Washington State Conservation Commission

Approved Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2026

Regular Business Meeting ~

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/SCC) met virtually as well as in-person on Thursday, March 19, 2026, in Friday Harbor, Washington. Chair Cherie Kearney called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

Note: All meeting materials can be found on our meetings webpage. You will find the meeting packet with background information, presentations and past meeting information.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Cherie Kearney, Chair, Governor Appointee
Wade Troutman, Vice-chair, Elected central region
Larry Cochran, Elected east region
Amy McKay, Washington Association of Conservation Districts (online)
Brook Beeler, Department of Ecology
Dani Gelardi, Department of Agriculture
Bill Blake, Elected west region
Jim Kropf, Washington State University (online)
Katie Rose Allen, Department of Natural Resources (online)

A quorum was present.

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT

James Thompson, Executive Director
Alicia McClendon, Administrative Assistant
Jean Fike, Puget Sound Regional Manager
Jessica Wilson, Chief Engagement Officer
Kate Delavan, Deputy Director
Lori Gonzalez, Executive Assistant
Sarah Groth, Chief Financial Officer
Sarah Wilcox, Strategic Initiatives Manager

Additional staff are listed in the attachments.

PARTNERS REPRESENTED

Angie Reseland, Dept of Fish and Wildlife (online)
Roylene Comes at Night, USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Nick Vira, USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Craig Nelson, WA Association of District Employees
Sarah Moorehead, WA Association of District Employees
Tom Salzer, WA Association of Conservation Districts (online)
Heather Wendt, WA Association of Conservation Districts (online)
Ryan Baye, WA Association of Conservation Districts

All other guests are listed in the following attachments:

Attachment A – online registration/attendance sheet
Attachment B – in-person sign-in sheet

ACTION MINUTES TAKEN

The meeting was opened with Commissioner roll call taken by Lori Gonzalez. A quorum was present. Following roll call, introductions were made for guests attending both in person and online.

Chair Kearney asked for any additions or corrections to the agenda; none were offered.

CONSENT AGENDA

Draft January 15, 2026- Business Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to approve the draft January 15, 2026 Business Meeting Minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Troutman. Motion passed.

Out of State Travel Requests

Motion by Commissioner Troutman to approve the executive director and a commission member to travel to Washington D.C. for the NACD Legislative Fly-In, March 23-26, 2026, as well as the Puget Sound Day on the Hill events held April 13-17, 2026.

Seconded by Commissioner Blake. Motion passed.

DISTRICT OPERATIONS

Town of Metaline Falls Annexation Request into Pend Oreille Conservation District

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to approve the Petition for inclusion of additional territory within the Pend Orielle Conservation District, as requested by the Pend Oreille Conservation District and the Town of Metaline.

Seconded by Commissioner McKay. Motion passed.

PROGRAMS

Authorization of Agricultural Conservation Easement Sponsorship (ACES) Application for WWRP Grant Funds

Motion by Commissioner McKay:
The Commission has determined that acquisition of agricultural conservation easements on the three properties is consistent with the mission, duties and purposes of SCC.

The Commission hereby authorizes the Sate Conservation Commission Executive Director to sign required documents to submit grant applications to the RCO WWRP Farmland Preservation Program for agricultural conservation easements on the three properties:

- Hinterlands Phase Two Agricultural Easement – Cascadia Conservation District
- Fairview Agricultural Easement – Kittitas County Conservation District
- Wilson Creek Agricultural Easement -- Kittitas County Conservation District

Seconded by Commissioner Gelardi. Motion passed.

