



Fiscal Year 2023 (7/1/22 – 6/30/23) Annual Work Plan **DRAFT 4/27/2022** Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD)

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Mission

The mission of the Whidbey Island Conservation District is to promote natural resource stewardship and resilient ecosystems for present and future generations.

Vision

To be a valued community partner and resource for a sustainable Whidbey Island through practical, science-based solutions to challenges to clean air, water, and healthy soils

The Conservation Planning Process

For all of our planning work, WICD uses the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service's [Nine Step Conservation Planning Process](#), which takes a holistic ecosystem, or watershed, approach to managing natural resources. We focus on the natural systems and processes that sustain natural resources, such as soil, water, air, plant, and animals, while considering social, cultural and economic perspectives.

Purpose of the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Work Plan

This Annual Plan of Work follows the Washington state fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023. The structure of the plan follows the structure of our Long-Range Plan, which guides us from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2027. The following three institutional goals represent our strategic direction for the next five years. These goals are supported by specific objectives and annual priorities. The Fiscal Year 2023 work plan will implement priority actions and track articulated metrics identified for Year 1 of the Long-Range Plan.

The three main goals outlined in our Long-Range Plan each focus on relationships essential to the success of WICD's mission: Goal 1 focuses on our partnership with local land managers, from outreach to technical assistance to cost-share implementation; Goal 2 focuses on our community partnerships and committee participation, as well as joint project work; and Goal 3 focuses on our organizational sustainability in terms of our financial resiliency, our Board leadership, and our staffing and volunteer infrastructure and support.

WICD's primary focus will continue to be our technical and educational assistance to the Whidbey Island community. In the past year we have made great progress in reducing our waiting list of assistance requests and will continue to serve clients as promptly as possible as we eliminate our backlog. In addition, we have had an almost-complete turnover of staff (80%). We will take this opportunity to strategically assess our current programming and re-evaluate our success measures. As Year 1 of our Long-Range Plan, Fiscal Year 2023 will be used to set benchmarks to which we can assess changes year over year.

Goal 1: Improve Sustainable Natural Resource Management Practices on and around Whidbey Island

The core services we provide to fulfill our mission are educational programming, conservation planning, and best management practices (BMPs) implementation programming. We offer a diverse range of outreach and educational services to support our community in growing their knowledge of natural resource conservation and land-use management with the ultimate goal of increasing on-the-ground conservation actions. Our conservation planning and technical assistance program supports land managers' and residents' planning for and adoption of conservation actions. Our implementation program focuses on helping clients secure cost-share funding for implementing recommended BMPs.

Goal 1 focuses on these integral programs: Conservation planning with local land managers, connecting them with financial support when possible, and providing natural resource management-related educational resources to our community. Together these components work to improve sustainable natural resource management practices by empowering Whidbey Island residents to overcome barriers to conservation actions, including barriers in knowledge, ability, financial feasibility, and motivation.

Objective 1: Provide conservation planning and other technical assistance to empower clients to adopt positive conservation actions in the natural resource areas of soil, water, air, plants, and animals

Outcome: Improving delivery and access to quality conservation planning will empower our community to make informed decisions about incorporating BMPs into their land management plan.

Success Measure: Clients express that they are better prepared to manage their properties. New clients seek our planning services based on positive reviews/encouragement from clients who have learned and worked with us. We increase our reach to new audiences (e.g. [historically underserved](#), geographic diversity).

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Qualitative feedback from client surveys; Quantitative measures will include number of information requests fulfilled, number of clients reached with TA, best management practices implemented, amount of acres managed, diversity of audience, geographic regions served, and number of client referrals

Fiscal Year 2023 Priorities:

- Empower landowners and managers to follow conservation planning techniques to more efficiently implement BMPs
- Develop a priority resource concern rubric that we apply across programmatic and fundraising activities
- Define a core program suite for technical assistance delivery to message externally and make internal priority decisions, including intake, feedback, and evaluation measures

Objective 2: Identify financial assistance opportunities and guide land managers in implementation of best natural resource and land-use management practices

Outcome: Increased access to financial assistance leads to stronger implementation of BMPs on Whidbey Island.

Success Measure: Clients are aware of the diversity of financial opportunities available to them and take action by applying for appropriate funds. More of our clients apply for and receive financial support to implement BMPs than the prior year.

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Quantitative measures will include the number of cost-share contracts obligated, number of contracted acres, and the number of contracts for historically underserved clients

Fiscal Year 2023 Priority:

Educate and advocate for land managers in navigating financial assistance programs

Objective 3: Act as a key educational resource for on-the-ground natural resource and land-use management practices

Outcome: Improving and increasing access to quality educational resources regarding natural resource and land-use management practices will elevate the natural resource literacy of our community and future generations.

Success Measure: Clients express that they are better prepared to manage their properties. New clients seek educational resources based on positive reviews/encouragement from clients who have learned from us.

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Qualitative feedback from client surveys and workshop surveys; Quantitative measures will include number of service orientation attendees, increase in audience engagement (e.g. workshop attendees, social media impressions, handouts/collateral given), and number of client referrals

Fiscal Year 2023 Priorities:

- Empower land managers through service orientations, educational workshops, and other outreach tools
- Inventory and evaluate existing education and outreach tools and channels to improve operational synergy and institutional retention
- Create a community engagement strategy and evaluation model for new educational program development led by public need

Goal 2: Strategically Develop and Engage in Strong, Mission-Aligned Partnerships

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 committees, joint projects, planning processes, publications, and educational programming with partners that focus on the economic and environmental sustainability of Whidbey Island's landscapes.

