



1B
SEP 09 2025

BOARD of CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES for the week of September 1-5, 2025

WORK SESSION – 9 a.m.

The work session convened at 9 a.m., Tuesday, September 2, 2025. Present were Commissioners French, Johnson and Ozias and Administrator Mielke.

Items of discussion per the agenda published August 28 were:

- Calendar/Correspondence
- Agreement with Department of Ecology for Solid Waste Management
- Agreement with Washington State Military Department and State 911 for PenCom Dispatch
- Agreement with Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs for Mental Health Field Response
- Pre-application questionnaire with Department of Ecology for Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- Memorandum of Understanding for North Olympic Peninsula Recompete Coalition for various Recompete projects
- Resolution to appoint Kami Rosser as the Deputy Clerk of the Board

The meeting concluded at 9:47 a.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chair French called the meeting to order at 10 a.m., Tuesday, September 2, 2025. Also present were Commissioners Johnson and Ozias and Administrator Mielke.

REQUEST FOR MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to adopt the agenda as presented, CMOs, mc

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Ed Bowen, Clallam Bay, commented on item 1e, Deputy Clerk Resolution
- Judy Larson, Sequim, commented on clerk email
- Jeff Tozzer, Sequim, commented on item 1a
- Pepai Whipple, Sequim, commented on 1a
- Rita Browning, Port Angeles, commented on care for neighbors

CONSENT AGENDA

1a Approval of vouchers for the week of August 25

The Following warrants and electronic Payments are approved for payment:

Accounts Payable:	Total
Warrant numbers: 9943106-9943224	\$949,968.00
Electronic payments dates: n/a	\$0.00
Total Accounts Payable:	\$949,968.00

1b Approval of payroll for a period ending August 15, 2025

The following voucher/warrants/electronic payments are approved for payment

Payroll	Total
Warrant Numbers	
179563 – 179872, 9943103 – 9943105	\$729,811.68
Electronic Payment Date	
8/25/2025 – 8/26/2025	\$311,080.60
Total Payroll:	\$1,040,892.28

1c Approval of minutes for the week of August 25

1d Proclamation Recognizing September 2025 as Workforce Development Professionals Month

1e Call for hearing to be held Tuesday, November 4, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. regarding adopting the Six-Year 2025-2030 Transportation Improvement Program

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to adopt the consent agenda, CMOs, mc

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- CRJ Recognizing September 2025 as Workforce Development Professionals Month
 - Bill Dowling, Olympic Workforce Development Council, provided comment
- CMO reported on EFM Private Forest Mangers, North Olympic Development Council, department staff meeting, Comprehensive Development Meeting
- CRJ reported on Commissioner of Public Lands, timber sales, Gene Turner Memorial
- CMF reported on department staff meeting, Clallam Bay Sekiu Advisory Committee meeting, Lodging Tax Funding

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

2a Agreement with Peninsula Dispute Resolution Center for providing the We're in this Together seminars

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to approve, CMOs, mc

HEARING(S)

- 4a Resolution regarding approving a system of rates and charges on parcels within the Clallam Conservation District providing revenues to the District for Conservation Services and Programs
- Kim Williams, Clallam Conservation District, provided a report

ACTION TAKEN: CRJm to open the public hearing, CMOs, mc

- The following provided testimony:
 - Dr. Sarah Huling, Forks
 - Eric Fehrmann, Sequim
 - Ed Bowen, Clallam Bay
 - Mark Curtis, Sequim
 - John Worthington, Sequim
 - Denise Lapio, Sequim (see attached)
 - Jacob Seegers, Port Angeles
 - Virginia Shogren, Sequim
 - Diana Morales Henderson, Sequim
 - Judy Larson, Sequim (see attached)
 - Paula Grimm, Sequim
 - Theresa Miller, Sequim
 - Robert James, Sequim
 - Karin Cummins, Sequim
 - Jeff Tozzer, Sequim
 - Ellen Menshew, Port Angeles
 - Pepai Whipple, Sequim
 - Maggie Bockart, Clallam County
 - John Paul, Port Angeles
 - Tom Whipple, Sequim
- The following sent in written testimony: Dr. Sarah Huling, Virginia Shogren, Terri DiMartino, Bailey Loveless, Duane Benedict, Linda Stenzel, Marolee Smith, Eric Fehrmann, Ken and Janet Wahl, John and Wendy Sumner, Robert Robb, Mike Frick, Kaj Ahlburg, Kate Jacobs, Mike Hill, John Campbell, Mary Rief, Carol unknown last name, Dennis O'Malley, Eric and Tracy Hagberg, John Worthington, Pepai Whipple, Victor Scavarda, Shimkiri Figar, Eva Sandvik, Jacob Seegers, Diana Henderson, Maureen McElravy (see attached)

ACTION TAKEN: CMOm to close the public hearing, CRJs, mc

ACTION TAKEN: CMOm continue to September 16 BOCC regular meeting to continue deliberations and take next step on additional language on the draft Resolution CRJs, mc

BOCC recessed for 5 minutes.

BUDGET

3a Presentation of Preliminary 2026 Budget

ACTION TAKEN: No action taken

BOARD of CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES for the week of September 1-5, 2025
Page 3

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Ellen Menshew, Port Angeles, commented on immigration
- John Worthington, Sequim, commented on Clallam Conservation District
- Mark Curtis, Sequim, commented o budget , Fair survey, taxes
- Ed Bowen, Clallam Bay, commented on budget, Clallam Bay Sekiu Advisory Committee meeting, Lodging Tax, Board of Natural Resources
- Karin Cummins, Sequim, commented on budget, actions of the Board, Charter Review Commission, town hgal, Noise Ordinance
- Jeff Tozzer, Sequim, commented on Homeless Taskforce, public hearings, town hall meetings
- Diana Morales Henderson, Sequim, commented on representing all citizens, BOCC meetings, immigration Firefighters detained

The meeting concluded at 1:40 p.m. and continued to Monday, September 8, 2025, at 9 a.m.

The Board of Commissioners attended coffee with Colleen and Housing Solutions Committee Meeting during the week of September 1, 2025

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 9th day of September 2025

ATTEST:

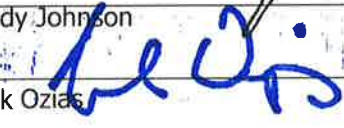

Loni Gores, MMC, Clerk of the Board



BOARD OF CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Mike French, Chair


Randy Johnson


Mark Ozias

BOARD OF CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PUBLIC HEARING

4a Resolution regarding approving a system of rates and charges on parcels within the Clallam Conservation District providing revenues to the District for Conservation Services and Programs

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that any testimony that I give is true and accurate. Please print name and address clearly.

NO	PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS
1	ERIC Fehrman	Eric Fehrman	Sequim
2	Mark G. Curtis	Mark G. Curtis	Sequim
3	Pepai Whipple	Pepai Whipple	Sequim
4	Denise Lapid	Denise Lapid	Sequim
5	Jacob Seeger	Jacob Seeger	PA
6	Virginia Shogren	Virginia Shogren	Sequim
7	JUDY LARSON	Judy Larson	SEQUIM.
8	Constance Jan	Constance Jan	Port Angeles
9	Paula GRATHAM	Paula Gratham	Sequim
10	LARRY GRATHAM	Larry Gratham	Sequim
11	Teresa Miller	Teresa Miller	Sequim
12	Robert James	Robert James	Sequim
13	Karen Cummins	Karen Cummins	Sequim
14	Jeff Tozzer	Jeff Tozzer	SEQUIM
15	Ellen Menshew	Ellen Menshew	Joyce - Clallam County
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

Public Hearing 4a
9/2/25
Denise Lapio

September 2, 2025

To: Loni Gores, Board Clerk

Forward to: Board of Clallam County Commissioners
Comm. Mark Ozias, Comm. Mike French, Comm. Randy Johnson

Re: Clallam Conservation District

Dear Commissioners,

I am opposed to Clallam Conservation District's (CCD) \$5.00 annual parcel fee proposal, which is to be determined by this Board through councilmanic procedure. The CCD's stance for the fee imposed on property tax payers is that it needs revenue increases to support increased staff salaries, increased expenses, and expanded programs. CCD relies heavily on government grants (taxpayer funded handouts), but wants to secure funding by taxing property owners a \$5.00 annual parcel fee.

Just like all taxpayers and government entities, CCD needs to be adjusting its expenses in relation to the income it currently receives. We have all had to scrutinize and eliminate certain expenses in order to balance our budgets; as in the case of the County's current and projected budget shortfalls, employees had to either be let go or had to have their hours reduced. I also fear that there will always be a need for a parcel fee increase, no matter the circumstance, because those in charge will always find a way to need more money.

Commissioners, vote "NO" on this \$5.00 annual parcel fee proposal. We property owners in Clallam County are overtaxed as it is. To add to our burden there are more tax increases being proposed and discussed, which include your upcoming vote on the 1% levy increase on our property taxes and the Cultural Access Tax (CAT) of a .1% increase in sales tax. Commissioners, when will it be enough for you? When will you start to realize that you have taxed us beyond what is fair and what we can afford? When will you consider us as human beings and not as utilitarian automatons?

Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner French, and Commissioner Ozias - Vote NO!

Sincerely,



Denise Lapio

Submitted after
interrupted oral presentation
9-2-25

ALL THESE COMMENTS WERE
SPECIFIC TO THIS P.H.

THIS IS
FOR THE
REC-BOCC
RECORD

Attention: Clallam County Commissioners
Comments by: Judy Larson, 1070 W Palo Verde Loop, Sequim, WA 98382-3222:

Public Hearing
4a 9/2/25
Judy Larson

I am: * a rural landowner with a shallow exempt well in a designated CARA;
* an SPTIA Shareholder who does NOT consent to CCD's-SPTIA's proposed piping of the original, first Sequim-Valley (1895 Sequim Prairie) irrigation ditch which provides my northern boundary.

I have been a frequent participant in CCD Board meetings since April 2023, so I have reasonable knowledge about some of CCD's good works AND about some perceived operational deficiencies.

Some of this pertinent background information I provided at the CCD's 7-25-25 PH held at Red Lion 5-6:30 pm for which you, our BOCC gave the needed legal notice of your plans to attend. I will try to avoid redundancy, but do summarily list for your and my fellow taxpayer's attention, some serious concerns I have about how RCW 89.08 is pursued BOTH "in general" AND in particular "here & now."

When WSCC was established and it developed its 47 conservation districts (CDs), funding was to be based on private and public grants and partnership contributions and with all work to be non-regulatory, and to be done with consent. In later years, RCW 89.08 was passed(not without controversy)because in financially difficult years for county and state budgets, support from general funds were reduced; and this RCW had property-owners directly assessed for CD services most were unaware of -likewise unaware regarding cd elections. (See LWV of WA May 2011 Report about WSCC & its CDs.)

? CCD says 22 of 45?

Currently only ~ 1/3 of WA CDs have invoked this RCW for support. Most CDs have staff like our own CCD's who are competent and have consistently applied for and received grants/contributions. This year CC has had to face a deficit so large it has decided not to provide CCD its yearly ~\$125000 of support AND CC is also making a BIG ASK of property-owners for a 25% tax increase! For a CC tax increase, we voters can directly agree to have this tax OR not; there is a Voter's Pamphlet, providing an Explanatory Statement and opportunity for Arguments For & Arguments Against;and the Pamphlet is provided to ALL registered voters.

With the CCD assessment, it is you, our BOCC who decide. Most of us, the residents of CC, have had little information directly provided about this. In fact, CCD was in such a rush to pursue the RCW assessment (decided at its June Board Meeting with last minute posted agenda details) that it wasted 100's of dollars with Sound Publishing for Legal Notices originally calling for a PH on 6-24-25! Also, at the subsequent 7-25-25 PH, CCD did not advise the public that it would have a "special" meeting on 7-29-25 to vote on sending a draft resolution to the BOCC. (If Commissioner Johnson, you have been directly involved in pushing for this RCW assessment, perhaps you should recuse yourself?)

The BOCC's Draft Resolution with its 9 "whereas" statements (called finding of facts?!) which came from the CCD 7-29-25 "Special" Meeting, appears to use information provided in a "quickie" consultant's report (costing \$25000) which purports to justify what direct and indirect

benefits CCD provides to our county residents.

Before you, our BOCC, decide to vote on this resolution, consider the need to balance our County's need for public support on County tax increases that provide services clearly important to ALL our residents versus the perhaps "added value" that can be provided by CCD efforts.

To justify the CCD "asked" assessment, BOCC should require that CD first improve on:

- *inadequate efforts to verify consent given by landowners affected by some projects -especially piping projects;
- *inadequate attention to required piping material specifications leading to injuries and needs to re-do work;
- *lack of follow-up to determine full costs and benefits for piping projects;
- *explaining its use of funds for seeking legal services(how much so far?) to write up justifications for developing a fact sheet about "prescriptive" rights that challenge individual property rights.

I end by noting that CCD does include requests for donations, which along with grants would be appropriate for supporting its services for our County. CCD should also consider increasing the cost share of those who do use CCD services. I do NOT support the proposed assessment/fee.

HAVE CCD ADDRESS IN ANNUAL REPORT
EACST *

**Public Hearing
Written Testimony**

**4a Rates and Charges
Clallam Conservation District**

Gores, Loni

From: Sarah <triplesconsultants2025@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2025 5:44 PM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: 9.2.2025: BOCC Correspondence Submission Clallam Conservation District Parcel Fee Proposal

Dear Commissioners and Clerk Loni,

I respectfully request that the following correspondence be entered into the public record for the September 2, 2025, public hearing regarding the Clallam Conservation District (CCD) proposal to adopt a parcel-based system of rates and charges.

The Value of CCD's Work

I want to begin by acknowledging that the CCD provides important services: watershed protection, habitat restoration, soil health, and financial support for low-income families who need septic system repairs. These programs matter, and I do not dispute their importance.

The real question before us is not whether the programs are valuable but how they should be funded, and whether the public should have a direct say in that decision.

What the 2024 Report Shows

According to CCD's own 2024 report:

- Total conservation benefits delivered: \$990,557.61 from grants and partnerships.
- Total expenditures: \$1,126,902.79.
- Direct County general fund contribution: \$60,000.
- Proposed parcel fee revenue: \$198,150 annually (based on 39,630 chargeable parcels at \$5 each).

In other words, the new fee would triple the local contribution from taxpayers, shifting costs from the broad general fund to individual property owners.

