

STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION OPERATING BUDGET REQUESTS

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Forest Health & Community Wildfire Resiliency — \$2.5M request

Conservation districts (CDs) are essential service providers in Washington's wildfire resiliency and forest health efforts, providing direct assistance in their communities across the state. In the 23-25 biennium, this program distributed \$15M in grants to 31 CDs. This funding created 100 new partnerships and leveraged an additional \$10M to expand opportunities to prevent and mitigate wildfires. In the 25-27 biennium, funding was reduced to \$2.5M.

The additional supplemental funding will:

- Bolster urgent local services such as reducing fuel for wildfires, wildfire risk assessments for residents, education, forest health treatment, and neighborhood-scale and county-level wildfire assessment and action planning.
- Protect people and places by reducing risks to homes, safeguarding communities, and protecting natural resources.

Photo: Guemes Island Chipping Crew

Conservation Technical Assistance — \$2.25M request

Conservation districts deliver voluntary, locally driven solutions for natural resource issues like soil health, habitat restoration, and water quality. As environmental threats continue to mount, their services are more critical than ever. CDs are limited in their ability to receive funding at the local level for their operations and depend on the flexibility and reliability of Conservation Technical Assistance grants to meet state priorities and increasing demand.

Providing additional funding will:

- Increase CD capacity to partner with landowners to provide technical assistance, develop projects, and implement conservation practices in communities across Washington.
- Ensure CDs are able to keep pace with demand for their services and programs.

Photo: Dew Drop Drill Prep



Business and Technology Transformation — \$3.2M one-time request

Ten years ago, SCC administered about \$35M in grant funding from two fund sources to CDs and other partners. Today, we administer about \$100M from eight fund sources, and our systems have not kept pace with our growth. We need to invest in our systems to ensure our data is usable and secure. We also need to reduce friction in our processes for our most important customer: CDs.

This vital investment will:

- Upgrade grant administration, fiscal management, and workforce support systems.
- Improve efficiency, responsiveness, customer service, and accountability.
- Provide real-time reporting to legislators, partners, and the public.

Photo: Example of a typical SCC finance staff member's desk at the end of fiscal closeout.

About the Washington State Conservation Commission

Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) conserves natural resources on all lands in Washington. We collaborate with Washington's 45 conservation districts and other partners to provide voluntary, incentive-based programs.

About Conservation Districts

Conservation districts are locally-led, non-regulatory governments dedicated to natural resource management. All 39 Washington counties are served by at least one CD, bringing expertise and trusted relationships to meet conservation needs.