed Budgets, Agreements and Cost Share payment as presented and authorize the Executive Director to sign the documents when they are ready. The motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Board Meetings: Ryan showed the Board a proposed schedule of meetings based on the previous discussion to consider changing the regular meeting day. After reviewing the information and considering the options, the Board decided to change the day of the month and keep the current time of day for regular meetings.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved and Amy Bridges seconded to set the Regular District Meeting day as the second Friday of each month at 1:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Officer Election: Amy needs to step down from the Auditor role, which includes reviewing financial documents and assisting with elements of the Annual Financial Report

M/S/C Dillon Miller nominated Russ Truman for Auditor. Amy seconded the nomination. The election vote was unanimous.

Candidate Statement Policy: A policy is needed defining the form and content of any statements accepted from candidates for Elected Supervisor positions and the options for publication or posting of the statements by the District. Ryan presented a draft based on the election manual rules, recommendations, and samples from other districts.

M/S/C Russ Truman moved and Amy Bridges seconded to amend the Operations Manual to include the policy on candidate statements as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Election and Conservation Fair: Ryan reviewed the plans for the Conservation Fair on Saturday, March 14 at Pybus Public Market and the details for the election to be held at

the same location. The poll site will be open from 10 am to 3 pm. The deadline to file to run for the position and to request an absentee ballot is February 13, 2026 at 4 pm.

The resolution also names Valerie Hampton as the Election Supervisor. Junell's position will be up for election.

M/S/C Amy Bridges moved and Pete Teigen seconded to adopt Resolution 2025-6, 2026 Supervisor Election. The motion passed unanimously.

Scan and Toss policy: The resolution will allow District records to be completely digital with the addition of a policy to scan archival records in the approved format for filing and retention, and discard the original paper record. A procedure document is also being prepared for staff reference in how to implement the policy.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved and Pete Teigen seconded to adopt Resolution 2025-7, Scan and Toss Policy, for inclusion in the Operations Manual. The motion passed unanimously.

Pete offered a shout-out to Ryan, Patrick & the staff for running the chipper to help landowners after the recent storms, even in the rain. He apologized to the group, stating that he had another commitment and had to leave, and then left the meeting.

Public Records Requests: Ryan presented Resolution 2025-7, naming himself the Public Records Officer in place of Valerie Hampton.

M/S/C Russ Truman moved and Dillon Miller seconded to adopt Resolution 2025-7 Public Records Officer. The motion passed unanimously.

Operations Manual Policy changes and updates: Several general updates are needed.

PFML: The language in the state Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) section is updated to reflect changes in state law that take effect January 1, 2026 regarding job protection during PFML for employers with 25 or more employees, and a requirement to maintain employee medical insurance coverage during authorized PFML absences.

Personal vehicle use: Clarification that if staff tow District equipment with a personal vehicle, the employee's insurance is primary. The policy also adds a release form for partners who borrow or help to relocate equipment and tow it with a non-district vehicle.

Paid holidays: A category schedule is established with core holidays in Category A, which retain the current status where an employee must get permission to take the holiday on an alternate day. This can happen (albeit rarely) if there is a work related event that falls on the same day as the holiday. Category B holidays can be taken on an alternate day within the same month (or the previous month in the case of Labor Day) without prior approval. Staff choosing this option just need to notify their supervisor of their plans.

