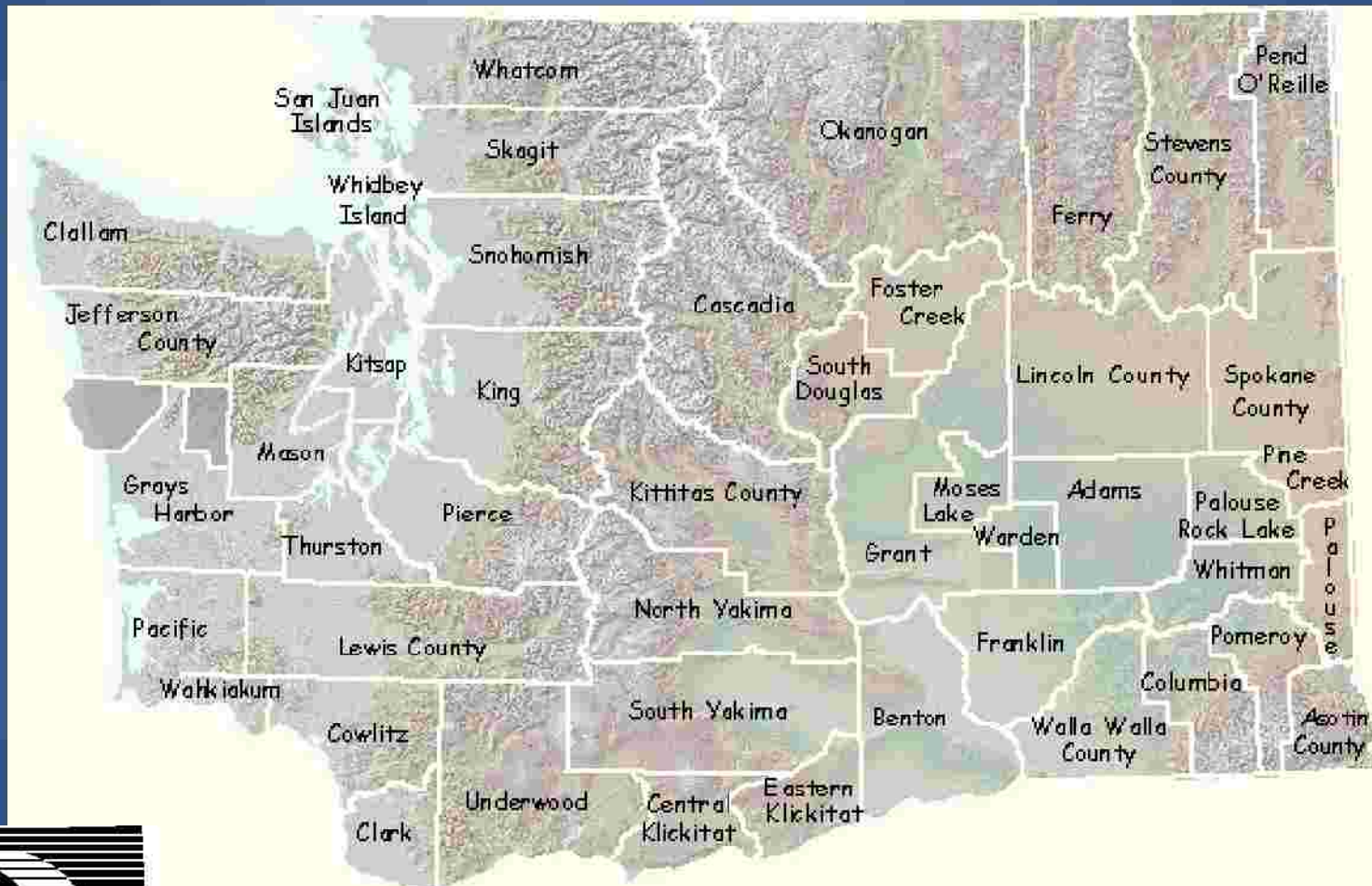


# Washington Districts In Good Standing

The evolution of a revolution



# When last we left our hero....

- Conservation districts had completed their budget surveys
- WACD had “ground-truthed” the surveys and WSCC submitted a budget request that was twice as big as anything in our history



# The Governor and Legislature said...



- The Governor reduced WSCC budget less than other Natural Resource Agencies
- Legislature agreed but, for the first time, removed 5 provisos, giving Commission greater flexibility on allocation to districts
- 6% budget cut on paper but in actuality about 20% because of reductions we had already taken



# 250 “Shalls!!!!”

## Chapter 89.08 RCW CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

### Sections

- 89.08.005 Short title.
- 89.08.010 Preamble.
- 89.08.020 Definitions.
- 89.08.030 Conservation commission.
- 89.08.040 Members. Compensation and travel expenses. Records, rules, hearings, etc.
- 89.08.050 Employees. Delegation. Quorum.
- 89.08.060 Assistance of other state agencies and institutions.
- 89.08.070 General duties of commission.
- 89.08.080 Petition to form district. Contents.
- 89.08.090 Notice of hearing. Hearing.
- 89.08.100 Findings. Order.
- 89.08.110 Election. How conducted.
- 89.08.120 Ballots.
- 89.08.130 Notice of election.
- 89.08.140 Expense of hearing and election.
- 89.08.150 Procedure after canvass.
- 89.08.160 Appointment of supervisors. Application to secretary of state.
- 89.08.170 Secretary of state's certificate. Change of name.
- 89.08.180 Annexation of territory. Boundary. ....