The Governance Problem

Under RCW 89.08.405, the BOCC has the authority to approve this parcel fee directly. Unlike a levy for schools, parks, or fire districts, this does not require a public vote. That means tens of thousands of property owners could see a new charge on their tax bills without ever having had the chance to approve or reject it at the ballot box.

This sets a troubling precedent. If we contribute to the normalization of the use of parcel fees to fund conservation services, it opens the door for other unelected boards and commissions to seek the same treatment, steadily eroding voter oversight of taxation.

The Wrong Kind of Incentive

I am also concerned about how this fee frames conservation. Needing help to replace a septic system is not a moral failing. But creating a mandatory parcel fee risks turning payment itself into a false signal of virtue. Real civic virtue is not in paying another line item on a tax bill; it is in building better infrastructure and adopting smarter policy.

Taxes and fees should be designed to incentivize infrastructure solutions like reducing reliance on rural septic systems through stronger urban wastewater systems, or creating targeted programs that directly support watershed protection. Simply adding a parcel fee does not address root causes; it just redistributes costs in a way that disproportionately impacts rural landowners.

A Leadership Opportunity for Clallam County

Clallam County has an opportunity to lead by example. Instead of approving this parcel fee, the Board could:

1. Return CCD funding to the general fund, where costs are shared equitably across the whole tax base, or
2. Place the proposal before the voters, giving taxpayers the same choice they have for other special-purpose funding, or
3. Develop a framework where taxes and fees are tied directly to infrastructure incentives, starting here in Forks, then scaling to larger cities where pressures are greater.

This is not about rejecting conservation. It is about ensuring that the way we fund it is fair, transparent, and sustainable. Clallam County has the chance to set a statewide standard for how conservation funding can be crafted responsibly.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you NOT to approve the proposed parcel fee without voter approval. Conservation benefits all of us, and the funding mechanism should reflect both fairness and the will of the people.

Thank you for your time and for entering this correspondence into the September 2nd hearing record.

Respectfully,
Dr. Sarah Huling, EdD, MBA

District 3

Triple S Consultants, LLC

Gores, Loni

From: Virginia Shogren <vshogren@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 18, 2025 11:10 AM
To: Kim Williams; Info@clallamcd.org; CSD - Seth Woolson
Cc: Ozias, Mark; French, Mike; Johnson, Randy; Mielke, Todd; Gores, Loni; christyrcox@live.com; Fike, Jean (SCC)
Subject: Public Comment for CCD Rates and Charges Tax Hearing July 25, 2025
Attachments: Public Comment for CCD 7-25-25 Hearing FAE 7-18-25.pdf

Dear Ms. Williams,

Attached please find public comment for the CCD's hearing on its proposed Rates and Charges System scheduled for July 25, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at the Red Lion Hotel in Port Angeles.

Thank you,

Virginia Shogren
360-461-5551

Clallam Conservation District
228 W. First Street, Suite H
Port Angeles, WA 98362

July 18, 2025
Via email to:
kim.williams@clallamcd.org
info@clallamcd.org
swoolson@csdlaw.com

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CCD RATES & CHARGES SYSTEM HEARING

Dear Clallam Conservation District,

This letter and enclosures are submitted as public comment for the proposed Rates and Charges System Hearing noticed by the Clallam Conservation District ("CCD") pursuant to RCW 89.08.405(4) and RCW 89.08.400(2) scheduled for July 25, 2025 ("Hearing"). Please include this letter and all enclosures with the Hearing records.

A. The Proposed Rates and Charges System Contravenes State Law and the Washington State Constitution

"The provisions of [the Washington State] Constitution are mandatory, unless by express words they are declared to be otherwise." WA State Const. art. I, §29.

"The legislature is prohibited from enacting any private or special laws in the following cases: . . . [f]or assessment or collection of taxes, or for extending the time for collection thereof." WA State Const. art. II, §28(5).

"All taxes shall be uniform upon the same class of property within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax and shall be levied and collected for public purposes only." WA State Const. art. VII, §1.

"No tax shall be levied except in pursuance of law; and every law imposing a tax shall state distinctly the object of the same to which only it shall be applied." WA State Const. art. VII, §5.

"A conservation district . . . shall not levy taxes or issue bonds. . . ." RCW 89.08.220.

Based on the above authority:

1. The above provisions of the State Constitution are mandatory on CCD and the Clallam County Board of County Commissioners ("BOCC").
2. By law, the CCD cannot levy taxes. RCW 89.08.220.

3. Since the legislature has determined that the CCD cannot levy taxes, the legislature may not also authorize the CCD to *indirectly* levy taxes via an agent in the form of the BOCC.¹
4. The legislature is further constitutionally prohibited from enacting any special laws for the assessment or collection of taxes. The conservation districts are non-regulatory entities that perform services on a voluntary basis only to those private persons and entities that request their services.² As such, any tax collection would necessarily serve CCD's self-identified customers, only, and not the general public.
5. Even if legally or constitutionally authorized, the proposed Rates and Charges System improperly purports to impose a 'uniform' property tax based upon a *per parcel flat rate* that does not take into account parcel size or service usage. The proposed Rates and Charges System is not a variable *ad valorem* tax on property. WA Const. art. VII, §2. It constitutes an unconstitutional flat fee property tax.
6. Even if legally or constitutionally authorized, the proposed Rates and Charges have no distinct object. According to the consultant's³ draft report briefly posted online by the CCD (no final report is available online as of the date of submission of this comment), the taxes are to be used in "resource management" based upon a nebulous and intangible "indirect benefit" of "*goals*" relating to the management of water, fish and wildlife habitat, soil, education, and operations.⁴ While laudable concepts, there is no distinct object for the use of the proposed Rates and Charges. The state constitution bars the government imposition of taxes for the general promotion of policies (however nice they may sound). The proof is in the pudding: the consultant concedes in the draft report that there is no direct benefit of CCD's services to the vast majority of Clallam County residents.⁵

¹ RCW 89.08.220 was adopted in 1939 and has not been repealed. RCW 89.08.400 and RCW 89.08.405 were adopted in 1989 and 2012, respectively. The attempted imposition of special assessments in Mason County by the Mason County Conservation District was successfully challenged in *Cary v. Mason County*, 173 Wn.2d 697, 272 P.2d 194 (2012). The Supreme Court decision in *Cary* issued on February 16, 2012. The legislature enacted RCW 89.08.405 (for rates and charges in lieu of special assessments) less than a month later, effective March 20, 2012.

² See, e.g., RCW 89.08.070, and State Conservation Commission website <https://www.scc.wa.gov/what-are-conservation-districts> (conservation districts are "community-based hubs" that provide "[n]on-regulatory services" for "voluntary actions").

³ FCS a Bowman Company <https://fcsgroup.com/utility-rate-and-fee-consulting/>

⁴ "Most services provided by the District are of *indirect benefit* as the entire county's population benefits when there is clean water, healthy soil, clean air, rich biodiversity, a strong agricultural economy and improved food access for all." FCS Draft Report, p. 4 (emphasis added).

⁵ Approximately 77,000 people reside in Clallam County. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/clallamcountywashington/PST045223>. Based on CCD's own summary of its "2024 Accomplishments", fewer than 100 property owners requested and received CCD's assistance last year. <https://clallamcd.org/>

B. The Initial Proposed Property Tax of \$5 Per Parcel Is Not to be Trusted

On June 3, 2025, I attended the CCD monthly Board meeting during which the CCD supervisors publicly discussed their proposed Rates and Charges System.

The supervisors and staff discussed the proposed amount of the parcel fee (\$5.00) as being the maximum per parcel fee allowed under the applicable statute. They considered no lower amount.

Even before the discussion ended, while the proverbial ink was still drying on the conversation, CCD's Chair asked a telling question:

I have a question. The length of this is 10 years. Is there any opportunity to renegotiate? I know there are no changes at the state level in regards to the maximum fee that can be charged. So right now, this would allow us to keep the lights on, not a substantial increase in funds for us, but, inflation is not going to stop for us today. Everything is going to get more expensive, we don't know. So my question is: if we get to a point where in five years, this \$5 fee is not even enough to pay the rent, do we have the option to go back to the county and say, look, we need more?

June 3, 2025 CCD Board Meeting, Chair Christy Cox.

Chairwoman Cox's question may have been prompted by 2025 Regular Legislative Session Substitute House Bill 1488, adopted, signed, and effective as of July 27, 2025 ("HB 1488"). HB 1488 raises the per parcel cap under RCW 89.08.405 from \$5 per parcel to \$25 per parcel (a 400% increase), regardless of county population size.

Perhaps even more alarming – starting in 2029, the maximum annual per parcel rate will be adjusted upwards based upon the consumer price index for all urban consumers for the Seattle metropolitan area vaguely defined as "Seattle and surrounding areas." HB 1488.

Over time, changes to the Rates and Charges System for Clallam County would be arbitrarily based on Seattle's consumer price index ("CPI") which is consistently the highest in the state according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (and much higher than the CPI for Clallam County).

The CCD supervisors appear to already be anticipating increases for an unlawful and unconstitutional tax. The proposal could be characterized as nothing more than an illegal bait and switch scheme.

C. CCD May Not Lawfully Place a Tax Lien Against Every Parcel in Clallam County

According to its own website, the CCD is "[n]ot a regulatory agency", and its programs are both *voluntary* ("voluntary conservation programs") and offered at no cost ("100% Funded by grants."):

2024 Accomplishments:

We at Clallam Conservation District had a busy year! Here is a little lookback at the conservation efforts we were able to achieve in 2024.



CLALLAM CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Quick Facts

- Created in 1959 to conserve the natural resources of Clallam County.
- Help land users manage natural resources sustainably.
- Not a regulatory agency.
- We promote local voluntary conservation programs.
- 100% Funded by grants.

Board of Supervisors
(3 members elected & 2 appointed)

Christy Cox, Chair
Nicole Rasmussen, Vice-Chair
Wendy Rae Johnson, Auditor
Ben Smith, Member
Lori DeLorm, Member

CCD Website partial screen shot created 7-16-25.

On June 3, 2025, the CCD supervisors spoke of the need to collect taxes to cover CCD's overhead (*e.g.*, salaries) for what appears to be relatively low-key jobs for six persons:

2024 Accomplishments:

We at Clallam Conservation District had a busy year! Here is a little lookback at the conservation efforts we were able to achieve in 2024.



Clallam Conservation District

**Partnerships bring.....
Innovation, Expertise & Strength**

THANK YOU!

Clallam Ag Works
Clallam County BOCC
Clallam County Environmental Health
Clallam County Marine Resources Committee
Clallam County Dept. Of Community Development
Dungeness River Management Team
Fiero Marine Science Center
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe
North Olympic Development Council
North Olympic Land Trust
North Olympic Salmon Coalition
Pacific Coast Salmon Coalition
Port Angeles Garden Club
Quileute Tribe
Wild Salmon Center
WSU Extension
10,000 Years Institute

CCD Website partial screen shot created 7-16-25.

It is unfortunate that CCD supervisors feel that the fun times must continue on the backs of Clallam County taxpayers in the form of liens against their properties. The proposed Rates and Charges are far from *voluntary*. Just the opposite:

The amount of the rates and charges shall constitute **a lien against the land** that shall be subject to the same conditions as a tax lien, and collected by the treasurer in the same manner as delinquent real property taxes, and subject to the same interest and penalty as for delinquent property taxes.

RCW 89.08.405(6) (emphasis added).

Conservation should be inspired not forced. A non-regulatory entity such as the CCD has no proper or lawful purpose in *the creation of an unconstitutional tax lien as to every parcel in Clallam County*.

Clallam County and the CCD should research the hard costs incurred in the defense of the *Cary v. Mason County* litigation. In addition, the Supreme Court in *Cary* affirmed the trial court's ruling that property owners in Mason County who had paid the unlawful tax under protest were entitled to a full refund: "[t]axes which are void, but which have been paid under protest, may be recovered back." *Cary, supra*, at 706. Attempts to collect the unlawful Rates and Charges will be subject to clawback.

D. Conclusion

The proposed Rates and Charges System is both unlawful and unconstitutional. The CCD supervisors should decline to adopt the system and should instead continue to operate on a voluntary and non-regulatory basis as has been done for the past 66 years and counting.

Sincerely,



Virginia Shogren
961 W. Oak Court
Sequim, WA 98382

Encls.: WA State Const. cited herein
RCW 89.08.220
Substitute House Bill 1488 (2025)

cc: Clallam County Commissioner Mark Ozias, mark.ozias@clallamcountywa.gov
Clallam County Commissioner Mike French, mike.french@clallamcountywa.gov
Clallam County Commissioner Randy Johnson, randy.johnson@clallamcountywa.gov
Todd Mielke, todd.mielke@clallamcountywa.gov
Loni Gores, loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov
Christy Cox, christycox@live.com
Jean Fike, jfike@scc.wa.gov

Article I, §29

SECTION 29 CONSTITUTION MANDATORY.

The provisions of this Constitution are mandatory, unless by express words they are declared to be otherwise.

Article II, §28(5)

SECTION 28 SPECIAL LEGISLATION. The legislature is prohibited from enacting any private or special laws in the following cases:

5. For assessment or collection of taxes, or for extending the time for collection thereof.

Article VII, §1

SECTION 1 TAXATION. The power of taxation shall never be suspended, surrendered or contracted away. All taxes shall be uniform upon the same class of property within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax and shall be levied and collected for public purposes only. The word "property" as used herein shall mean and include everything, whether tangible or intangible, subject to ownership. All real estate shall constitute one class: *Provided*, That the legislature may tax mines and mineral resources and lands devoted to reforestation by either a yield tax or an ad valorem tax at such rate as it may fix, or by both. Such property as the legislature may by general laws provide shall be exempt from taxation. Property of the United States and of the state, counties, school districts and other municipal corporations, and credits secured by property actually taxed in this state, not exceeding in value the value of such property, shall be exempt from taxation. The legislature shall have power, by appropriate legislation, to exempt personal property to the amount of fifteen thousand (\$15,000.00) dollars for each head of a family liable to assessment and taxation under the provisions of the laws of this state of which the individual is the actual bona fide owner. [AMENDMENT 98, 2006 House Joint Resolution No. 4223, p 2117. Approved November 7, 2006.]

Article VII, §5

SECTION 5 TAXES, HOW LEVIED. No tax shall be levied except in pursuance of law; and every law imposing a tax shall state distinctly the object of the same to which only it shall be applied.

