



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Memo on Potential 2021 WACD Bylaw Changes

At the September meeting, the Board of Directors directed staff to disseminate and gather feedback on five potential bylaw changes at the area association meetings. Staff shared the list of changes through the Weekly 5 Things and presented at each of the six area association meetings for comment and feedback.

At their meeting on November 15th, the Board formally recommended five proposed Bylaw changes for the Association to consider at the Annual Business Meeting. WACD Bylaw amendments must be adopted by at least a 2/3rd vote of the members present.

1. Updating Rock Lake CD's name

This May, the Palouse-Rock Lake Conservation District completed the necessary documentation to change their name to the Rock Lake CD. The WACD Articles of Incorporation (specifically Article II, Section 4) should be updated to reflect this change.

2. Lengthening Officer Term of Service

The length of officer terms was a frequent topic at meetings of the board in 2020 and into 2021. Because of the many possible permutations, staff is proposing to standardize the President and Vice-President's term with the other WACD Officers. This is to provide a starting point for discussions and serve as a viable potential middle position.

Part V – Officers. Section 4.

(To go into effect for the 2022 Officer Elections)

(a) The President shall serve a ~~one~~-Two-year term and may stand once for reelection to a second consecutive ~~one~~-Two-year term (maximum ~~two~~ four consecutive years if reelected). In the absence of a sitting Vice President, the President may stand for an additional one-year term (this provision will be removed at the conclusion of the 2021 annual meeting).

(b) The Vice-President shall serve a ~~one~~-Two-year term and may stand once for reelection to a second consecutive ~~one~~-Two-year term (maximum ~~two~~ four consecutive years if reelected).



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The reasoning behind this proposed delay to 2022 are two-fold.

- 1) This staggers WACD officer elections and ensures continuity and experience among the officer corps. WACD President and Vice Presidents would be elected in even years, while the Treasurer, Secretary, and National Director be elected in odd years.
- 2) Implementing this next year would allow candidates for the President and Vice President next year to know the time commitment inherent in the position, rather than see their term change at the 2021 Annual Conference.

3. Ensuring Representation of non-dues paying WACD Member-Districts

The WACD Bylaws as written are silent on the topic of non-dues paying districts, only addressing only two possibilities: those districts who pay dues and those who expressly decline membership. This proposed change would consider all districts under RCW 89.08 as part of the association, but would still require dues to be considered a member-district. There are many WACD activities which may benefit these districts, such as our government advocacy at the state and federal level, that the Association cannot reasonably exclude the benefits of membership to non-dues paying districts. The proposed language will acknowledge the fact that districts face financial hardship each year and enshrine current practice into the bylaws.

PART III - Association Dues and Voting Members. Section 1. Annual District Dues to

WACD. ~~(a) Every conservation district in Washington State shall be considered whose dues are fully paid for the current fiscal year at the commencement of the WACD Annual Meeting shall be deemed to be a member of this Association, unless membership is expressly declined by the conservation district by written notice to the Association.~~

~~(b) The dues for each member district is \$3,888.89. The Association, by June 15 of each year, shall provide each conservation district with notification of this amount.~~

(a) Every conservation district formed under RCW 89.08 shall be deemed to be a member of this Association, unless membership is expressly declined by the conservation district by written notice delivered to the Association.



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- (b) Every conservation district whose dues are fully paid for the current fiscal year at the commencement of the WACD Annual Meeting shall be eligible to vote in the affairs of the Association.
- (c) The maximum dues that may be levied for each member district is \$3,888.89 per year. The Association, by June 15 of each year, shall provide each conservation district with notification of this amount.
- (d) The Association may request optional supporting dues that exceed the maximum dues level. Supporting dues may be limited to explicit uses as presented to member districts by the Association. Supporting dues are optional and do not affect membership or voting rights.

4. More Participation at Annual Business Meetings

With the mass adoption of virtual business meetings for conservation districts in 2020 due to the pandemic, the question was put forward via resolution to enshrine virtual participation and voting at the WACD Annual Business Meeting.

Though the resolution failed to meet the 2/3 majority for adoption, the question of virtual participation is still a topic of topic. It would likely increase participation by reducing the traditional barriers to in-person attendance: cost and travel. After a year and more experience with virtual participation at local district boards, and the 2021 Annual Business Meeting combining in-person and virtual participation, the Board adopted a recommendation that the association consider adopting the proposed change.

PART IV - Meeting of Members. Section 5. A quorum must exist at any meeting of the Association at which official business is to be conducted. A quorum shall consist of the voting members present **physically or participating remotely**.

5. Sustainable Funding Committee

Long-term funding has long been a primary goal for WACD's member conservation districts. Many district resolutions brought forward to WACD's Annual Business Meeting each year reflect this need, yet meaningful change has not been forthcoming. In recognition of this need



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and to assure continued work toward this goal, the creation of a standing committee dedicated to district funding was proposed at the September Board Meeting.

As part of their response, each of the area associations adopted resolutions with similar language endorsing its creation. WACD's Legislative, Bylaws, and District Policies Committee recommending adopting a version with WACD being considered as a potential pass-through fiscal agent to its member-districts. If the resolution is adopted "as is", the WACD Board would be responsible for adopting the policies governing the specific operations of the committee.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION LANGUAGE: The WACD president establish (under Part X,§1 of the WACD by-laws) a permanent committee to review and develop identified and new opportunities for consistent and stable funding for CDs statewide. The sustainable funding committee will report progress and recommendations to the WACD board quarterly or as actions require. A progress report to the membership will be made at least annually.
(Consider adding WACD as recipient of possible sources of revenue for distribution to CDs.)