



# Fiscal Year 2022 (7/1/21 – 6/30/22)

## Annual Work Plan *FINAL (Approved 5.26.21)*

# Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD)

For More Information Contact:

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### Mission of the Whidbey Island Conservation District

The mission of the Whidbey Island Conservation District is to assist in the management of natural resources on and around Whidbey Island for present and future generations, inspiring voluntary conservation practices.

This Annual Plan of Work follows the Washington state fiscal year beginning July 1st, 2021 and ending June 30th, 2022. There are four program areas divided among two main parts of the work plan.

## Part I Natural Resource Priorities

(In order of priority based on public feedback and WICD Board-approved [2017-2022 Long Range Work Plan](#))

1. Water quality and quantity
2. Soil health, preservation, and retention
3. Economic and environmental sustainability of Whidbey Island land uses (i.e., farm, forest, residential)
4. Shoreline resources and marine life habitat
5. Human willingness to invest in conservation
6. Land use
7. Wildlife habitat, rural and urban
8. Energy (i.e. conservation, alternative generation resources)
9. Air quality

**Priority Geographic Areas:** All of Whidbey Island.

## Program Area 1 - Natural Resource Conservation Planning & Technical Assistance

**Goal:** The District's conservation planning and technical assistance program supports land managers' and residents' planning for and adoption of conservation actions. This program's goal is to help Whidbey Island residents overcome barriers to conservation actions, including barriers in knowledge, in ability, and in motivation. The work targets conservation actions that address the District's Natural Resource Priorities, ranked above in order of priority.

**Services:** The District's Conservation Planning and Technical Assistance Program provides services that are based on available funding, and include:

- General information requests, technical assistance, site visits, and conservation plan writing and follow-up in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) 9-step conservation planning process and applicable standards (see [Center for Technical Development definitions](#) for more information). Service areas include individual and community level planning and technical assistance on the topics of:
  - Agriculture and Livestock
  - Forest Stewardship and Wildfire Preparedness (i.e., Firewise)
  - Water Resources
  - Habitat Stewardship

**Objectives:**

**Objective 1:** Provide technical assistance and conservation planning to address the District’s natural resource priorities (Priorities Addressed).

**Metrics:**

- Water Resources (1,4,6)- Assist at least 70 clients, including:
  - 40 technical assistance site visits
- Agriculture and Livestock (1,2,3)- Assist at least 45 clients, including:
  - 30 technical assistance site visits
  - 3 farm plans
- Forest Stewardship and Wildfire Preparedness (i.e. Firewise) (2,3,6,7)- Assist at least 35 clients, including:
  - 30 technical assistance site visits (20 forest stewardship & 10 wildfire preparedness) ,
  - 5 forest plans developed
  - Coordination, assistance, and support for 1 new Firewise USA™ community
  - Coordination, assistance, and support for 4 existing Firewise USA™ communities
- Habitat Stewardship (7)- Assist at least 10 clients, including:
  - 10 technical assistance site visits
- General Informational (Correspondence) - Respond to 100 general information requests that do not require further assistance.

**Objective 2:** Provide technical assistance to partner organizations (see list in Program Area 3, Objective 6) coordinating complex projects that impact natural resources.

**Metrics:**

- General Informational (Correspondence) - Respond to general information requests from partners related to District Natural Resource Priorities, as funding permits.
- Partner-Related Technical Assistance - Provide technical assistance site visits on on partner projects that align with District’s Natural Resource Priorities, as funding permits.

**Objective 3:** Develop Technical Assistance criteria and process that sorts incoming requests for different levels of service based on the Distirct’s natural resource priorities, available funding, and workload demand.

**Metrics:**

- Workflow and decision support established – Staff have process that helps better manage heavy workload demands and prioritizes limited staff time to projects that match the District’s priorities and funding.

**Program Area 2- Natural Resource Conservation Implementation**

**Goal:** The District’s natural resource conservation implementation program is focused on helping clients overcome financial and technical barriers to implementing high-priority conservation actions. Eligible projects must meet the District’s cost share ranking criteria, and demonstrate public benefit and alignment with the District’s natural resource priorities.

**Services:** The District’s Conservation Implementation services rely on project-specific funding, and include:

- Identify conservation cost share opportunities and assist with practice implementation.
- Coordinate grant project funding.
- Provide engineering services, as requested.
- Hold a native plant sale, integrating technical assistance and outreach events with sale of plants.