RCW 89.08.220

Corporate status and powers of district.

A conservation district organized under the provisions of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. shall constitute a governmental subdivision of this state, and a public body corporate and politic exercising public powers, but shall not levy taxes or issue bonds and such district, and the supervisors thereof, shall have the following powers, in addition to others granted in other sections of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess.:

(1) To conduct surveys, investigations, and research relating to the conservation of renewable natural resources and the preventive and control measures and works of improvement needed, to publish the results of such surveys, investigations, or research, and to disseminate information concerning such preventive and control measures and works of improvement: PROVIDED, That in order to avoid duplication of research activities, no district shall initiate any research program except in cooperation with the government of this state or any of its agencies, or with the United States or any of its agencies;

(2) To conduct educational and demonstrational projects on any lands within the district upon obtaining the consent of the occupier of such lands and such necessary rights or interests in such lands as may be required in order to demonstrate by example the means, methods, measures, and works of improvement by which the conservation of renewable natural resources may be carried out;

(3) To carry out preventative and control measures and works of improvement for the conservation of renewable natural resources, within the district including, but not limited to, engineering operations, methods of cultivation, the growing of vegetation, changes in use of lands, and the measures listed in RCW 89.08.010, on any lands within the district upon obtaining the consent of the occupier of such lands and such necessary rights or interests in such lands as may be required;

(4) To cooperate or enter into agreements with, and within the limits of appropriations duly made available to it by law, to furnish financial or other aid to any agency, governmental or otherwise, or any occupier of lands within the district in the carrying on of preventive and control measures and works of improvement for the conservation of renewable natural resources within the district, subject to such conditions as the supervisors may deem necessary to advance the purposes of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. For purposes of this subsection only, land occupiers who are also district supervisors are not subject to the provisions of RCW 42.23.030;

(5) To obtain options upon and to acquire in any manner, except by condemnation, by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, bequest, devise, or otherwise, any property, real or personal, or rights or interests therein; to maintain, administer, and improve any properties acquired, to receive income from such properties and to expend such income in carrying out the purposes and provisions of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess.; and to sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any of its property or interests therein in furtherance of the purposes and the provisions of chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess.;

(6) To make available, on such terms, as it shall prescribe, to land occupiers within the district, agricultural and engineering machinery and equipment, fertilizer, seeds, seedlings, and such other equipment and material as will assist them to carry on operations upon their lands for the conservation of renewable natural resources;

(7)(a) To prepare and keep current a comprehensive long-range program recommending the conservation of all the renewable natural resources of the district. Such programs shall be directed toward the best use of renewable natural resources and in a manner that will best meet the needs of the district and the state, taking into consideration, where appropriate, such uses as farming, grazing, timber supply, forest, parks, outdoor recreation, potable water supplies for urban and rural areas, water for agriculture, minimal flow, and industrial uses, watershed stabilization, control of soil erosion, retardation of water runoff, flood prevention and control, reservoirs and other water storage, restriction of developments of floodplains, protection of open space and scenery, preservation of natural beauty, protection of fish and wildlife. preservation of wilderness areas and wild rivers. the prevention or reduction of sedimentation and

other pollution in rivers and other waters, and such location of highways, schools, housing developments, industries, airports and other facilities and structures as will fit the needs of the state and be consistent with the best uses of the renewable natural resources of the state. The program shall include an inventory of all renewable natural resources in the district, a compilation of current resource needs, projections of future resource requirements, priorities for various resource activities, projected timetables, descriptions of available alternatives, and provisions for coordination with other resource programs.

(b) The district shall also prepare an annual work plan, which shall describe the action programs, services, facilities, materials, working arrangements and estimated funds needed to carry out the parts of the long-range programs that are of the highest priorities.

(c) The districts shall hold public hearings at appropriate times in connection with the preparation of programs and plans, shall give careful consideration to the views expressed and problems revealed in hearings, and shall keep the public informed concerning their programs, plans, and activities. Occupiers of land shall be invited to submit proposals for consideration to such hearings. The districts may supplement such hearings with meetings, referenda and other suitable means to determine the wishes of interested parties and the general public in regard to current and proposed plans and programs of a district. They shall confer with public and private agencies, individually and in groups, to give and obtain information and understanding of the impact of district operations upon agriculture, forestry, water supply and quality, flood control, particular industries, commercial concerns and other public and private interests, both rural and urban.

(d) Each district shall submit to the commission its proposed long-range program and annual work plans for review and comment.

(e) The long-range renewable natural resource program, together with the supplemental annual work plans, developed by each district under the foregoing procedures shall have official status as the authorized program of the district, and it shall be published by the districts as its "renewable resources program". Copies shall be made available by the districts to the appropriate counties, municipalities, special purpose districts and state agencies, and shall be made available in convenient places for examination by public land occupier or private interest concerned. Summaries of the program and selected material therefrom shall be distributed as widely as feasible for public information;

(8) To administer any project or program concerned with the conservation of renewable natural resources located within its boundaries undertaken by any federal, state, or other public agency by entering into a contract or other appropriate administrative arrangement with any agency administering such project or program;

(9) Cooperate with other districts organized under chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. in the exercise of any of its powers;

(10) To accept donations, gifts, and contributions in money, services, materials, or otherwise, from the United States or any of its agencies, from this state or any of its agencies, or from any other source, and to use or expend such moneys, services, materials, or any contributions in carrying out the purposes of chapter 184, Laws 1973 1st ex. sess.;

(11) To sue and be sued in the name of the district; to have a seal which shall be judicially noticed; have perpetual succession unless terminated as hereinafter provided; to make and execute contracts and other instruments, necessary or convenient to the exercise of its powers; to borrow money and to pledge, mortgage and assign the income of the district and its real or personal property therefor; and to make, amend rules and regulations not inconsistent with chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. and to carry into effect its purposes;

(12)(a) Any two or more districts may engage in joint activities by agreement between or among them including, but not limited to, planning, financing, engineering, constructing, operating, maintaining, and administering any program or project concerned with the conservation of renewable natural resources. The districts concerned may make available for purposes of the agreement any funds, property, personnel, professional engineering, equipment, or services available to them under chapter 184, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess.

(b) Any district may enter into such agreements with a district or districts in adjoining states to carry out such purposes if the law in such other states permits the districts in such states to enter into such agreements.

(c) The commission shall have authority to propose, guide, and facilitate the establishment and carrying out of any such agreement;

(13) Every district shall, through public hearings, annual meetings, publications, or other means, keep the general public, agencies and occupiers of land within the district, informed of the works and activities planned and administered by the district, of the purposes these will serve, of the income and expenditures of the district, of the funds borrowed by the district and the purposes for which such funds are expended, and of the results achieved annually by the district; and

(14) The supervisors of conservation districts may designate an area, state, and national association of conservation districts as a coordinating agency in the execution of the duties imposed by this chapter, and to make gifts in the form of dues, quotas, or otherwise to such associations for costs of services rendered, and may support and attend such meetings as may be required to promote and perfect the organization and to effect its purposes.

[**2019 c 103 s 1; 1999 c 305 s 8; 1973 1st ex.s. c 184 s 23; 1963 c 110 s 1; 1961 c 240 s 13; 1955 c 304 s 23.** Prior: (i) **1939 c 187 s 8**; RRS s 10726-8. (ii) **1939 c 187 s 13**; RRS s 10726-13.]

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1488

Chapter 262, Laws of 2025

69th Legislature
2025 Regular Session

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS—MAXIMUM PER PARCEL RATES

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 27, 2025

Passed by the House April 18, 2025
Yeas 53 Nays 43

LAURIE JINKINS

**Speaker of the House of
Representatives**

Passed by the Senate March 26, 2025
Yeas 29 Nays 20

JOHN LOVICK

President of the Senate

Approved May 13, 2025 10:15 AM

BOB FERGUSON

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1488** as passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

BERNARD DEAN

Chief Clerk

FILED

May 14, 2025

**Secretary of State
State of Washington**

SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1488

AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

Passed Legislature - 2025 Regular Session

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By House Finance (originally sponsored by Representatives Berg, Duerr, and Peterson)

READ FIRST TIME 02/13/25.

1 AN ACT Relating to conservation district revenue limitations; and
2 amending RCW 89.08.405.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 89.08.405 and 2021 c 176 s 5252 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) Any county legislative authority may approve by resolution
7 revenues to a conservation district by fixing rates and charges. The
8 county legislative authority may provide for this system of rates and
9 charges as an alternative to, but not in addition to, a special
10 assessment provided by RCW 89.08.400. In fixing rates and charges,
11 the county legislative authority may in its discretion consider the
12 information proposed to the county legislative authority by a
13 conservation district consistent with this section.

14 (2) A conservation district, in proposing a system of rates and
15 charges, may consider:

16 (a) Services furnished, to be furnished, or available to the
17 landowner;

18 (b) Benefits received, to be received, or available to the
19 property;

20 (c) The character and use of land;

1 (d) The public benefit nonprofit corporation status, as defined
2 in RCW 24.03A.245, of the land user;

3 (e) The income level of persons served or provided benefits under
4 this chapter, including senior citizens and disabled persons; or

5 (f) Any other matters that present a reasonable difference as a
6 ground for distinction, including the natural resource needs within
7 the district and the capacity of the district to provide either
8 services or improvements, or both.

9 (3)(a) The system of rates and charges may include an annual per
10 acre amount, an annual per parcel amount, or an annual per parcel
11 amount plus an annual per acre amount. If included in the system of
12 rates and charges, the maximum annual per acre rate or charge shall
13 not exceed ~~((ten))~~ 10 cents per acre. The maximum annual per parcel
14 rate shall not exceed ~~((five dollars, except that for counties with a
15 population of over four hundred eighty thousand persons, the maximum
16 annual per parcel rate shall not exceed ten dollars, and for counties
17 with a population of over one million five hundred thousand persons,
18 the maximum annual per parcel rate shall not exceed fifteen dollars))~~
19 \$25.

20 (b) Beginning March 1, 2029, and by March 1st every third year
21 thereafter, the department of revenue must adjust the maximum annual
22 per parcel rates based on the consumer price index for all urban
23 consumers, all items, for the Seattle metropolitan area for the prior
24 12-month period as calculated by the United States bureau of labor
25 statistics or its successor agency. The adjusted maximum annual per
26 parcel rates must be rounded to the nearest \$1. If the adjustment to
27 the maximum annual per parcel rate is negative, the maximum annual
28 per parcel rate for the prior year continues to apply. The department
29 of revenue must publish the adjusted maximum annual per parcel rates
30 on its public website by March 31st. For purposes of this subsection
31 (3)(b), "Seattle metropolitan area" means the geographic area sample
32 that includes Seattle and surrounding areas.

33 (c) Public land, including lands owned or held by the state,
34 shall be subject to rates and charges to the same extent as privately
35 owned lands. The procedures provided in chapter 79.44 RCW shall be
36 followed if lands owned or held by the state are subject to the rates
37 and charges of a conservation district.

38 ~~((+e+))~~ (d) Forestlands used solely for the planting, growing, or
39 harvesting of trees may be subject to rates and charges if such lands
40 are served by the activities of the conservation district. However,

1 if the system of rates and charges includes an annual per acre amount
2 or an annual per parcel amount plus an annual per acre amount, the
3 per acre rate or charge on such forestlands shall not exceed
4 one-tenth of the weighted average per acre rate or charge on all
5 other lands within the conservation district that are subject to
6 rates and charges. The calculation of the weighted average per acre
7 shall be a ratio calculated as follows: (i) The numerator shall be
8 the total amount of money estimated to be derived from the per acre
9 special rates and charges on the nonforestlands in the conservation
10 district; and (ii) the denominator shall be the total number of
11 nonforestland acres in the conservation district that are served by
12 the activities of the conservation district and that are subject to
13 the rates or charges of the conservation district. No more than (~~ten~~
14 ~~thousand~~) 10,000 acres of such forestlands that is both owned by the
15 same person or entity and is located in the same conservation
16 district may be subject to the rates and charges that are imposed for
17 that conservation district in any year. Per parcel charges shall not
18 be imposed on forestland parcels. However, in lieu of a per parcel
19 charge, a charge of up to three dollars per forestland owner may be
20 imposed on each owner of forestlands whose forestlands are subject to
21 a per acre rate or charge.

22 (4) The consideration, development, adoption, and implementation
23 of a system of rates and charges shall follow the same public notice
24 and hearing process and be subject to the same procedure and
25 authority of RCW 89.08.400(2).

26 (5)(a) Following the adoption of a system of rates and charges,
27 the conservation district board of supervisors shall establish by
28 resolution a process providing for landowner appeals of the
29 individual rates and charges as applicable to a parcel or parcels.

30 (b) Any appeal must be filed by the landowner with the
31 conservation district no later than (~~twenty-one~~) 21 days after the
32 date property taxes are due. The decision of the board of supervisors
33 regarding any appeal shall be final and conclusive.

34 (c) Any appeal of the decision of the board shall be to the
35 superior court of the county in which the district is located, and
36 served and filed within (~~twenty-one~~) 21 days of the date of the
37 board's written decision.

38 (6) A conservation district shall prepare a roll that implements
39 the system of rates and charges approved by the county legislative
40 authority. The rates and charges from the roll shall be spread by the

1 county assessor as a separate item on the tax rolls and shall be
2 collected and accounted for with property taxes by the county
3 treasurer. The amount of the rates and charges shall constitute a
4 lien against the land that shall be subject to the same conditions as
5 a tax lien, and collected by the treasurer in the same manner as
6 delinquent real property taxes, and subject to the same interest and
7 penalty as for delinquent property taxes. The county treasurer shall
8 deduct an amount from the collected rates and charges, as established
9 by the county legislative authority, to cover the costs incurred by
10 the county assessor and county treasurer in spreading and collecting
11 the rates and charges, but not to exceed the actual costs of such
12 work. All remaining funds collected under this section shall be
13 transferred to the conservation district and used by the conservation
14 district in accordance with this section.

15 (7) The rates and charges for a conservation district shall not
16 be spread on the tax rolls and shall not be allocated with property
17 tax collections in the following year if, after the system of rates
18 and charges has been approved by the county legislative authority but
19 before the (~~fifteenth~~) 15th day of December in that year, a
20 petition has been filed with the county legislative authority
21 objecting to the imposition of such rates and charges, which petition
22 has been signed by at least (~~twenty~~) 20 percent of the owners of
23 land that would be subject to the rate or charge to be imposed for a
24 conservation district.