BUDGET

Preliminary Approval: 2027-2029 Decision Packages

Motion by Commissioner Cochran to approve the following decision package topics for further development by SCC staff for possible submittal in the 2027-2029 budget:

Capital Budget Proposals

- Farmland Protection and Land Access
- Irrigation Efficiencies Grant Program
- Natural Resource Investments
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program
- Riparian Grant Program
- Shellfish
- Voluntary Stewardship Program
- Washington Shrubbsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative

Operating Budget Proposals

- Conservation Technical Assistance
- Disaster Assistance Program
- Forest Health and Community Wildfire Resiliency
- Science Hub”

Seconded by Commissioner Beeler.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 11:20 a.m. Chair Kearney announced that the Commission would recess into Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.11 (1) (i) to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency. The Executive Session was scheduled to last 30 minutes until 11:50 a.m.

At 11:50 a.m. the Chair announced an extension of the Executive Session to 12:00 p.m.

At 12:00 p.m., the Executive Session concluded, and the Commission reconvened in open session.

POLICY, BUDGET AND FINANCE

Proposed Rulemaking Related to Conservation District Elections

Motion by Commissioner Beeler to authorize staff to follow the Office of Code Revisor’s (OCR’s) public comment process for rulemaking in lieu of SCC’s standard procedure of a 45-day public comment period.

Seconded by Commissioner Gelardi. Motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Troutman to authorize staff to begin the rulemaking process amendments to WAC Chapter 135-110 following guidance to the SCC received from the Attorney General's Office related to the resolution of the 2024 Clallam CD election lawsuit.

Seconded by Commissioner Blake. Motion passed.

Chair Kearney adjourned the meeting at 1:03 p.m.

Attachment A

Zoom Registration Report

March 19, 2026 SCC Business Meeting

First Name	Last Name
Angie	Reseland
Bill	Eller
dean	hellie
Paul	D'Agnolo
Megan	Stewart
Jodi	Prout
Joy	GARITONE
Josh	Giuntoli
Sarah	Wilcox
Karla	Heinitz
Jenny	Coe
Kris	Neely
Brandy	Reed
Tami	Stubbs
Alan	Chapman
Karen	Hills
Hilary	Aten
nicole	boyes
Margaret	McKeown
Sarah	Jones
B'Elanna	Rhodehamel
Kara	Kaelber
Emmy	Engle (Okanogan CD)
Nikki	Atkins
Brad	Riehle
Allisa	Carlson
Mike	Poteet

First Name	Last Name
Matt	Janz
Katie Rose	Allen
Ashley	Wood
Jim	Kropf
Dave	Hedrick
Rosa	Mendez-Perez
Becca	Hebron
Toyo	Garber
Paige	DeChambeau
Amy	Martin
Amy	McKay
Heather	Wendt
Anna	Lael
Kate	Delavan
Nick	Vira
Dean	Longrie
Larry	Cochran

Attachment B

Washington State Conservation Commission

Please Sign In

Conservation Commission Business Meeting
Thursday, March 19, 2026

	NAME	ENTITY/DISTRICT
1.	Sarah Groan	SCC
2.	Alicia McClendon	SCC
3.	Lori Gonzalez	SCC
4.	David Rose	NRCS
5.	Bill Bahr	SCC - Western
6.	Kate Delavan	SCC
7.	Brook Beeler	Ecology
8.	Craig Nelson	Okanogan CD
9.	Jessica Wilson	SCC
10.	NICK VIRA	NRCS
11.	LARRY COCHRAN	WSCC
12.	Evan Bander	MCD
13.	Vicki Carter	Spokane CD
14.	Ryan Baye	WHCD
15.	Josh Larsen	Whitman CD

16. Zorch Oppenheimer — Clark CD
17. Ryan Williams — Cascadia CD
18. Roybre Conas AtN-Rt — NRCS-WA
19. Jean Fike — WSCC
20. Jennifer Baie — Palouse CD
21. Sarah Moorehead — WADE/TCO
22. Wade Troutman — SCC
23. Cherie Kearney — Chair
24. James Thompson — SCC
25. Dani Gelardi — SCC/Ag
26. Dani Madrone — SCC
27. Paul Andersson — SJICD
28. Lynn Bahrych — SJICD
29. Guest
30.
31.
32.
33.
34.