



October 5, 2022

Dear CD colleagues:

As a result of the significant conversations taking place around conservation district elections, the Joint Committee on Elections (“committee”) was created by the Washington State Conservation Commission (“SCC”) to bring people together to start a conversation and see what changes could be made. The committee came to the Commission with several recommendations, and those recommendations were added to the legislation that SCC and the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) worked on during the 2021 legislative cycle. Although that bill did not ultimately pass the Legislature and become law, SCC, in partnership with the committee and WACD has continued to engage in the consideration of options for the next legislative session.

A related committee recommendation was the recommendation to adopt the month of March as “Conservation Month” as part of a broader outreach effort to raise awareness regarding the conservation contributions of conservation districts and their staff.

This outreach effort will be partnered with significant public engagement to highlight the contributions of conservation districts and the importance of district elections to the general public. The Conservation Commissioners officially adopted March as Conservation Month during the Sept. 2022 commission meeting.

What does this mean for conservation districts?

SCC is working with its partners to finalize a statewide marketing campaign to promote March as Conservation Month. In order for each conservation district to get the most out of the outreach efforts and associated advertising to be provided through the SCC, **districts are encouraged to consider holding supervisor elections sometime during the month of March 2023**. SCC is aware that districts are starting to schedule your elections now and wanted to get this vital issue on your radar. You can learn more about [Conservation Month here](#).

Why Conservation Month?

- The dedication of significant outreach and advertising efforts can raise the conservation profile of district programs and promote election awareness. If it can be demonstrated to the public and the legislature that funding and marketing can grow voter turnout while promoting the marked success of district conservation programming, conservation districts should be empowered to continue to pick their own best election times and choose how their community members will vote.
- The initiative aligns with the [SCC 2022-27 Long-Range Strategic Plan](#). In the strategic priority area of “Governance and Accountability,” goal 4 states, “conservation districts operate legally, transparently, accountable and inclusively.” In addition, goal 5 says, “conservation district boards are well-supported to achieve their mission.” We believe that this initiative helps us to meet both of those goals.



Please note: This campaign is something that SCC is looking to fund on an annual basis as long as the rules and regulations regarding conservation district elections remain the same. Should any new regulations come about, we would reevaluate and possibly reallocate the resources.

Thank you for your consideration, and as always, we are here for any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Pettit".

Chris Pettit
SCC Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daryl Williams".

Daryl Williams
SCC Commission Chair