<p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <p><b>Objective 1:</b> Update District’s Natural Resource Conservation Implementation Program project ranking criteria to better align with the District’s strategic plan and natural resource priorities, and best stewardship of public monies.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Create one revised and updated Project Ranking Matrix</u>, approved by the Board of Supervisors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Identify cost-share opportunities and assist clients with practice implementation utilizing the District’s updated ranking process.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Application Support</u> - Assist 2 clients in applying for state-funded cost-share monies through the Washington State Conservation Commission’s Shellfish and Natural Resource Investments Programs.</li> <li>● <u>Project Coordination Support</u> - Provide project implementation support to these 2 clients in installing conservation practices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Make cluster engineer available to support District-prioritized projects.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Engineering support</u> – Clients are referred for engineering assistance, as needed. New District Manager will conduct 1 internal needs assessment with staff and partners for best and most efficient use of cluster engineer’s services as aligned with District’s priorities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4:</b> Hold annual native plant sale, integrating technical assistance and outreach events with sale of plants.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Plant Sale</u> - Generate \$29,000 in revenue through plant sales at annual sale.</li> <li>● <u>FUTURE</u> - Consider adding other measures, including number of plant sale customers and plants sold, outreach goals.</li> </ul>

### **Program Area 3 - Partnerships, Outreach and Education**

**Goal 1:** The District offers a diverse partnership, outreach, and education service to support land managers and the community in growing their knowledge of natural resource conservation and land-use management, with the ultimate goal of increasing on-the-ground conservation actions. These services reach both youth and adult audiences, and are often conducted in collaboration with multiple partner organizations to meet the needs of as many residents on Whidbey Island as is feasible, based on staff capacity and funding.

**Goal 2:** The District partners with other agencies, organizations, and funders with similar natural resource priorities to coordinate improvements in the overall delivery of services so that the District can amplify and accelerate the impact of its programs and work. This work can include participation in planning processes, publications, and educational programming with partners that focus on the economic and environmental sustainability of Whidbey Island’s landscapes.

**Services:** The District’s Partnership, Outreach, and Education services span a broad range of print, digital, and in-person channels that reach multiple Whidbey Island audiences as funding allows, and include:

- Holding integrated technical assistance and education with our annual native plant sale.
- Technical education presentations to community organizations and the public.
- Coordination of the Whidbey Island Growers Association in partnership with WSU Extension Island County Food Systems.
- Youth education activities focused on District’s natural resource priorities.

- Maintaining existing outreach channels, including:
  - A website ([www.whidbeycd.org](http://www.whidbeycd.org)) that serves as a digital “point-of-entry” and resource hub.
  - Three social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) that display relevant, real-time natural resource conservation resources, events, and tools.
  - An email marketing platform and subscription service that provides a quarterly newsletter, general announcements and updates, and volunteer opportunities.
- Provide District presence with partners on committees in high priority natural resource areas to ensure voluntary conservation voice at the local, regional, and state level, and targeted strategies for broader collective impact.

<b>Objectives:</b>
<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Integrate technical assistance and education with the annual Native Plant Sale.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Engage New Residents and Underserved Audiences</u> - Expand promotional strategy and volunteer opportunities to include historically underserved audiences of Whidbey Island, including those living in the Oak Harbor and north Whidbey areas, and to new residents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Provide technical education presentations to community organizations and the public.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Design and deliver up to 10 presentations</u>, as work capacity and priority alignment allows, with emphasis on reaching new audiences that have historically been underserved with District services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Coordinate the Whidbey Island Growers Association in partnership with WSU Extension Island County Food Systems.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Implement a new engagement strategy</u> for new and existing farmer-to-farmer connections through a seasonal “FarmWalk” event series, targeted at one north, one central, and one south Whidbey farm location each season under the theme of “Collaboration and Connection.”</li> <li>• <u>Recruit at least 4 north Whidbey, 4 central Whidbey, and 4 south Whidbey farmers to participate</u> in providing outdoor tours to their peers through the FarmWalk series.</li> <li>• <u>Develop up to 12 short videos of each FarmWalk</u>, and</li> <li>• <u>Integrate all videos into a calendar year narrative of stories presenting Whidbey Island farmers and their resiliency.</u></li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4:</b> Provide youth education activities focused on District’s natural resource priorities.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Deliver youth education activities</u>, as requested, based on available funding and staff availability.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 5:</b> Maintain existing outreach channels, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A website (<a href="http://www.whidbeycd.org">www.whidbeycd.org</a>).</li> <li>▪ Three social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube).</li> <li>▪ An email marketing platform and subscription service that provides a quarterly newsletter, general announcements and updates, and volunteer opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Metrics (based on available staff time and funding):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Provide one content update per month to District’s website.</u></li> <li>• <u>Provide once content update per week to District’s social media platforms.</u></li> <li>• <u>Provide video updates to YouTube as needed</u> that include Whidbey Island Growers Association videos, District Board Workshops, and pertinent recorded webinars.</li> <li>• <u>Distribute a quarterly newsletter</u> via the District’s email marketing platform.</li> <li>• <u>Communicate, as needed, announcements and volunteer opportunities</u> through the District’s email marketing platform.</li> </ul>