M/S/C Russ Truman moved and Amy Bridges seconded to make the Operations Manual changes to PFML, Personal Vehicle and Paid Holiday policies as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Long Term Strategic Planning: Ryan wants to get started soon. A budget will need to be developed for the projected period. The existing one could be used as a basis, but he would like to approach it differently by visualizing what a good organizational structure looks like, including how many staff with what expertise will be needed. Also considered should be what to aim for to achieve a stable, good ongoing program. There is a good opportunity with the Rates & Charges renewal to take a good look at what we want to do, including what infrastructure is needed. Should that include buying property, for example, having a demonstration site, or owning an office? A main focus would be goals for grants and fundraising. Ryan feels a facilitator would help guide the process. The former Conservation Commission Programs Lead Shana Joy is available to do this, and has the advantage of being very familiar with how districts operate and the rules they need to follow. The proposed contract amount is within his authority, but he wants to know if the Board wants a joint session with staff or an additional separate session? If that is added, it would come to about \$12,000. The end product would be a basis for the Rates and Charges and Long Term plans. Junell noted that sometimes an outside party is helpful to see things from a different perspective and draw out new ideas. It's a huge chunk of change, but the District may need to spend that money to move forward into the future. Russ commented that strategic planning is always a good thing. Amy said it sounded good. Ryan needs approval to spend above the threshold. He will set something up for the March or April meeting. February is probably too soon, especially with Legislative Days coming up on February 10 and other Commission meetings happening soon.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved and Amy Bridges seconded to authorize Ryan to enter a contract for up to \$14,000 for strategic planning facilitation. The motion passed unanimously.

WACD Annual Meeting: Russ reported that he went to the convention, and on the first day attended new supervisor training. Topics included the responsibility of the board to provide long term vision for the District, and to consider procedural questions such as the boundary between staff and supervisors, with Ryan as the buffer. They were reminded to read the handbook, and to consider how to figure out what the community wants. Other questions included: Do we have visionary meetings? Why do you want to be on the Board? What are your goals and priorities? Russ thinks it would be good for the Board to do something like that. He is going to be paying more attention to the activity of statewide boards and how they might affect Cascadia.

Various proposed legislation was discussed at the meeting, including a bill to allow local elections for CD supervisors on the general ballot, the possibility that appointed positions could go away, and Board members could be required to complete financial disclosures. Other bills in the works include a pre-filed bill to limit CD land ownership. In other business, Bill Blake was elected to the open position on the Conservation Commission. He is a former longtime District employee, but is not a Board member. Russ said the networking with other Supervisors was fun, and he wants to go again next year. It will be held near White Salmon at Skamania.

2026 Budget: Some of the information Ryan needed for the budget got to him late, so he was delayed getting the projections done. He is close to finished but needs to format it for presentation to the Board. He will bring the budget and 2026 salary schedule to the next meeting. There will not have been a payroll including 2026 hours at that time yet, so it can be effective retroactive to Jan 1.

Holiday Hours: Ryan would like to post a notice from December 24 – January 5 that the office doors will be locked, and entry is by appointment only due to reduced staffing. The Board agreed that would be an acceptable plan.

Meeting Sponsorship: The Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board Salmon Summit is next month in Leavenworth. The last time it was held (two years ago) the District participated with a sponsorship. Ryan would like to sponsor it again this time at the \$500 level.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved and Amy Bridges seconded to sponsor the UCSRB Salmon Summit at the \$500 level. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be January 9, 2026 at 1:30 pm in the District conference room.

The Board entered Executive Session at 3:45 pm for 45 minutes to consider the performance of a public employee.

Regular session resumed at 4:30 p.m.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved and Russ Truman seconded to approve the Performance Planning Memo for Ryan Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved the following:

Grant Contracts and Budgets:

Bonneville Power Administration \$129,518 Roaring Creek design and permitting.

Chelan County PUD \$15,000 wildfire website design matching funds.

US Fish & Wildlife Service \$45,454 continue Balsamroot burn scar restoration.

Grant and Contract Budgets:

Cost Share Payments

Natasha Staton \$11,900.00 RCPP Cost share – thinning on 5 acres;

Set the second Friday of each month at 1:30 p.m. as the Regular District Meeting day;

Elected Russ Truman as Auditor;

Amended the Operations Manual to include the policy on candidate statements;

Adopted Resolution 2025-6, 2026 Supervisor Election;

Adopted Resolution 2025-7, Scan and Toss Policy;

Adopted Resolution 2025-7 Public Records Officer;

Approved Operations Manual changes to PFML, Personal Vehicle and Paid Holiday policies;

Authorized Ryan Williams to enter a contract for up to \$14,000 for strategic planning facilitation;

Approved sponsoring the UCSRB Salmon Summit at the \$500 level;

Approved the Performance Planning Memo for Ryan Williams.

CHAIR



RECODER

