



# Conservation CONNECTION

WHIDBEY ISLAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #26

may 2019

## WICD Annual Work Plan & Budget Available for Review



Beginning Wednesday, May 1st through Monday, May 20th, Whidbey Island Conservation District's draft Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Plan of Work & Budget is available for public review and comment. Each year through its Annual Plan of Work and every five years through its Long Range Plan of Work, the WICD board of supervisors seek feedback from partners and the public to develop Work Plan documents, which serve as guidance to staff in carrying out natural resource priorities. A draft of next year's plan can be viewed by clicking the image [bit.ly/2V4XaKx](http://bit.ly/2V4XaKx) and/or link above, or by requesting a copy from the District by calling toll-free at (888) 678-4922. Comments from the public on the draft can be submitted by email to [wicd@whidbeycd.org](mailto:wicd@whidbeycd.org) or mailed to: WICD, PO Box 490, Coupeville, WA 98239.



New District Manager Matt Zupich (center) welcomes Shannon Bly (left) and Gwendolyn Hannam (right) to WICD staff.

## WICD Welcomes New Staff and Bids Farewell to Bruce

Congrats to Matt Zupich on his new role as District Manager! Matt has over ten years of experience working in the natural resource field, including nearly three years as a Natural Resource Planner for WICD, and is looking forward to his position leading the district.

Joining the WICD team in April are Natural Resource Planner Gwendolyn Hannam and Conservation Program Support Specialist Shannon Bly. Gwendolyn has previously worked as a Lead Biologist Scientist in the Water Management Section for the US Army Corps of Engineers and as a private Environmental Service Consultant. Shannon is a graduate of Fairhaven College at Western Washington University with a degree in Natural Resource Economics, and comes to WICD from the Oak Harbor Country Store where she worked with the public on their farm, yard, and livestock questions and projects.



## Weeds of Spring 2019 Now Available

These seasonally-themed bulletins are a partnership between WICD and Island County's Department of Natural Resources. To view, sign up to receive future Weed Bulletins, or view an archive of local weed resources, visit [whidbeycd.org/weed-bulletin](http://whidbeycd.org/weed-bulletin). View the complete list of Island County's Noxious Weeds for 2019 at [bit.ly/2CgbedB](http://bit.ly/2CgbedB).

Also this past April, we waved farewell to WICD's Farm Planner – Bruce Gordon. Bruce was known by staff and board, as well as partners and the public, for his problem-solving abilities and his desire to help people with conservation challenges.

When he joined the District team in fall 2010, Bruce brought with him a career of experience spanning nearly 30 years in conservation of natural resources. The lives of Whidbey landowners



Bruce Gordon

have been positively impacted by his presence and we thank him for his years of service.

Visit [whidbeycd.org/wicd-staff/](http://whidbeycd.org/wicd-staff/), to learn more about our staff.



## Farmers Markets Are Open! Support Local & Regional Farms

WICD staff facilitate connections between farmers, and between farmers and consumers. With the 2019 growing season underway, we invite you to learn more by clicking on the icons at left or by visiting: [whidbeycd.org/agricultural-community](http://whidbeycd.org/agricultural-community)

## Check out Historic Photos of Whidbey Island with WICD's Historical Mapping Project



In the 1990s, when USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) closed its Whidbey-based office, WICD inherited several sets of historic aerial photographs. The aerial photos are mainly images of Whidbey Island and Island County from the 1940s, 1963, and 1990. In spring 2015, WICD digitized these photos and houses them via an interactive mapping tool. Check it out and see what your property looked like years ago through these interesting historical maps at [whidbey-cd.org/historical-mapping-project/](http://whidbey-cd.org/historical-mapping-project/)



### Our Native Plant Sale Volunteers Rock!

*Thank you, to our 2019 team. We couldn't do it without you.*

*- gratefully, WICD staff*

Over fifty volunteers assisted in packing plant orders and preparing for our Open Sale Day this past February 23rd. Thank you for making this another successful sale. Nearly 11,000 plants sold!

## Sierra Country Club Holds Firewise Community Work Party

May 4th was Wildfire Community Preparedness Day. WICD partnered with the Sierra Country Club to hold a community work party. Homeowners limbed trees, cleared brush, and hauled yard waste to make their shared spaces fire safe. The Department of Natural Resources wildfire truck was on the scene to offer assistance and expertise. And there's no better way to end a work party than with a BBQ! Sierra Country Club has been an NFPA nationally recognized Firewise Community for two years, and is using their experience to mentor nearby communities. Thank you Sierra Country Club for your continued efforts to keep your community wildfire safe. Are you interested in learning more about Firewise? Visit our website's [Firewise Page](#) to learn how your neighborhood can become an official Firewise Community, or call the District at (888) 678-4922 to schedule a free, one-hour Firewise home assessment.



Sierra Country Club members and DNR firefighters show off their Firewise work in their community for Wildfire Community Preparedness Day.

## Did You Know? Whidbey Island Growers Association – A great place to connect with rural landowners and share resources



### Whidbey Island Growers Association

A potluck group of agricultural producers meeting monthly to build community & share resources. All are welcome to attend at any time.

**Upcoming Events**

- May 6 @ 6:30 PM - Open House/Charter, Sunday Agricultural Training for the Night Farmer! All Welcome to PWV! Ding Neff's Farm
- May 13 @ 6:30 PM - 2019 Extension & Co. Coupeville - Washington State Department of Ecology - Doug Kelly, Island County Hydrogeologist & John Rose, WA DCE
- July 1 @ 6:30 PM - 2019 Extension & Co. Coupeville - Washington State Department of Ecology - Doug Kelly, Island County Hydrogeologist & John Rose, WA DCE
- August 1 @ 6:30 PM - Local Food and Market - First Annual Island Bread & Farm Tour

Resources & connections for farmers  
[www.whidbeycd.org/agricultural-community/](http://www.whidbeycd.org/agricultural-community/)

Are you a farmer or rural landowner interested in connecting with other like-minded agriculture-focused folks on Whidbey? Over the past three and a half years, the Whidbey Island Growers Association has served as a hub for farmers, rural business owners, and agricultural support organizations to come together to connect, share resources, and build community. This informal potluck group is coordinated by staff from the Whidbey Island Conservation District and the WSU Extension Island County Farms & Food Systems Program, but speakers, topics, and activities at each meeting are guided by all attendees through a group planning session at the beginning of each calendar year and feedback throughout the year. View the next few months of programming at [bit.ly/2VKimKt](http://bit.ly/2VKimKt) or visit [whidbeycd.org/agricultural-community/](http://whidbeycd.org/agricultural-community/). Interested in being added to the Growers Association email list? Email Kelsi Mottet at [kelsi@whidbeycd.org](mailto:kelsi@whidbeycd.org) with subject "Add me to Growers Association List."

### Whidbey Island Growers Association June Potluck presents Island County's Hydrogeology & Water Rights

June 3rd: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM WSU Extension 406 N. Main., Coupeville

- Doug Kelly - Hydrogeologist from Island County Environmental Health Department
- John Rose - Hydrogeologist from Washington State Department of Ecology

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