Objective 1: Improve our service delivery and reach by integrating and leveraging our partnerships for broader collective impact

Outcome: The District's partnerships are stronger, mutually beneficial and mission-aligned so that together with our partners we can better meet our community's conservation needs.

Success Measure: Partners can both demonstrate an improvement in services and/or community reach, as well as an exchange of patrons, participants, or resources, as a result of the partnership.

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Qualitative feedback from our partners; Number of services accomplished resulting from each partnership

Fiscal Year 2023 Priority:

Focus on strengthening current partnerships as our largely new team gets better established in their roles

Objective 2: Participate in partner committees addressing high priority natural resource concerns for broader collective impact

Outcome: Committee participation clearly benefits our strategic objectives and organizational sustainability.

Success Measure: The community demonstrates value in the collective effort of the committees' work.

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Qualitative feedback from our committee partners; Number of services accomplished resulting from committee work

Fiscal Year 2023 Priority:

Focus on our current committee participation to strengthen those partnerships as well as more fully understand our contributions on each

Objective 3: Collaborate on joint projects to address specific natural resource concerns on and around Whidbey Island

Outcome: Collaborative projects clearly benefit our strategic objectives and organizational sustainability.

Success Measure: The community demonstrates value in the collective effort of the joint projects.

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Qualitative feedback from our committee partners; Number of services accomplished resulting from each joint project

Fiscal Year 2023 Priority:

Focus on our current collaborations to strengthen those partnerships as well as more fully understand our contributions on each

Goal 3: Continue to Strengthen and Build Organizational Sustainability

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.

Objective 1: Secure a strong financial foundation through targeted efforts to increase revenue opportunities

Outcome: By strengthening and diversifying our revenue streams, the District will be more financially resilient, resulting in greater community confidence in our organization's sustainability and growth.

Success Measure: As a result of greater community confidence, we will see increased revenue, including new community-based gifts.

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Quantitative measures will include increase in overall revenue, number of newly identified grants, and number of new revenue streams

Fiscal Year 2023 Priorities:

- Build a grant pipeline database and project management infrastructure
- Research feasibility of improved plant sale revenue generation, as well as new revenue streams

Objective 2: Build Board capacity and expertise to ensure strong leadership and oversight, as well as cultivate donor relationships and potential organizational and agency partnerships

Outcome: By developing their role as institutional leaders and ambassadors, the Board will help ensure community confidence in our organizational stability and growth.

Success Measure: Board members will attend trainings and at least 80% will feel better informed about District operations and governance; Board leadership materials will be produced for ongoing use; Associate Supervisor program will be well-received through participant feedback and will include a range of ages, gender, and ethnicity; Election participation will increase by at least 20% in the next WICD election.

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Qualitative surveys of understanding on trainings and leadership materials from Supervisors and Associate Supervisors; Quantitative measures will include number of Board trainings, diversity of Associate Supervisor program participants, and increase in election participation

Fiscal Year 2023 Priorities:

- Build a robust Board leadership program to include recruitment, onboarding, training, self-evaluation, and continuing education components
- Build Associate Supervisor program recruitment and engagement strategy to increase board diversity and inclusion

Objective 3: Ensure staff, Board, and volunteers feel valued and are appropriately supported, nurtured, and compensated for their efforts

Outcome: Staff and volunteers feel better supported to fulfill their roles and wish to remain part of our organization because of its positive work environment.

Success Measure: Staff and volunteers report that they feel highly supported and encouraged to grow in their roles and are valued members of the District's team. WICD is known throughout the community as a great place to work and volunteer, due to its positive work environment, competitive pay and generous benefits.

Metrics: This year's data will become a baseline to set measures in the following year: Qualitative surveys of staff and volunteers; Quantitative measures will include staff and volunteer retention rate

Fiscal Year 2023 Priorities:

- Develop an institutional framework to define work culture and establish core competencies
- Strengthen personnel policies including updating WICD's operations manual, formalizing job descriptions, developing onboarding procedures, and regularly reviewing compensation levels
- Build institutional knowledge and succession planning

[WICD's FY2023 Budget summary on the following page]

WICD FY2023 Budget

INCOME		
Rates and Charges	191,000.00	
Center for Technical Development FY2023	13,000.00	
NACD TA Grant	84,380.00	
Shore Friendly	16,000.00	
Western SARE Research Grant	68,947.00	
WSCC Implementation Grant	117,822.00	
WSCC Livestock FY2023	14,719.00	
WSDA Specialty Crop Block Grant	11,976.00	
Plant Sale	45,000.00	
Transfer from Reserve	19,694.00	
TOTAL Revenue	582,538.00	
GRANT IMPLEMENTATION COSTS		
NACD FY2023 Grant	4,125.00	
Western SARE Research Grant	26,931.00	
CTD Grant	631.00	
TOTAL Grant Implementation Costs	31,687.00	
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Total Staff Costs (Salary, Benefits, WICD Costs)	443,718.00	
Office & Related Expenses	35,968.00	
Information Technology	5,898.00	
General Administrative Costs	12,942.00	
Professional Services (Audit)	9,000.00	
Professional Partnerships	5,000.00	
Marketing & Promotion	2,475.00	
Team Building Fund	1,000.00	
Travel & Related Expenses (not Grant funded)	400.00	
Conferences, Dues & Training	3,400.00	
Plant Sale Expenses	31,050.00	
TOTAL Expenses	550,851.00	
REVENUE Less EXPENSES		-