Passed by the House April 18, 2025.
Passed by the Senate March 26, 2025.
Approved by the Governor May 13, 2025.
Filed in Office of Secretary of State May 14, 2025.

--- END ---

Gores, Loni

From: Terri DiMartino <girldog2007@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 24, 2025 1:49 PM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: No on \$5.00 Clallam Conservation District fee

Dear Commissioners:

I am not in support of the Clallam Conservation District fee of \$5.00 on my property taxes. Please vote no on this non essential tax. Clallam County cannot afford it. Please put this up for a public vote on the November ballot.

If people need soil testing, they can pay for it, not me. If someone lives near a stream, they can pay to plant and maintain plants, not me. I've looked at the Clallam Conservation District website and social media page, and don't understand why they are asking for taxpayer money? They have a staff of 5, that's enough. It's not prudent to grant this \$5.00 lifetime fee for an organization that's not accountable to the taxpayers or essential for Clallam County.

On another note, my neighbors could care less if they have noxious weeds, rotting and non-running vehicles, and blight on their property. There is no junk enforcement in Clallam County on nuisance properties, why is this?

Respectfully,
Terri DiMartino

Gores, Loni

From: Virginia Shogren <vshogren@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 8:50 AM
To: Kim Williams; Info@clallamcd.org; CSD - Seth Woolson
Cc: Ozias, Mark; French, Mike; Johnson, Randy; Mielke, Todd; Gores, Loni; Boughton, Dee; christyrcox@live.com; Fike, Jean (SCC); james@washingtonwatertrust.org; jason@washingtonwatertrust.org; caroline.mellor@ecy.wa.gov
Subject: Public Comment for CCD Board Meeting August 12, 2025 - Notice of OPMA Violations
Attachments: Public Comment CCD Board Meeting 8-12-25 FAE 8-8-25.pdf

Dear Ms. Williams,

Attached please find public comment for the CCD's August 12, 2025 Board meeting.

Thank you,

Virginia Shogren
360-461-5551

Clallam Conservation District
228 W. First Street, Suite H
Port Angeles, WA 98362

August 8, 2025
Via email to:
kim.williams@clallamcd.org
info@clallamcd.org
swoolson@csdlaw.com

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CCD BOARD MEETING AUGUST 12, 2025

NOTICE OF OPMA VIOLATIONS AND REQUEST FOR CORRECTIVE ACTION

Dear Clallam Conservation District,

This letter is a public comment for the CCD Board Meeting scheduled for August 12, 2025. Include this comment and its enclosure with the minutes for the meeting on August 12, 2025.

On July 29, 2025, the CCD held a special meeting according to an agenda for the meeting posted online (date and time of posting TBD), copy enclosed. The meeting was held **“via Zoom only”** [emphasis in the original]. The agenda states that the meeting was held to adopt a resolution proposing a system of Rates and Charges for “Natural Resource Conservation”. Additional business was noted on the agenda, including the adoption of a contract, a memorandum of understanding, and a personal services agreement “to manage Dungeness Drought program” (“Special Meeting”).

The agenda for the Special Meeting did not provide the Zoom address or call-in information for the Special Meeting. According to the agenda, Zoom access for the remote-only meeting was identified as being available at the physical location of the CCD office: “228 W. First St., Ste. G, Port Angeles, WA 98362, Armory Square Building.” (“**Zoom access provided to public at . . .**” [emphasis in the original].) The original purpose of “Zoom” was to provide an alternative to in-person meetings. The irony of having instructions for using Zoom only available by making a physical visit seems to have been lost on the CCD.

No notice of the Special Meeting (either oral or written) was provided to the public in attendance at the CCD’s Rates and Charges public hearing held a mere four days earlier on July 25, 2025.

The CCD’s website, as of August 1, 2025, displayed a “Special Meeting Documents” header under “Clallam Conservation District Regular Board Meeting” that provides the agenda, only. As of August 1, 2025, the website page displayed no information as to the date, time or location of the Special Meeting.

RCW 42.30.080 governs notice for special meetings. Notice of special meetings is required at least 24 hours before the time of such meeting as specified in the notice. Remote-only meetings may only be held in the event of a declared emergency in accordance with RCW 42.30.230.

Absent a declared emergency, the “**Zoom only**” Special Meeting was conducted in violation of the OPMA. RCW 42.30.230.¹ Notice of the Special Meeting also was inadequate under RCW 42.30.080 which is a further violation of the OPMA.²

Any action taken at a meeting that fails to comply with OPMA notice requirements is “null and void”. RCW 42.30.060. Civil penalties may also apply to members of a governing body who had actual knowledge that a declared emergency did not exist at the time of the Special Meeting (and at any other special meetings similarly noticed and conducted).

I request that within 14 days of the date of this letter that the CCD take corrective action to:

1. Provide the following public records:
 - a. any documentation of a declared emergency upon which the CCD relied in holding the remote-only Special Meeting;
 - b. meeting minutes for the Special Meeting;
 - c. all communications and notices regarding the Special Meeting;
 - d. all notices, meeting documents, and minutes for any other special meeting(s) conducted by CCD on or after November 1, 2022 to present; and,
2. In the absence of a documented declared emergency and other notice consistent with the OPMA, to hold a new meeting in compliance with the OPMA to lawfully conduct the business as identified on the Special Meeting agenda.

Sincerely,



Virginia Shogren
961 W. Oak Court
Sequim, WA 98382

Encl.

cc: Clallam County Commissioner Mark Ozias, mark.ozias@clallamcountywa.gov
Clallam County Commissioner Mike French, mike.french@clallamcountywa.gov
Clallam County Commissioner Randy Johnson, randy.johnson@clallamcountywa.gov
Todd Mielke, todd.mielke@clallamcountywa.gov

¹ For remote meetings, RCW 42.30.230(2) requires a cost-free option for public attendance. Providing a physical address instead of Zoom access details effectively denies this access. This constitutes an additional OPMA violation.

² The MRSC Open Public Meetings Act Basics emphasizes that notices must be clear and sufficient to ensure public access. *See also*, Washington State Attorney General’s Open Government Resource Manual (2016).

Loni Gores, loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov
Dee Boughton, dee.boughton@clallamcountywa.gov
Christy Cox, christyrcox@live.com
Jean Fike, jfike@scc.wa.gov
James Kraft, james@washingtonwatertrust.org
Jason Hatch, jason@washingtonwatertrust.org
Caroline Mellor, caroline.mellor@ecy.wa.gov (Re: WRDROU-2025-ClalCD-00080)



AGENDA
Special Board Meeting
July 29, 2025 10:15 AM
via Zoom only

**Zoom access provided to public at: 228 W. First St., Ste. G, Port Angeles,
WA 98362, Armory Square Building**

- 10:15 CALL TO ORDER and AGENDA REVIEW
10:20 INTRODUCTIONS and PUBLIC COMMENT

NEW BUSINESS

- 10:25 Clallam Conservation District Rates and Charges Draft Report**
10:30 RESOLUTION# 25-05- A resolution of the board of Supervisors of the Clallam Conservation District, Clallam County Washington, proposing a system of Rates and Charges to Clallam County Washington for Natural Resource Conservation.
10:40 CCD Contract Management and Procurement Policy
10:45 MOU between CCD and Washington Water Trust (WWT)
10:50 Personal Services Agreement with Client #25-006 to manage Dungeness Drought program

OLD BUSINESS

- 10:55 Adjourn**

Gores, Loni

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 9:32 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Online Form Submission #8113 for Contact the Clerk of the Board

Contact the Clerk of the Board

First Name	Bailey
Last Name	Loveless
Email	baileysueloveless@gmail.com
Phone	8013187024
Subject	Support for proposal
Comments	I support the effort to locally fund the Clallam Conservation District. We all benefit from having sustainable stewardship of our landscapes. I'd be particularly supportive if this would help increase the CCD's visibility within our community.

Please Note

This form is not for emergencies. If you have an emergency, please phone 911.

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

Gores, Loni

From: Virginia Shogren <vshogren@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 10:08 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Cc: Ozias, Mark; French, Mike; Johnson, Randy; Mielke, Todd; Boughton, Dee; CSD - Seth Woolson; christyrcox@live.com; Fike, Jean (SCC)
Subject: Public Comment for BOCC September 2, 2025 Hearing Re: CCD Property Tax
Attachments: _BOCC Public Comment for 9-2-25 Hearing FAE 8-29-25.pdf

Dear Ms. Gores,

Attached please find public comment for the BOCC's Conservation District Rates and Charges Property Tax Hearing scheduled for September 2, 2025.

Thank you,

Virginia Shogren
360-461-5551

Clallam County Board of Commissioners
223 East 4th Street, Room 160
Port Angeles, WA 98362

August 29, 2025

**PUBLIC COMMENT AGAINST PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX FOR
CLALLAM CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Dear Clallam County Board of Commissioners,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed BOCC resolution (“Resolution”) to adopt a ‘rates and charges’ property tax (“Property Tax”) for the Clallam Conservation District (“CCD”), the hearing for which is scheduled for September 2, 2025.

The Resolution should be rejected on multiple legal grounds.

A. The CCD Was Created Upon the Premise That It Is *Legally Prohibited* From Levying Taxes

An illegal act cannot be lawfully delegated or performed by another entity, including a government agency, on behalf of a prohibited agency. *See, e.g.*, RCW 39.34.030 (interagency agreements must comply with applicable laws and the state Constitution (RCW 39.34.110)); RCW 43.09.260 (examination of local governments).

The CCD is expressly prohibited from levying taxes: “A conservation district . . . **shall not levy taxes** or issue bonds. . . .” RCW 89.08.220 (“Corporate status and powers of district”; emphasis added).

RCW 89.08.220 was originally adopted in 1939 and has not been repealed. In 1939, the statute read: “Such soil conservation district . . . shall not have the power to levy taxes or issue bonds.” As amended in 1955, the statute read: “A district shall constitute a body corporate, exercising public powers, but **shall not levy taxes** or issue bonds.” (emphasis added)

Consequently, at the time the CCD was formed as the “Olympic Soil Conservation District” on October 2, 1959, the precursor to RCW 89.08.220 was in full force and effect. *See*, enclosed origination records obtained from the State Conservation Commission. The electors of Clallam County who voted at a referendum to create the Olympic Soil Conservation District on July 20, 1959 did not approve or create an entity that could levy taxes against them.

Since the electors authorized the formation of the CCD on the legal premise that it cannot levy taxes (which has been the law for 86 years and counting), the BOCC may not now *indirectly* levy taxes against Clallam County electors in order to provide tax revenue to the CCD, as expressly stated in the proposed Resolution.

B. The Proposed Resolution Violates Multiple Provisions of the State Constitution

“The provisions of [the Washington State] Constitution are mandatory, unless by express words they are declared to be otherwise.” WA State Const. art. I, §29.

“The legislature is prohibited from enacting any private or special laws in the following cases: . . . [f]or assessment or collection of taxes” WA State Const. art. II, §28(5).

“All taxes shall be uniform upon the same class of property within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax and shall be levied and collected for public purposes only.” WA State Const. art. VII, §1.

“No tax shall be levied except in pursuance of law; and every law imposing a tax shall state distinctly the object of the same to which only it shall be applied.” WA State Const. art. VII, §5.

Based on the above authority:

1. The above provisions of the State Constitution are mandatory on the BOCC.
2. The BOCC, acting in the capacity of a legislative body, is constitutionally prohibited from adopting any **special law** for the assessment or collection of taxes. WA State Const. art. II, §28(5). The CCD is a non-regulatory entity that performs services on a voluntary basis only to those private persons and entities that request its services.¹ As such, any tax collection would necessarily serve CCD’s self-identified customers, only, and not the general public, rendering the Resolution a **special law**.

The special law nature of the Resolution is apparent from the CCD’s consultant’s draft finalized or actually signed²), there is no direct benefit of CCD’s services to the vast majority of Clallam County residents.

According to the BOCC’s own Resolution, the Property Tax is to be collected for “programs” “designed to help **private land managers** protect natural resources as they **make a living from their land**.” Resolution, p. 2.

According to the CCD’s own website summary of its “2024 Accomplishments”, **fewer than 100 property owners requested and received CCD’s assistance last year**.

¹ See, e.g., RCW 89.08.070, and State Conservation Commission website <https://www.scc.wa.gov/what-are-conservation-districts> (conservation districts are “community-based hubs” that provide “[n]on-regulatory services” for “voluntary actions”).

² The Resolution is predicated upon a “CCD or District” “staff performed” “rate study of rates and charges necessary to recover the cost of CCD programs and services furnished, to be furnished, or available to landowners and properties within the District. . . .” Resolution, p. 1, Para. 3. To my knowledge, no such ‘study’ exists; only an unsigned and incomplete “DRAFT Rates and Charges Report” dated “July 2025” prepared by FCS, a Bowman company.

<https://clallamcd.org/>. Approximately 77,000 people reside in Clallam County.³ This means that the Resolution is an unconstitutional **special law** that aims to benefit approximately **0.13%** of Clallam County residents on an annual basis.

3. The proposed Resolution improperly purports to impose a ‘uniform’ property tax based upon a *per parcel flat rate* **that does not take into account parcel size or service usage**. The proposed Property Tax is not a variable *ad valorem* tax on property. WA Const. art. VII, §2. It constitutes an unconstitutional flat fee property tax.
4. The proposed Resolution fails to identify a **distinct object** for which only it (the Property Tax) shall be applied. WA State Const. art. VII, §5. The proposed Resolution is almost schizophrenic in this department.

According to the Resolution, the Property Tax is to be used to, *inter alia*, “benefit [“private landowner[.]”] properties and the land and waters of CCD⁴”, “[m]aintain existing agricultural activities”, “promote greater food security”⁵, “[e]stablish conservation easements”, promote “[c]ooperative activities to restore high-quality habitat”, implement “stream planting”, “secur[e] necessary permits for land manager maintenance of riparian areas”, promote “fish passage barrier removal”, “[a]ssist with projects at the request of partners”, conduct “water quality monitoring”, “identify[] high risk properties”, “improve water quality and water supply”, “[c]onserv[e] and protect[] high quality agricultural soils”, “provide technical assistance and funding opportunities”, “[p]rovide educational opportunities for area school children”, provide assistance with “Critical Area Ordinance compliance”, provide “cost-share program[s]”, build “fencing”, and “eliminat[e]. . . ruminant fecal coliforms from the stream that drains to shellfish beds”. *Id.*

The drafters of the Resolution worked hard in an attempt to establish a legitimate purpose for the Property Tax. In reality, the public’s money will be used to cover CCD’s internal overhead that is not covered by grant funding – namely, **staff salaries and benefits** – as established at the CCD’s Board meeting on June 3, 2025 and its public hearing on July 25, 2025.