Some shalls are more important than others...

#### 89.08.185

##### Petition to withdraw from district — Approval or rejection — Disputed petitions.

The local governing body of any city or incorporated town within an existing district may approve by majority vote a petition to withdraw from the district. The petition shall be submitted to the district for its approval. If approved by the district, the petition shall be sent to the commission. The commission shall approve the petition and forward it to the secretary of state and the boundary of the district shall be adjusted accordingly. If the petition is not approved by the district, the district shall adopt a resolution specifying the reasons why the petition is not approved. The petition and the district's resolution shall be sent to the commission for its review. The commission shall approve or reject the petition based upon criteria it has adopted for the evaluation of petitions in dispute. If the commission approves the petition, it shall forward the petition to the secretary of state and the boundaries of the district shall be adjusted accordingly. The criteria used by the commission to evaluate petitions which are in dispute shall be adopted as rules by the commission under chapter 74.05 RCW, the administrative procedure act.

#### 89.08.190

##### Nomination and election of supervisors — Annual meeting of voters.

Within thirty days after the issuance of the certificate of organization, unless the time is extended by the commission, petitions shall be filed with the commission to nominate candidates for the three elected supervisors. The petition shall be signed by not less than twenty-five district electors, and a district elector may sign petitions nominating more than one person.

In the case of a new district, the commission shall give due notice to elect the three supervisors. All provisions pertaining to elections on the creation of a district shall govern this election so far as applicable. The names of all nominees shall appear on the ballot in alphabetical order, together with instructions to vote for three. The three candidates receiving the most votes shall be declared elected supervisors, the one receiving the most being elected for a three-year term, the next for two and the last for one year. An alternate method of dividing the district into three zones may be used when requested by the board of supervisors and approved by the commission. In such case, instructions will be to vote for one in each zone. The candidate receiving the most votes in a zone shall be declared elected.

Each year after the creation of the first board of supervisors, the board shall by resolution and by giving due notice, set a date during the first quarter of each calendar year at which time it shall conduct an election, except that for elections in 2002 only, the board shall set the date during the second quarter of the calendar year at which time it shall conduct an election. Names of candidates nominated by petition shall appear in alphabetical order on the ballots, together with an extra line wherein may be written in the name of any other candidate. The commission shall establish procedures for elections, canvass the returns and announce the official results thereof. Election results may be announced by polling officials at the close of the election subject to official canvass of ballots by the commission. Supervisors elected shall take office at the first board meeting following the election.



# Seeking Guidance From Districts



- In an April meeting:
  - Districts wanted greater accountability for spending allocations and getting conservation on the ground
  - Recommended WSCC connect and enforce budget allocations based on district performance
- In May the Commission directed staff to develop evaluation tools for this purpose



# So based on this guidance and the “250 Shalls” ...

WSCC staff developed a Districts In Good Standing Checklist evaluating:

1. Implementation of Natural Resource Conservation
2. Public Outreach, Involvement and Education
3. Annual Plans of work
4. Long-range plans
5. General District Operations
6. Grants and Vouchering
7. Supervisor elections and appointments
8. District Capacity
9. Audits
10. Reports



# And then, in the span of a month...

- Commission Regional Managers and financial staff evaluated all 47 conservation districts and found improvements needed in the following areas:
  - grants and vouchering (17)
  - elections and appointments (11)
  - District capacity (4)
  - annual plan of work (3)
  - implementation of natural resource conservation (1)
  - General district operations (1)
- As a result of this and additional evaluations:
  - 4 districts needed to improve their ability to properly expend budget allocations; and
  - 15 districts were placed on a “watch list”



# And then, in the span of a month...(continued)

- The Commission decided at a June special meeting to:
  - Initially allocate 25% of their FY 2009 allocation for FY 2010.
  - Direct Commission staff to evaluate the district budget survey requests and prorate the final budget
  - Districts on the “watch” list will receive no more than 50% of their final budget and must develop a plan to get into compliance before receiving the remainder.
  - If a district on the “watch” list is not in compliance by January 2010, their remaining allocation will revert to a pool of funds to be distributed to all districts.
  - The Commission would approve the final budget distribution no later than their July regular meeting.





# In July the Commission...

- Divided allocations into 4 tiers and allocate to each a different level based upon:
  - whether the elements of Districts In Good Standing have been achieved
  - whether the outcomes identified in FY09 grants have been achieved
  - whether grant funds were returned and, if so, when and how much
  - whether or not the district received a “Concerns” or a “Watch” status indicator.
- Directed each district to work with their Regional Manager using the grant allocation provided, to develop an implementation plan containing measurable outcomes, reflecting the district’s annual plan of work, and compatible with the priorities identified within the WACD Budget Survey.
- Required work plans to include deliverables and the results of the plans and deliverables will be collected and reported semi-annually, to WACD leadership and Commission members
- Stated that in September, the Conservation Commission members will decide whether to continue to withhold 50% of funds from the Tier 4 group and distribute those funds, on a competitive basis, to districts identified in Tier 1



# Next Steps



- WSCC will send-out to districts a new good standing checklist for comment and eventual ownership of criteria for evaluation of districts
- WACD and WSCC would approve that checklist well before the end of the fiscal year



# Overall Goal

Effective conversion of state funding into conservation work completed through the local conservation districts -- "Promises Made – Promises Kept"



# Thanks!

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