**Objective 6:** Provide District presence with partners on committees in high-priority natural resource areas, as funding permits, to ensure voluntary conservation voice at the local, regional, and state level, and targeted strategies for broader collective impact.

**Metrics:**

- Provide regular presence as committee schedule allows for the following:

*Agriculture & Livestock-oriented:*

- Puget Sound District Caucus Food Systems Workgroup
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Northwest Local Work Group
- Washington State Conservation Commission Center for Technical Development Leadership Team
- Whidbey Island Food & Agricultural Resiliency Consortium

*Water Resources-oriented:*

- Island County Marine Resources Committee
- Island County Salmon Recovery Technical and Citizen Committee
- Island Local Integrating Organization
- Puget Sound District Caucus Stormwater Workgroup
- Puget Sound Stormwater Strategic Initiative

*Forest Stewardship and Wildfire Preparedness-oriented:*

- Northwest Washington Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network

- Provide opportunities to respond to new partnership requests as work capacity and priority alignment allows.

## **Part II District Operations Priorities**

(In order of priority based on public feedback and WICD Board- approved [2017-2022 Long Range Work Plan](#))

1. Satisfied and informed customers
2. Stable funding and fiscal accountability
3. Satisfied, well-trained employees
4. Engaged and well-trained board
5. A ready and willing corps of volunteers
6. Complete and current policy manual, procedures and processes
7. Maintain positive relationships with other conservation districts, the Conservation Commission, and other government and NGO partners
8. Marketing who and what we are
9. Maintain visible, suitable, and accessible office space

## **Program 4 - Operations and Administration**

**Goal:** The District's operation and administration are focused on sound and sustainable business and management practices so the District's natural resource programs are able to sustain and strengthen their impact on the mission.

**Services:** This program area includes the following services themes:

- Achieve highest level of accountability, both in district operations and financial audits, to ensure the proper, effective, and efficient use of public funds.
- Provide accurate and complete information in a simple and understandable format.
- Bring a high level of transparency and responsiveness to partners and the public.
- Plan for and maintain consistent funding to ensure staffing levels to support natural resource and operational goals and accomplish annual plan of work.
- Provide employee and board professional development opportunities and cross training.
- Provide employees and board members with the opportunity to participate in state, regional, and national conservation organizations and initiatives, as determined by the public's priorities for the District.

- Offer competitive compensation/benefit packages.
- Ensure employee satisfaction for team cohesiveness, improved workflow, and increased productivity.
- Annually review policies, procedures, and related processes; update as needed.
- Maintain and/or foster relationships and agreements with all organizational partners through effective communication and execution of services.
- Provide consistent volunteer opportunities that support District operation