The BOCC’s Resolution “doth protest too much”. It is misleading (to put it mildly) and unconstitutional on multiple grounds. It should be rejected.

³ Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/clallamcountywashington/PST045223>

⁴ The Resolution elevates the CCD to the level of a sovereign entity with control over all land and waters of Clallam County. The hyperbole belies the weakness of the Resolution.

⁵ At the CCD’s hearing on July 25, 2025, a CCD supervisor sharply threatened a member of the public with either being in support of their Property Tax or being left with no food on the table and no water to drink. The CCD’s fear mongering is not appropriate and is not a proper ground for the adoption of the Resolution.

C. The Proposed Resolution Fails As Predicated Upon a Null and Void CCD Resolution

The Resolution is predicated upon CCD Resolution #2025-05, purportedly adopted by the CCD at a remote-only (“**via Zoom only**”) special meeting held on July 29, 2025 (“CCD Resolution”). Resolution, p. 1, Para. 5.

On August 8, 2025, the BOCC was first notified in writing that the CCD Resolution is likely null and void having been adopted at a remote-only special meeting held in violation of the OPMA. (copy enclosed).

On August 11, 2025, counsel for the CCD responded in writing claiming that the meeting was “a properly scheduled hybrid meeting” similar to the CCD Board’s regular monthly meetings. The CCD’s attorney enclosed a purported notice for the special meeting that states “[t]his meeting will be held via Zoom” (with no mention of a hybrid meeting).⁶

On August 12, 2025, I attended the CCD regular Board meeting held as a hybrid meeting next door to the CCD offices in what is referred to as the OlyCAP conference room. At that regular meeting, the CCD Board voted to amend the agenda for the special meeting in an *ex post facto* attempt to convert it into a hybrid meeting. During that regular meeting, the CCD also took corrective action as to two action items from the July 29, 2025 special meeting (in apparent response to the OPMA violation notice), but took no corrective action as to the CCD Resolution.

On August 12, 2025, I also visited the CCD’s office and spoke with a staff person who confirmed that the CCD supervisor who attended the special meeting on July 29, 2025 sat in a back room of the CCD’s offices and attended the meeting remotely via a laptop.

On August 28, 2025, I spoke with Lynda Lieb, the Office Coordinator of the Olympic Community Action Partners who oversees the reservations and use of the OlyCAP conference room that is used by CCD for its hybrid meetings. She confirmed that on July 29, 2025 (the date of the special meeting), the conference room was reserved from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. by Early Childhood Services. The CCD’s special meeting was held from 10:17 a.m. to 10:55 a.m. that morning according to the official minutes prepared for that meeting. **This means that the CCD could not have held a hybrid meeting on the morning of July 29, 2025.**

I requested records from the CCD to corroborate, *inter alia*, its representations to the BOCC during a work session held on August 11, 2025, that the CCD’s special meeting was ‘hybrid’ (held both in person and over Zoom). Despite multiple requests with deadlines, as of the date of this public comment, the CCD has provided zero documentation of any hybrid meeting held on July 29, 2025.

⁶ The CCD’s attorney represented that this notice was posted to CCD’s website the morning before the day of the special meeting. However, upon requesting public records to confirm this, CCD’s manager Kim Williams confirmed that the notice was never posted to CCD’s website.

Based on my investigation to date, the special meeting held on July 29, 2025 was indeed a remote-only meeting held over Zoom. It was not a 'hybrid' meeting held by the CCD in the OlyCAP conference room.

Remote-only meetings may only be held in the event of a declared emergency in accordance with RCW 42.30.230. Absent a declared emergency, the **"via Zoom only"** Special Meeting -- as stated in the original agenda posted online and the **"via Zoom"** notice subsequently provided by CCD's own counsel -- was conducted in violation of the OPMA. RCW 42.30.230.

Any action taken at a meeting that fails to comply with OPMA notice requirements is "null and void". RCW 42.30.060. **The CCD Resolution is, by all appearances, null and void and cannot be a lawful predicate basis for the adoption of the proposed BOCC Resolution.**

D. A Non-Regulatory Agency That Provides Voluntary Services May Not Lawfully Directly or Indirectly Impose Tax Liens

According to its own website, the CCD is "[n]ot a regulatory agency", and its programs are both *voluntary* ("voluntary conservation programs") and offered at no cost ("100% Funded by grants."):

2024 Accomplishments:

We at Clallam Conservation District had a busy year! Here is a little lookback at the conservation efforts we were able to achieve in 2024.



CCD Website partial screen shot created 7-16-25.

At their regular Board meeting on June 3, 2025, the CCD supervisors spoke of the need to collect taxes to cover CCD's overhead (*e.g.*, salaries) for what appears to be relatively low-key jobs for six persons:

2024 Accomplishments:

We at Clallam Conservation District had a busy year! Here is a little lookback at the conservation efforts we were able to achieve in 2024.



CCD Website partial screen shot created 7-16-25.

Clallam County residents do not support tax liens against their properties to pay *salaries* for persons who provide *voluntary* services. A non-regulatory entity such as the CCD has no proper or lawful purpose in *the direct or indirect creation of an unconstitutional tax lien as to every parcel in Clallam County*. The BOCC should decline the invitation to participate in the scheme.

E. Conclusion

The proposed Resolution is unlawful, unconstitutional, and predicated upon a null and void CCD Resolution that was adopted in violation of the OPMA. The BOCC should decline to adopt the Resolution. It should instead encourage the CCD to continue to operate on a voluntary and non-regulatory basis as has been done for the past 66 years and counting.

Sincerely,

Virginia Shogren
961 W. Oak Court
Sequim, WA 98382

Encls.: Olympic Soil Conservation District origination records
August 8, 2025 Public Comment and Notice re: OPMA Violations

cc: Clallam County Commissioner Mark Ozias, mark.ozias@clallamcountywa.gov
Clallam County Commissioner Mike French, mike.french@clallamcountywa.gov
Clallam County Commissioner Randy Johnson, randy.johnson@clallamcountywa.gov
Todd Mielke, todd.mielke@clallamcountywa.gov
Loni Gores, loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov
Dee Boughton, dee.boughton@clallamcountywa.gov
Seth Woolson, swoolson@csdlaw.com
Christy Cox, christyrcox@live.com
Jean Fike, jfike@scc.wa.gov

United States of America
 State of Washington
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE



TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME

I, Victor A. Meyers, Secretary of State of the State of Washington and custodian of the Seal of said State, do hereby

certify that Howard M. Cameron and William McGrorie, supervisors of the Olympic Soil Conservation District, have presented to this office an application, in the form required by law, for a Certificate of Organization of the Olympic Soil Conservation District; and

WHEREAS, the said application was accompanied by a statement from the State Soil Conservation Committee, in the form required by law; and

WHEREAS, the name proposed for the said district is not identical with that of any other soil conservation district of this state, or so nearly similar as to lead to confusion or uncertainty; and

WHEREAS, the said application and statement have been made, filed and recorded in this office as required by law;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby certified that the Olympic Soil Conservation District has been duly organized as a governmental subdivision of this State and a public body corporate and politic.



In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed hereto the Seal of the State of Washington. Done at the Capitol, at Olympia,

this 2nd day of October A.D. 1959.

Victor A. Meyers

Secretary of State

By

Jean C. Dunsen

Assistant Secretary of State

STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

415 Hutton Building
Spokane, Washington

IN THE MATTER OF THE ORGANIZATION	)	Statement by the State
	)	
OF THE OLYMPIC SOIL CONSERVATION	)	Soil Conservation
	)	
DISTRICT	)	Committee

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETINGS:

Be it known that on the tenth day of April, 1959, a petition for the organization of the Olympic Soil Conservation District, signed by 48 landowners was duly filed in the office of the State Soil Conservation Committee;

That on the eighth day of June, 1959, at the Macleay Community Hall in Sequim, Washington, and at the Natural Resources Building in Forks, Washington, public hearings were held after due notice of the said hearing had been given as required by law;

That on the 16th day of July, 1959, the State Soil Conservation Committee did duly determine that there is need in the interest of the public health, safety and welfare, for a soil conservation district to function in the proposed territory and did define the boundaries thereof;

That thereafter due notice was given of a referendum to be held within the territory so defined by the Committee on the question of the creation of the said district;

That the said referendum was held within the said defined boundaries on the 20th day of July, 1959;

That the result of the said referendum showed that a majority of the votes cast in the said referendum were in favor of the creation of the said district;

That on the 17th day of September, 1959, the State Soil Conservation Committee did duly determine that the operation of the said district is administratively practicable and feasible;

That the boundaries of the said district were defined by the State Soil Conservation Committee as follows:

ALL OF CLALLAM COUNTY, WASHINGTON, EXCEPT INCORPORATED CITIES AND TOWNS.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the State Soil Conservation Committee has caused these presents to be executed by its secretary under the seal of the Committee this 29th day of September, 1959.


Secretary, State Soil Conservation
Committee

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF ORGANIZATION OF
OLYMPIC SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Honorable Victor A. Meyers

Secretary of State

Olympia, Washington

The undersigned supervisors of the Olympic Soil Conservation District respectfully represent:

1. That pursuant to the provisions of the Soil Conservation Districts Law, (Chapter 304 Sessions Laws of the State of Washington, 1955 (S.B. 233)), a petition for the creation of the Olympic Soil Conservation District was filed with the State Soil Conservation Committee; that the proceedings specified in the said act were taken pursuant to the said petition as more fully appears in the statement by the State Soil Conservation Committee hereto attached and made a part of this application; that this application is being filed in order to complete the organization of the said district as a governmental subdivision and a public body, corporate and politic, as provided by the said act; and that the State Soil Conservation Committee has appointed the undersigned as supervisors of the said Soil Conservation District.

2. That the names and official residences of the undersigned supervisors are as follows:

William McGrorie	Route 2, Box 323, Sequim, Washington
Howard Cameron	Route 1, Sequim, Washington

That certified copies of the appointments of the said supervisors, evidencing their right to office are submitted herewith.

3. That the supervisors, William McGrorie and Howard Cameron, have been appointed for the terms of one and two years, respectively, from the dates of their respective appointments.

4. That the name which is proposed for the said district is the Olympic Soil Conservation District.

5. That the principal office of the supervisors of the said district is located at Port Angeles, Washington.

Wherefore, the undersigned supervisors of the said district respectfully request that the Secretary of State make and issue to the undersigned supervisors a certificate, under the seal of the State, of the due organization of the said Olympic Soil Conservation District.

Howard M. Connor

William M. Brown

STATE OF WASHINGTON)
COUNTY OF Challam } SS.

William McCrorie and Howard Cameron, whose names are subscribed to the foregoing application state that the matters and things therein contained are true and correct.

Howard W. Cameron

William McCrorie

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of September, 1959.

Norman L. Silva
Notary Public in and for the State
of Washington residing at _____

STATE OF WASHINGTON)
COUNTY OF Challam }

I, Norman L. Silva, a Notary Public in and for the county and state aforesaid do certify that William McCrorie and Howard Cameron whose names are assigned to the foregoing application are personally known to me and known by me to be the officers as affirmed therein, and that each has subscribed thereto in my presence. Given under my hand and seal this 28th day of September, 1959.

Norman L. Silva
Notary Public in and for the State
of Washington residing at _____

Clallam Conservation District
228 W. First Street, Suite H
Port Angeles, WA 98362

August 8, 2025
Via email to:
kim.williams@clallamcd.org
info@clallamcd.org
swoolson@csdlaw.com

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CCD BOARD MEETING AUGUST 12, 2025

NOTICE OF OPMA VIOLATIONS AND REQUEST FOR CORRECTIVE ACTION

Dear Clallam Conservation District,

This letter is a public comment for the CCD Board Meeting scheduled for August 12, 2025. Include this comment and its enclosure with the minutes for the meeting on August 12, 2025.

On July 29, 2025, the CCD held a special meeting according to an agenda for the meeting posted online (date and time of posting TBD), copy enclosed. The meeting was held **“via Zoom only”** [emphasis in the original]. The agenda states that the meeting was held to adopt a resolution proposing a system of Rates and Charges for “Natural Resource Conservation”. Additional business was noted on the agenda, including the adoption of a contract, a memorandum of understanding, and a personal services agreement “to manage Dungeness Drought program” (“Special Meeting”).

The agenda for the Special Meeting did not provide the Zoom address or call-in information for the Special Meeting. According to the agenda, Zoom access for the remote-only meeting was identified as being available at the physical location of the CCD office: “228 W. First St., Ste. G, Port Angeles, WA 98362, Armory Square Building.” (**“Zoom access provided to public at”** [emphasis in the original].) The original purpose of “Zoom” was to provide an alternative to in-person meetings. The irony of having instructions for using Zoom only available by making a physical visit seems to have been lost on the CCD.

No notice of the Special Meeting (either oral or written) was provided to the public in attendance at the CCD’s Rates and Charges public hearing held a mere four days earlier on July 25, 2025.

The CCD’s website, as of August 1, 2025, displayed a “Special Meeting Documents” header under “Clallam Conservation District Regular Board Meeting” that provides the agenda, only. As of August 1, 2025, the website page displayed no information as to the date, time or location of the Special Meeting.

RCW 42.30.080 governs notice for special meetings. Notice of special meetings is required at least 24 hours before the time of such meeting as specified in the notice. Remote-only meetings may only be held in the event of a declared emergency in accordance with RCW 42.30.230.

Absent a declared emergency, the “**Zoom only**” Special Meeting was conducted in violation of the OPMA. RCW 42.30.230.¹ Notice of the Special Meeting also was inadequate under RCW 42.30.080 which is a further violation of the OPMA.²

Any action taken at a meeting that fails to comply with OPMA notice requirements is “null and void”. RCW 42.30.060. Civil penalties may also apply to members of a governing body who had actual knowledge that a declared emergency did not exist at the time of the Special Meeting (and at any other special meetings similarly noticed and conducted).

I request that within 14 days of the date of this letter that the CCD take corrective action to:

1. Provide the following public records:
 - a. any documentation of a declared emergency upon which the CCD relied in holding the remote-only Special Meeting;
 - b. meeting minutes for the Special Meeting;
 - c. all communications and notices regarding the Special Meeting;
 - d. all notices, meeting documents, and minutes for any other special meeting(s) conducted by CCD on or after November 1, 2022 to present; and,
2. In the absence of a documented declared emergency and other notice consistent with the OPMA, to hold a new meeting in compliance with the OPMA to lawfully conduct the business as identified on the Special Meeting agenda.

Sincerely,



Virginia Shogren
961 W. Oak Court
Sequim, WA 98382

Encl.

cc: Clallam County Commissioner Mark Ozias, mark.ozias@clallamcountywa.gov
Clallam County Commissioner Mike French, mike.french@clallamcountywa.gov
Clallam County Commissioner Randy Johnson, randy.johnson@clallamcountywa.gov
Todd Mielke, todd.mielke@clallamcountywa.gov

¹ For remote meetings, RCW 42.30.230(2) requires a cost-free option for public attendance. Providing a physical address instead of Zoom access details effectively denies this access. This constitutes an additional OPMA violation.

² The MRSC Open Public Meetings Act Basics emphasizes that notices must be clear and sufficient to ensure public access. *See also*, Washington State Attorney General’s Open Government Resource Manual (2016).

Loni Gores, loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov
Dee Boughton, dee.boughton@clallamcountywa.gov
Christy Cox, christyrcox@live.com
Jean Fike, jfike@scc.wa.gov
James Kraft, james@washingtonwatertrust.org
Jason Hatch, jason@washingtonwatertrust.org
Caroline Mellor, caroline.mellor@ecy.wa.gov (Re: WRDROU-2025-ClalCD-00080)



AGENDA
Special Board Meeting
July 29, 2025 10:15 AM
via Zoom only

**Zoom access provided to public at: 228 W. First St., Ste. G, Port Angeles,
WA 98362, Armory Square Building**

- 10:15 CALL TO ORDER and AGENDA REVIEW
10:20 INTRODUCTIONS and PUBLIC COMMENT

NEW BUSINESS

- 10:25 Clallam Conservation District Rates and Charges Draft Report**
10:30 RESOLUTION# 25-05- A resolution of the board of Supervisors of the Clallam Conservation District, Clallam County Washington, proposing a system of Rates and Charges to Clallam County Washington for Natural Resource Conservation.
10:40 CCD Contract Management and Procurement Policy
10:45 MOU between CCD and Washington Water Trust (WWT)
10:50 Personal Services Agreement with Client #25-006 to manage Dungeness Drought program

OLD BUSINESS

- 10:55 Adjourn**

Gores, Loni

From: Duane Benedict <dubeben@msn.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 8:38 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: CCD funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

 You don't often get email from dubeben@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

The CCD needs to stand on its own by fund raising on its own. We county taxpayers should not be funding a program that just wants a taxpayer handout. Clallam County is facing a serious budget shortfall and basic needs such as safety, road repair, and cutting costs/funding to NGO's should be a priority. This \$5 per parcel for CCD funding....is and should be a NO vote!

D. Benedict

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Gores, Loni

From: Linda Stenzel <stenzel4@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 9:06 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: CCD

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from stenzel4@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

When will CCD and our commissioners finally realize that they will soon run out of other people's money??? I DON'T have extra money to give to salmon!!! We pay \$1/gallon more than national average for our gas. We pay high property taxes. We have homeless building their own town under the bridges (and when they burn down tax-payer's homes, insurance will cancel all of us) and those folks won't be able to sue the city and or county for losses because they waste our money on other useless projects instead of protecting our town. Businesses are going under like crazy, but, hey, let's raise the cost of doing business and on sales tax.

WHY does it make sense to pay more money for NOTHING of real benefit to the hardworking people who are being robbed? This MUST stop! The salmon aren't coming back, and those few that do are only available to the tribes, not to the citizens paying for this ridiculous work.

There will be an exodus if this keeps going and who will you rob then? Time to wake up and realize we are fed up.

Linda Stenzel

Gores, Loni

From: marolee diane smith <maroleedsmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 3:11 PM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Clallam Conservation District FEES

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Greetings,

Please do NOT encourage or accept any new fees for property taxes. Clallam Conservation District doesn't even RUN ITS ELECTIONS through the existing elections mechanism. There are ZERO records to be found

How is it that the County Conservation District has "elections" "locally by the public" ... as a special election, but we don't use the mechanism of our Auditor's Office, to submit ballots, or have results certified. I'm completely confused by all of this. Especially when I read (in their own document) that *"Neither the Commission or Districts have the ability to levy taxes. This distinguishes them from the from other divisions of local government and makes them unique..."*

https://cdn.prod.website.files.com/5ec2d4f7da309c68cdc0655a/5f405ae721f4e3f69643e774_Election-Handout-final.pdf

I get it that this was seen as a 'good thing' decades ago, "advantages to not being governed under typical election law..." (as their webpage points out). The positive is that the cost of conducting the election is paid for by the districts, not the county. But, how do I KNOW if they actually followed their rules, and who has oversight?!!

As a political candidate there is so much oversight with the PDC, the auditor's office, and such. But, these guys get to promote themselves as representing WHOM? Themselves, or us? How can they actually ASK us to pay more money for their crazy things. Who has a say over their "cost-share programs" which provide financial incentives or assistance to ... whomever/whatever they choose. How am I, as a member of the county, even certain who and what they are assisting?

I voted in their last election at the Armory, and there were NOT private polling booths set up to vote. It was chaotic, and I'd say the glut of people were not welcomed with open-arms. (I came at the very end, and I've never seen so many snippy people.) I do not see how they "substantially followed" their rules. And, most shocking... WE PLACED OUR BALLOTS into an already FULL garbage can! (With a wooden lid.)

DO NOT ALLOW a new fee on our taxes. We cannot afford it.
Marolee Smith

Gores, Loni

From: Sarah <triplesconsultants2025@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 11:28 PM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Re: 9.2.2025: BOCC Correspondence Submission Clallam Conservation District Parcel Fee Proposal

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Subject: Sept. 2 CCD “rates & charges” — since my Aug 20 letter: please VOTE NO or defer; if proceeding, adopt owner protections

Dear Commissioners French, Johnson, and Ozias,

Please enter this correspondence into the record for the September 2, 2025, hearing on the Clallam Conservation District (CCD) parcel “rates & charges.”

What’s changed since my August 20, 2025, email

In the 11 days since my first letter, I’ve reviewed the statute, the draft resolution, and comparable district practices. That work clarified several material points that sharpen my request:

- **Tax-roll collection & liens:** If approved, the CCD charge is placed on property-tax bills, and any unpaid amount becomes a lien with tax-like interest/penalties.
- **Petition safety valve:** If $\geq 20\%$ of affected owners file a petition by December 15, 2025, the 2026 collection is blocked.
- **Appeals are short and internal to CCD:** Owners have 21 days after the property-tax due date to appeal to CCD; CCD’s decision is final, subject to 21 days for court review.
- **Higher statutory ceiling than many assume:** Current law authorizes up to \$25 per parcel (CPI-indexed going forward) and treats forestland differently (no per-parcel charge; special alternatives).
- **Term is a policy choice:** The statute does not set a minimum or maximum term for “rates & charges,” so a one-year system is lawful.

Bottom line (updated)

Given these mechanics and risks, I now strongly urge a **NO vote** on September 2—or at minimum a deferral until after the November levy outcomes so staff can return with an owner-protective alternative.

If you proceed on Sept. 2, please adopt all five of these safeguards

Each item is lawful and can be included as a condition of approval:

1. One-year only (2026) with a Dec. 31, 2026, sunset and a new public hearing for any renewal.
2. Minimal nominal rates for 2026; for forestland, use the per-owner method permitted by statute (no per-parcel).
3. Automatic relief tied to Assessor records: automatic recognition of low-income senior/disabled approvals; honor other property-tax exemptions; waive while deferrals are active.

4. Appeals people can use: accept appeals online/email/mail/in-person; no prepayment required; apply a preponderance standard with a rebuttable presumption when owners provide credible documents (misclassification/exemption); route land-use/acreage fixes directly to the Assessor.
5. Plain-language notice: mail/post a one-pager that clearly states tax-roll collection, lien if unpaid, the appeal clock, and the Dec. 15 petition right.

Values & funding (unchanged)

I continue to value CCD's on-the-ground work—watershed protection, habitat, soil health, and septic assistance. The question is how to fund it fairly. A short-term, minimal-rate framework with clear relief and due-process protections respects both the law and the people you serve—and lets you reassess after the levy outcomes.

Thank you for considering a path that protects residents and preserves the Board's flexibility. Please **vote** **NO** on September 2—or defer to allow a better, safer design.

Respectfully,
Dr. Sarah Huling, EdD, MBA
District 3 – Forks
Triple S Consultants, LLC
triplesconsultants2025@gmail.com

*AI-assisted drafting (ChatGPT). This material is for public information and advocacy and is not legal advice. Triple S Consultants, LLC reviewed and takes responsibility for the final content. *Generated Aug 31, 2025, 11:19 AM PT.*

On Thu, Aug 21, 2025 at 8:20 AM Gores, Loni <loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov> wrote:

Thank you for your email below. I will forward to the Board of Commissioners.

Loni

“My email address has changed! The new format is Loni.Gores@clallamcountywa.gov Please update my contact card as your earliest convenience, Thank you!”

Loni Gores

Clerk of the Board

Commissioners Office

223 East 4th Street, Suite 4

Port Angeles, WA 98362

Phone: 360-417-2256

Phone: 360-417-2256

From: Sarah <triplesconsultants2025@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2025 5:44 PM

To: Gores, Loni <loni.gores@clallamcountywa.gov>

Subject: 9.2.2025: BOCC Correspondence Submission Clallam Conservation District Parcel Fee Proposal

Dear Commissioners and Clerk Loni,

I respectfully request that the following correspondence be entered into the public record for the September 2, 2025, public hearing regarding the Clallam Conservation District (CCD) proposal to adopt a parcel-based system of rates and charges.

The Value of CCD's Work

I want to begin by acknowledging that the CCD provides important services: watershed protection, habitat restoration, soil health, and financial support for low-income families who need septic system repairs. These programs matter, and I do not dispute their importance.

The real question before us is not whether the programs are valuable but how they should be funded, and whether the public should have a direct say in that decision.

What the 2024 Report Shows

According to CCD's own 2024 report:

- Total conservation benefits delivered: \$990,557.61 from grants and partnerships.
- Total expenditures: \$1,126,902.79.
- Direct County general fund contribution: \$60,000.
- Proposed parcel fee revenue: \$198,150 annually (based on 39,630 chargeable parcels at \$5 each).

In other words, the new fee would triple the local contribution from taxpayers, shifting costs from the broad general fund to individual property owners.

The Governance Problem

Under RCW 89.08.405, the BOCC has the authority to approve this parcel fee directly. Unlike a levy for schools, parks, or fire districts, this does not require a public vote. That means tens of thousands of property owners could see a new charge on their tax bills without ever having had the chance to approve or reject it at the ballot box.

This sets a troubling precedent. If we contribute to the normalization of the use of parcel fees to fund conservation services, it opens the door for other unelected boards and commissions to seek the same treatment, steadily eroding voter oversight of taxation.

The Wrong Kind of Incentive

I am also concerned about how this fee frames conservation. Needing help to replace a septic system is not a moral failing. But creating a mandatory parcel fee risks turning payment itself into a false signal of virtue. Real civic virtue is not in paying another line item on a tax bill; it is in building better infrastructure and adopting smarter policy.

Taxes and fees should be designed to incentivize infrastructure solutions like reducing reliance on rural septic systems through stronger urban wastewater systems, or creating targeted programs that directly support watershed protection. Simply adding a parcel fee does not address root causes; it just redistributes costs in a way that disproportionately impacts rural landowners.

A Leadership Opportunity for Clallam County

Clallam County has an opportunity to lead by example. Instead of approving this parcel fee, the Board could:

1. Return CCD funding to the general fund, where costs are shared equitably across the whole tax base, or
2. Place the proposal before the voters, giving taxpayers the same choice they have for other special-purpose funding, or
3. Develop a framework where taxes and fees are tied directly to infrastructure incentives, starting here in Forks, then scaling to larger cities where pressures are greater.

This is not about rejecting conservation. It is about ensuring that the way we fund it is fair, transparent, and sustainable. Clallam County has the chance to set a statewide standard for how conservation funding can be crafted responsibly.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you NOT to approve the proposed parcel fee without voter approval. Conservation benefits all of us, and the funding mechanism should reflect both fairness and the will of the people.

Thank you for your time and for entering this correspondence into the September 2nd hearing record.

Respectfully,
Dr. Sarah Huling, EdD, MBA

District 3

Gores, Loni

From: Eric Fehrmann <efehrm_3@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 1, 2025 8:30 AM
To: French, Mike; French, Mike; Johnson, Randy; Gores, Loni
Subject: CCD Fee

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I urge you to vote NO on the Clallam Conservation District proposed \$5.00/ parcel fee. The CCD is not being honest about future increases as noted in the House Bill 1488 below, starting in 2029 the fee will be increased by the cost of living. The CCD was asked at their public hearing about future increases, and they said it could not increase for five years. NOT TRUE. **YOU STATE THAT TRANSPARANCY IS A PRIORITY, BEING MISLED BY THIS NGO IS NOT WHAT I WOULD CALL TRANSPARANCY.**

<https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2025-26/Pdf/Bills/House%20Passed%20Legislature/1488-S.PL.pdf#page=10>

Gores, Loni

From: ken wahl <kwahl1@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, September 1, 2025 12:37 PM
To: French, Mike
Cc: Gores, Loni
Subject: Asking for a no vote for CCD Funding

I'm asking you to vote NO on the CCD 'rates & charges' as drafted—or at least defer until after the November levy outcomes. If you move forward, please amend for 2026 only, minimal rates, automatic Assessor-verified exemptions, appeals without pay-to-appeal and with multiple filing options, and a plain-language notice that explains tax-roll collection, liens, appeal deadlines, and the Dec. 15 petition right. This respects RCW 89.08.405 while protecting residents.

Ken and Janet Wahl
155 Mariner View Dr
Sequim, WA 98382
Parcel # 0330275300600000

Gores, Loni

From: John D. and Wendy Sumner <jdwsumner@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 1, 2025 3:40 PM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Commissioners vote on \$5 tax on each parcel of land

You don't often get email from jdwsunmer@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Loni Gores,

Please convey to the County Commissioners that my wife and I would like them to vote NO for the proposed \$5 tax on each parcel of land. We have various reasons why we believe they should vote NO. I am sure they have heard all of the pros and cons, as we have. We just want them to know where we stand.