<p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <p><b>Objective 1:</b> Achieve highest level of accountability, both in district operations and financial audits, to ensure the proper, effective, and efficient use of public funds.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Audit/ Funding Requirements</u> - Comply with all state/federal audit requirements, as well as requirements of funding entities, while keeping financial systems efficient and transparent to taxpayers.</li> <li>• <u>SAO Requirements</u> - Prepare for onsite State Auditors Office (SAO) regularly-scheduled audit which occurs every 3 years (next 2022).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Provide accurate and complete program and financial information in a simple and understandable format.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Board is well-informed</u> - Board members (when asked) concur that program and financial information meets their needs for staying informed on the business of the District.</li> <li>• <u>Board Meetings</u> - Board members are trained in their duties and meetings follow all requirements for open public board meetings.</li> <li>• <u>Public Engagement in Planning Processes</u> - Public are informed of and encourage to provide public input on to the District’s Annual Work Plan and Long Range Plan.</li> <li>• <u>Information sharing</u> - The District routinely uses local newspapers, social media, website, and email to keep the general public informed of the District’s business news.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Bring a high level of transparency, professionalism, and responsiveness to WICD partners and the public.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Transparency</u> - Provide information through formal and informal processes.</li> <li>• <u>Data Management</u> - Continue to improve upon and refine a single-source database system to improve efficacy of communication.</li> <li>• <u>Tracking System</u>- Improve tracking system, in collaboration with WSCC and PSCD, to ensure timely responsiveness to the public.</li> <li>• <u>Survey Tool</u> - Explore the use of a survey tool for client feedback.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4:</b> Plan for and maintain consistent funding to ensure staffing levels that will support natural resource and operational goals.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>State Funding</u> - Secure state funding for WSCC grants, cost share, and projects with WSCC, PSCD, and WACD.</li> <li>• <u>Other Fund Development</u> - Explore and/or pursue funding for local and regional Near Term Action (NTA) projects, and other relevant funding opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 5:</b> Provide employee and board development opportunities and cross-training, as funding permits.</p> <p><b>Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Formal Training</u> - Provide training for staff and board utilizing current staff, WA Association of District Employees (WADE) training conference, the Center for Technical Development (CTD), NRCS, WSCC, Enduris, WA State Labor &amp; Industry, SAO, and other entities.</li> </ul>

- Cross Training - Continue to cross-train specific District Manager (DM) duties and financial staff responsibilities where needed.
- Key Trainings - Provide training for staff specifically in public records and open public meetings statutes, group facilitation, grant writing, and project management (including budget management).

**Objective 6:** Provide employees and board members the opportunity to participate in state, regional, and national conservation organizations, as time and funding permit.

**Metrics:**

- Participate in PSCD, WADE, WSCC, WACD, NACD, and NRCS activities.
- Seek out new conservation partner opportunities.

**Objective 7:** Ensure employee satisfaction for team cohesiveness, improved workflow, and increased productivity.

**Metrics:**

- Improve employee review process to incorporate job satisfaction and wellness criteria.
- Consider alternative work schedules and ad-hoc remote work arrangements.
- Encourage teambuilding and wellness activities, including an annual staff and board retreat.
- Conduct weekly staff meetings.
- Increase staff awareness of funding sources, balances, and targets.

**Objective 8:** Annually review WICD policies, procedures, and related processes; update as needed.

**Metrics:**

- Ensure that board-approved policies are up-to-date, organized, and accessible to the WICD board, staff, and the general public (upon request).

**Objective 9:** Maintain and/or foster relationships and agreements with all partners through effective communication and execution of services.

*[Budget information – on following page]*

## **Fiscal Year 2022 ANNUAL BUDGET**

<b>INCOME</b>	
Rates and Charges	\$180,000
Dept Ecology - Stormwater	\$56,000
WSCC IM	\$100,000
WSCC Cost Share (pass through)	TBD
WSCC Cost Share TA	\$12,000
WSCC LT	\$12,000
IC- Shorefriendly	TBD
CTD Agreement	\$5,000
NRCS Task Orders	TBD
Plant Sale	\$29,000
Transfer from Reserve	\$16,520
<b>TOTAL Revenue</b>	<b>\$410,520</b>

<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Total Staff Costs (Salary, Benefits, WICD Costs)	\$304,920
Administrative Professional Services	\$5,000
Supplies (office and operating)	\$3,000
Phone/Postage/ Communications	\$3,500
Admin Travel, Mileage, & Lodging	\$1,000
Field Travel, Mileage	\$2,500
Election	\$500
Rent	\$24,000
Insurance (Enduris)	\$7,500
Utilities	\$2,600
Maint/Repairs- Sharp,WTS&NSIC,CRM,fire ext.	\$6,000
Conference, Dues, Training	\$6,000
Landowner Cost Share (pass through)	TBD
Stormwater Project expenses (SCD sub)	\$23,000
General Project expenses + Advertising	\$500
Plant Sale expenses	\$20,000
Capital Expenses	\$500
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$410,520</b>
<b>Revenue less Expenses</b>	<b>\$0</b>