My wife and I live at 962 Robin Hood Loop, in Forks. We are both registered voters and do vote.

Thank you for you time,

John & Wendy Sumner

Gores, Loni

From: Bob Robb <bobrobb2@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 5:57 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Cc: Jeff Tozzer
Subject: Proposed Parcel Fee

You don't often get email from bobrobb2@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Ms. Gores, as a Clallam County homeowner, I'm sending this brief email to voice my strong opposition to the proposed \$5 parcel fee ostensibly established to help fund the growth of the Clallam Conservation District. Local property owners are being taxed to death, and while seemingly insignificant, this is just another death-by-a-thousand cuts tax that would continue to crush the budgets of us retired seniors living on small fixed incomes. Proposing to grow the CCD from 3 to 4.25 full-time employees, which will necessitate the need for more funding downstream, makes zero sense in this day and age of difficult financial times for Clallam County. Just say no to the growth of this non-essential service. Thank you.

Robert Robb
551 Stone Rd.
Sequim WA 98382

Gores, Loni

From: mrfrick@olypen.com
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 6:23 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: New Fee

[You don't often get email from mrfrick@olypen.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

It is my understanding that this new 5.00 fee will be used by the county to increase the number of people working in the conservation department, using this money to hire a grant writer and then skim off a portion of the grant for their favorite project this just shows that the Commissioners are not listening to the residents who voted them into office. All this will do is increase my taxes and give the Commissioners' another way to fleece the citizens of Clallam County out of more hard-earned money. If this passes, then it's time to elect new Commissioners and get rid of the money hungry group that we have now.

Stop taxing us into poverty.

Mike

Gores, Loni

From: Kaj Ahlburg <ahlburgkaj@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 6:33 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Comment regarding Clallam Conservation District per parcel fee

I strongly oppose the proposed per parcel fee for the Clallam Conservation District. Property owners are already overtaxed, and the CCD's activities do not benefit all property owners equally.

Sincerely,

Kaj Ahlburg
4513 Mount Pleasant Road
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Gores, Loni

From: JK Jacobs <jacobsxpa@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 6:43 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Commissioners Board meeting re: Parcel Tax

You don't often get email from jacobsxpa@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern -

That seems like a futile way to address this email. It appears it concerns NO ONE on the Board that our taxes go up, at their discretion, without a vote of the people. It's always nicking the property owners for more money for YOUR greater good. At this point, I can't see how you would think this makes you look good. Maybe you don't care, but my understanding was that you ran and made it into office by the vote of The People. You work FOR US.

If you don't know by now that we're sick to death of this type of dictatorship, you're more checked out than I thought. I almost didn't write this because, let's be honest, you obviously don't care what we think. I can't be there today in person, but I'm contributing in some way because I hate to see overreach of power. Especially at a local level - ***that is where our vote is supposed to count for something.***

I've heard and seen so much protest of "kings" and "abuse of power" lately. Does it resonate with you at all? How can you justify adding another tax without the consent of THE PEOPLE. Did I mention you work FOR US? I meant to. You probably think \$5 isn't a lot when all it gets you in WA State is a gallon of gas. "Why would they care about \$5/yr.?" you might wonder.... it's principal. It's a slow death of the will of the people if we just lie down and take it. We aren't voting for this. We aren't GIVING you \$5/yr (more if you're fortunate to own more property here). You are effectively TAKING our money - whether we like it or not.

If you don't understand why implementing this parcel tax is abhorrent, then you're what's wrong with our failing system.

Kate Jacobs
Port Angeles Property owner/ Business owner

Gores, Loni

From: MIKE HILL <mh28534@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 6:49 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: I do not support an additional parcel fee

You don't often get email from mh28534@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I live in clallam county and am disappointed to see the continual increase of taxes and fees. Please do not add additional parcel fees.

Mike Hill

Gores, Loni

From: John Campbell <jac960@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 7:11 AM
To: Gores, Loni

To all concerned:

Please do not approve this parcel "fee". We as taxpayers, do not want to pay more for anything. The county needs to focus on fiscal restraints, not wringing more from its overtaxed residents. Thank you
John Campbell

Gores, Loni

From: mary rief <missyrief@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 7:12 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: CCD \$5 fee .. NO

 You don't often get email from missyrief@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It may Concern,

I am a constituent of Clallam County living in the Dungeness area.

I very much disagree with any fee being added to our already outrageous taxes and fees on our property.

Especially fees that are not voted on by the very public who pays for them!

Do not lock taxpayers into a parcel fee that generates \$200,000 or more for the Clallam Conservation District.

No. If you need to support this organization then you have to rearrange your existing budget to actually balance by cutting something else. That's how budgets work!

Sincerely,

Mary Rief

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

Gores, Loni

From: Donna <omadon834@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 7:25 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Re: Parcel Fee

You don't often get email from omadon834@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I thought of something else about these ridiculous homeless apartments that are being built with our money. There were plenty of empty stores now that can be converted into quarters. They already have plumbing, electrical and heat.

On Tue, Sep 2, 2025, 7:17 AM Donna <omadon834@gmail.com> wrote:

My husband and I are completely and totally against this parcel fee. Clallam County & the State of Washington are taxing us into oblivion.

Here's an idea. Instead of spending our money on homeless apartments including a balcony with a view & dishwashers & dog washing stations, use that money for necessities. Help for the homeless is supposed to be a safety net not a hammock. We are outraged, and on our way to the poor house ourselves. Carol

Gores, Loni

From: Terri DiMartino <girldog2007@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 8:11 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: "No" on proposed parcel fee

Dear Commissioners:

I cannot afford anymore special fees on my property taxes. This is not an essential service needed. Please vote no on the parcel fee.

Thank you,
Terri DiMartino
Sequim, Washington

Gores, Loni

From: Dennis O'Malley <dennis.m.omalley@proton.me>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 8:13 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: \$5 parcel fee

You don't often get email from dennis.m.omalley@proton.me. [Learn why this is important](#)

Lori,
I'm sure today will be a busy day so I'll keep my comment short. NO on the \$5 parcel fee. Find the money in your existing budget if it's that's important, but no new "fees".

Respectfully,
Dennis O'Malley
103 Fairway Dr.
Sequim, Wa 98382

Gores, Loni

From: Tracy Hagberg <the.hagbergs@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 8:53 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Parcel fee comment

You don't often get email from the.hagbergs@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good morning,

As a Clallam county residents and property owners we are expressing our disapproval and rejection of the parcel fees that will be voted on today.

Sincerely

Eric & Tracy Hagberg
2192 Woodcock Road, Sequim WA

Gores, Loni

From: john worthington <worthingtonjw2u@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 9:24 AM
To: French, Mike; Johnson, Randy; Ozias, Mark; Loni.gores@clallamcounty.wa.gov; Gores, Loni; info@jamestowntribe.org; hhals@jamestowntribe.org; mike.gallagher@ecy.wa.gov; Shawn Hines; rjohnson@jamestowntribe.org; Community and Economic Development; council@cityofpa.us; Kim Williams
Subject: 5 DOLLAR PARCEL FEE HEARING COMMENTS

Hello Commissioners,

Please do not allow the proposed 5-dollar parcel fee to go to a vote because the public needs your protection from policies that don't work.

The riparian portion of funding is not worth the public investment. Riparian science has not been working and has become a bureaucratic hole in the taxpayer's arm. In addition, the current riparian science has what they refer to as "good methane" and "good stagnant water." When asked to explain the "good methane" in their science and the "bad methane" in the dam removal science or explain the "good stagnant water" and "bad stagnant water" equation. Instead, they avoid that conversation and call you names behind your back. The water conservation elements, of their riparian science will not only fail to save water, but it will also be the cause of said "good methane" and "good stagnant" "good stagnant water" and "bad stagnant water" equation.

The Clallam County Water Conservation District refuses to evenly apply the Jimmycomelately science that they themselves developed, because they say their science is 20 years old and needs to be updated. However, the Jamestown Tribe still uses that 20 year old science because they have to and because they want to and I don't blame them one bit.

The Jamestown Tribe understands all too well what happens when you use riparian science. They saw firsthand what happened to Mr. McGlothlin the man who owned the property where the Blyn long house is. The water could go anywhere. They also understood that the jimmycomelately needed to be filtered with baffles and relocated to a channel from which the water would never escape, so they didn't have the same problems as Mr. McGlothlin. They wanted protection for their future reservation sites. That is understandable and fair.

The Jimmycomelately science also contained additional science that should have been used statewide. The science of slowing down water to a grade of 3 percent, to allow for the optimum spawning conditions was stellar. It provided better salmon spawning habitat and building protection. This is science that should have been used again in Blyn where the tribal buildings are taking up vital 3 percent grade space, and it should have been used in Port Angeles for Peabody creek and Valley creek. Then it should have been used on the Elwha to maximize 3 percent grade space there. Then there wouldn't be a "good methane" and "good stagnant" "good stagnant water" and "bad stagnant water" undefendable policy and there would be more salmon and more available water that needs to get alluvium to the farms. No till farming is not in anyone's best interests. I can't believe the tribes are supportive of chemical farming over mineral farming.

In sum, the Jimmycomelately science is worth paying for and it is worth voting for but the riparian science being offered by this 5-dollar parcel fee is not. Please do your job and protect the Clallam County taxpayer from the riparian science based 5-dollar parcel fee. If people really understood the advantages of the Jimmycomelately science, they couldn't get the money out of their pockets fast enough.

Finally, we are wasting time. The jobs from applying the jimmycomelately science would revitalize our region and give tribal and non tribal people more salmon in the long run.

Please stop using the current riparian science and do what makes sense and what is fair for everybody. Start promoting and funding Jimmycomelately science. Lets get to work.

Thanks

John Worthington

Gores, Loni

From: Pepai Whipple <pepalapu@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 9:26 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: Asking for a no vote for CCD Funding

I'm asking you to vote NO on the CCD 'rates & charges' as drafted—or at least defer until after the November levy outcomes. If you move forward, please amend for 2026 only, minimal rates, automatic Assessor-verified exemptions, appeals without pay-to-appeal and with multiple filing options, and a plain-language notice that explains tax-roll collection, liens, appeal deadlines, and the Dec. 15 petition right. This respects RCW 89.08.405 while protecting residents.

Tom & Pepai Whipple
Sequim, WA

Sent from my iPhone

Gores, Loni

From: Victor Scavarda <mtnvic@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 9:37 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: New parcel fees

You don't often get email from mtnvic@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Gentlepersons:

We are opposed to any increase in parcel fees unless they are approved by popular vote of the taxpayers.

Any other increase is not consistent with democratic process.

Thank you for your attention to this matter

Victor and Alice Scavarda

Sequim

Gores, Loni

From: Shimkiri Syiem <shimkiri@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 9:52 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: \$5 parcel fee for the CCD

You don't often get email from shimkiri@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Clallam County Commissioners, and especially Commissioner Johnson,

I respectfully, completely, and wholeheartedly disagree with the parcel fee for the Clallam Conservation District. The CCD is a non-profit organization and should be funded as such through donations and fees for service. It is not a branch of government and should not be funded as such, and in particular it should not be funded through a mandatory parcel fee that would turn into a lien against the property if unpaid. It would place an undue burden on taxpayers in the present and/or in the future, including and especially for underrepresented factions of Clallam County.

Thank you for your time.

All the best,
Shimkiri Figar

Gores, Loni

From: Eva Sandvik <evasandvik1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 9:58 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: No Clallam Conservation tax

[You don't often get email from evasandvik1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

To whom it may concern,

I'm asking the board of Clallam County commissioners, as elected representatives, to oppose the \$5 per parcel Clallam conservation district tax/fee.

Eva Sandvik

Gores, Loni

From: Jacob Seegers <seegers101@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 10:09 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: CCD Comments
Attachments: CCD_Rough2_8-31-25.docx

Commissioners,

Please include this attached draft version of a recent article that I wrote as part of my opposition comments regarding the Clallam Conservation District's proposed \$5 Parcel Fee.

Kind regards,

Jacob Seegers
360-460-2545

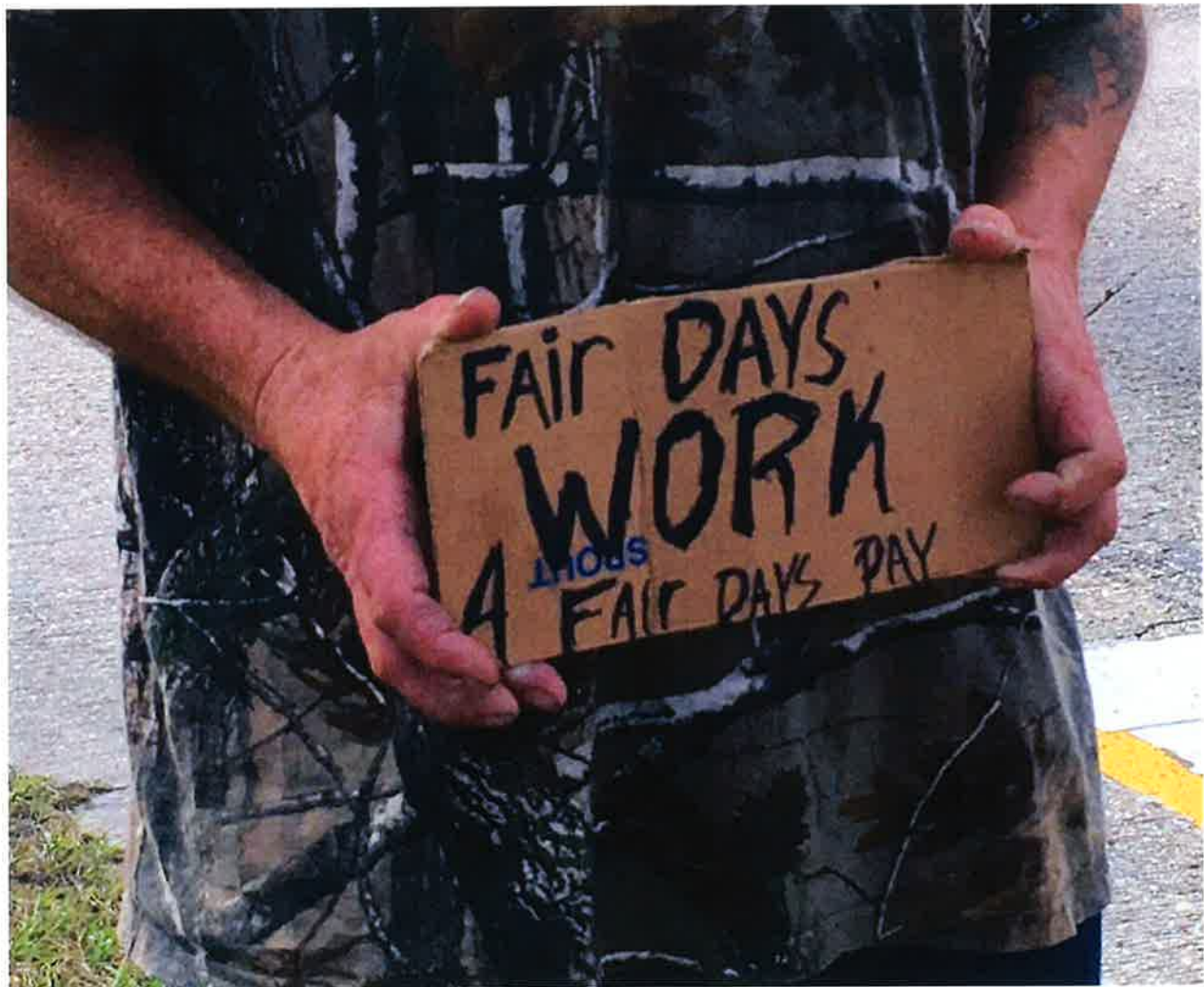
Fishy Fee Smells Like a Taxpayer Fleecing

Confessions of a Panhandler:

When I lived in El Paso, Texas, I met Kurt. He stopped me in the parking lot of Sprouts Farmers Market, hat in hand, pleading for bus fare to New Mexico. Family was waiting for him there, he claimed. After a long conversation and some shared laughs, he admitted the family didn't exist.

Kurt was a professional panhandler. He opened for business at 10 a.m. sharp and treated it like a job. In his mind, he was helping people. Some paid for the glow of self-congratulation, others for a bit of penance. Kurt was well-compensated.

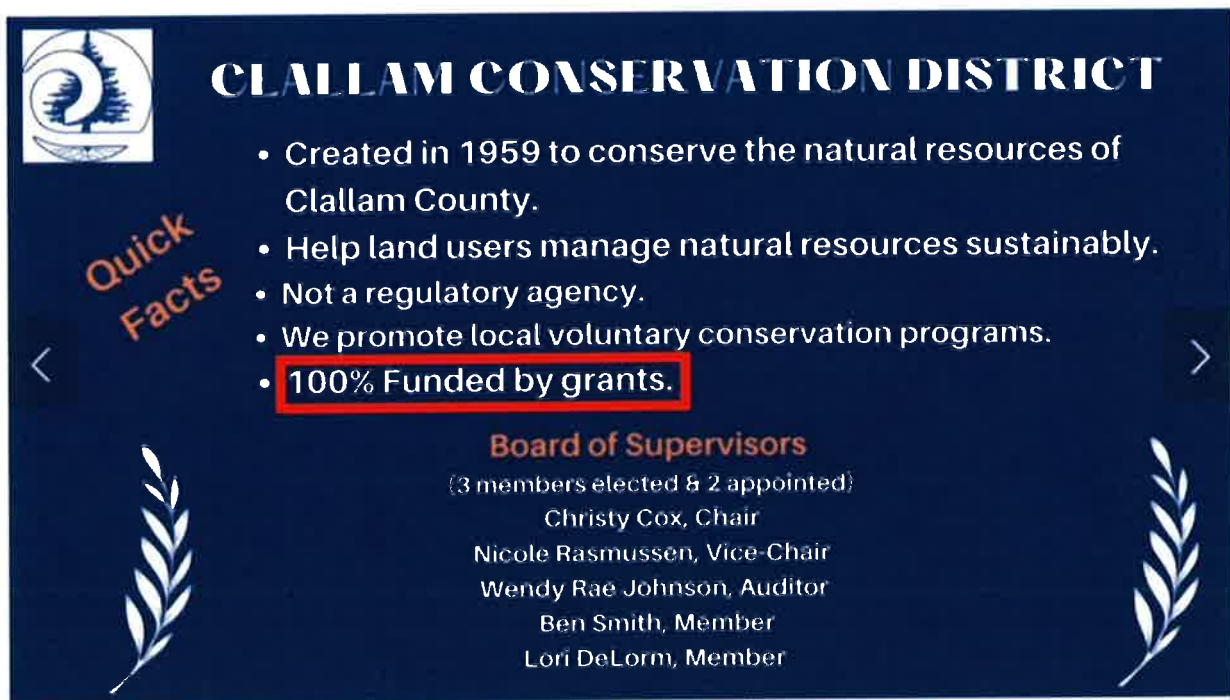
Some mornings, I would drop Kurt off at Sprouts. He would always grin and say, "See you after work!"



As we became friends, I tried to help Kurt find something more stable than the weekly-rate motel he called home. But every option clashed with his chosen way of life. In the end, he preferred living on handouts.

The \$5 Hustle:

Clallam Conservation District (CCD), an entity that survives entirely on government handouts, wants the Board of Clallam County Commissioners (BOCC) to impose a \$5 annual parcel fee on property owners. The fee would generate about \$200,000 per year for the next decade—and any unpaid fees would become a lien against your property (RCW 89.08.405(6)).

A dark blue rectangular graphic with a white logo in the top left corner depicting a stylized tree and a circular arrow. The text "CLALLAM CONSERVATION DISTRICT" is in large, bold, white capital letters. Below it, a bulleted list of five facts is shown in white text. The fifth bullet, "100% Funded by grants.", is enclosed in a red rectangular box. To the left of the list, the words "Quick Facts" are written in a red, slanted font. Below the list, the heading "Board of Supervisors" is in orange, followed by "(3 members elected & 2 appointed)" in white. The names and roles of the supervisors are listed in white: Christy Cox, Chair; Nicole Rasmussen, Vice-Chair; Wendy Rae Johnson, Auditor; Ben Smith, Member; and Lori DeLorm, Member. White laurel branches are on the bottom left and right. Navigation arrows are on the left and right sides of the list.

CLALLAM CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- Created in 1959 to conserve the natural resources of Clallam County.
- Help land users manage natural resources sustainably.
- Not a regulatory agency.
- We promote local voluntary conservation programs.
- **100% Funded by grants.**

Board of Supervisors
(3 members elected & 2 appointed)
Christy Cox, Chair
Nicole Rasmussen, Vice-Chair
Wendy Rae Johnson, Auditor
Ben Smith, Member
Lori DeLorm, Member

Unlike a school, fire, or park levy, this fee can be **approved directly by the commissioners without a public vote**. On September 2, 2025, they will hold a [public hearing](#) on this proposal.

CCD insists its work justifies the fee. But, unlike Kurt, they will not be asking for it, hat in hand. They expect it.

After offering public comment at the July, 25th Conservation District Parcel Fee Hearing, I spoke with several members to acknowledge their work, even where we disagreed. Supervisor Maggie Bockart surprised me with her reply: “Oh, I think we DO agree.” She, too, dislikes the parcel fee, and contends that the district should be supported “by the 1%” and run by volunteers.

But, unlike Robinhood, this band of biologists and self-proclaimed “soil advocates”, has yet to determine a fool-proof plan to pilfer the rich. Instead, they plan to fleece the taxpayer. And, if history is a guide, our county commissioners are poised to help them do it.

How We Got Here:

Grant revenue is unpredictable. In, fact CCD’s most recent [Workplan](#) allocates \$60,000 to staff tasked with securing it.

Secure Adequate Funding	Staff Lead(s)	Est. Cost & \$ Source(s)
Long-term stable funding is secured for basic district operations. ➤ Pursue stable funding to lower financial risk. ○ Secure services of marketing firm to develop messaging & outreach action plan. ○ Engage with stakeholders and community members through presentations, workshops, public hearings, and social media to gather feedback and support. ➤ Maintain 6 months' reserves. ➤ Establish a NICRA ➤ File digitization and management Grant funding is secured for implementation of conservation projects. ➤ Pursue grant funding for specific projects and staff.	Kim, Meghan, Jennifer, Heather	\$60,000 IM, OH

Grants do not always cover all indirect costs which is why CCD’s constant refrain is, “*We need stable funding!*” CCD claims that this “stable funding” is “critical to cover expenses that grants do not fund, such as grant-writing and presentations, our soil testing program, elections, and rising operational costs.”

Back in 2019, Joe Holtop, then executive director of CCD, emphasized this point during the [April 8th BOCC Work Session](#).

Clallam Conservation District

➤ Created in 1959

- Per RCW 89.08
- Locally led non-Regulatory sub-division of state

➤ 1 of 45 Conservation Districts in State

- 16 have local stable funding through RCW 89.08.4
- 9 of 12 CDs in Puget Sound have local stable funding

➤ Funded by grants

- Most grant \$ from State Conservation Commission
 - 8 Commission, 2 Ecology, 1 SRFB grant, 1 ILA w/County
 - Have had as many as 16 grants
- Receiving \$45,000 from County in 2019
 - Past 17 years was \$26,000

WE NEED STABLE FUNDING!



According to Holtrop, CCD received \$26,000 annually from the county's general fund from 2001 to 2018, rising to \$45,000 in 2019. He argued that the district needed a more substantial safety net and proposed a \$5 parcel fee to the county commissioners during the 2019 work session.

One day later, [Peninsula Daily News reported](#) on CCD's Parcel Fee Plan:

"He (Holtrop) said the district still needs to conduct a rate study, but the charges would be a maximum of \$5 per parcel and \$3 per forest landowner, he said. He said the plan is to submit a proposal and hold a public hearing by Aug. 1."

By CCD's June 11th, 2019 Board Meeting, the district had already secured a deal with the commissioners: \$125,000 per year for five years from the county's general fund.

So what happened between April 8 and June 11? A few sticking points emerged with the proposed \$5 parcel fee:

- District 3 Commissioner Bill Peach worried the timeline for approval would not allow adequate consultation with constituents. He was also reluctant to support a proposal that would raise taxes on Clallam parcel holders (May 20, 2019 Work Session).
- CCD hesitated to spend roughly \$30,000 on legal and professional fees for a "rate study" without confidence in BOCC support (April 8, 2019 Work Session).

“That [rates and charges] study could cost up to \$30,000 and we don’t want to spend that money unless we know we’re getting some direction that, yes we’re going to, kind of, start drifting down that road...spending money we don’t have to further the cause is one thing. Spending money we don’t have to say, “goodbye” is another.”

After attending a CCD board meeting, Commissioner Johnson, who described himself as “gunho” for CCD’s efforts, stepped in to save the day. During the May 20, 2019 BOCC work session, he proposed the five-year, \$125,000-per-year plan to the other commissioners.

Commissioner Peach supported the plan because it did not impose a direct long-term burden on taxpayers and allowed the board to “pivot” if the expense could no longer be justified from the county’s general fund.

Commissioner Ozias was also on board.

CCD’s [April 2021 Newsletter](#) praised the commissioners: “Thanks to the Clallam County Board of Commissioners, and **Commissioner Johnson in particular**, we now can expect to receive \$125,000 annually from the County for the next four years.”

2020 Conservation Accomplishments

We can all probably agree, 2020 was a year to forget. The COVID19 pandemic presented crises, challenges and heartbreak not seen in our lifetimes. But we persevered.

At the conservation district, we adapted. Staff had the good fortune to be able to continue working, albeit mostly from home. We learned how to use Zoom and other online platforms for virtual meetings and workshops, but we truly missed getting out into the field and interacting directly with the people we serve. We directed our focus on our core mission of helping people practice better stewardship of our natural resources. What follows is a summary of our major accomplishments for this year to forget.

Although not an actual conservation accomplishment, perhaps our most significant achievement was securing stable funding that will provide us with a solid foundation to continue our conservation work. Thanks to the Clallam County Board of Commissioners, and Commissioner Johnson in particular, we now can expect to receive \$125,000 annually from the County for the next four years. This is an increase from \$26,000 that we had received for the past two decades (with the exception of 2019 when we received an additional \$20,000). Knowing we will receive these funds over the next four years not only gives us peace of mind, it allows us to direct more of our time and effort toward getting actual work done.

That deal expired in 2024 and the commissioners will end support from the general fund altogether in 2026.

So why did the commissioners abandon direct county funding and why are they currently revisiting a potential parcel fee approval? One explanation may lie in the numbers: in 2019, Clallam County enjoyed a \$1.8 million surplus. Today, it projects a deficit of more than \$8.2 million by 2028.

Clallam County
Fund Resources and Uses Arising from Cash Transactions
For the Year Ended December 31, 2019

		Total for All Funds (Memo Only)	001 General	101 Roads	110 OPSCAN Operations
Beginning Cash and Investments					
30810	Reserved	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	-
30880	Unreserved	43,752,610	12,507,161	10,155,906	812,098
388 / 588	Net Adjustments	2,847,130	66,899	117,318	97,288
Revenues					
310	Taxes	36,567,937	20,465,738	7,970,866	682,983
320	Licenses and Permits	1,058,360	1,018,749	37,586	-
330	Intergovernmental Revenues	13,476,038	5,289,309	4,816,560	388,397
340	Charges for Goods and Services	15,512,539	7,460,575	190,487	459,722
350	Fines and Penalties	963,830	956,293	-	7,536
360	Miscellaneous Revenues	4,316,138	2,563,682	642,824	60,396
Total Revenues:		71,894,842	37,754,346	13,658,323	1,599,034
Expenditures					
510	General Government	17,108,222	14,154,621	309,820	-
520	Public Safety	17,955,831	14,499,611	800,000	1,502,985
530	Utilities	674,238	-	-	-
540	Transportation	14,270,228	-	11,965,021	-
550	Natural and Economic Environment	4,451,631	2,371,885	96,362	-
560	Social Services	6,795,064	1,898,743	-	-
570	Culture and Recreation	3,056,106	2,990,389	-	-
Total Expenditures:		64,311,320	35,915,249	13,171,203	1,502,985
Excess (Deficiency) Revenues over Expenditures:		7,583,522	1,839,097	487,120	96,049

3-Year GF Budget Projection

(From 3-year Revenue & Expenditure Projections Presentation on 7/29)

2026 Projection

-3,877,800

2027 Projection

-6,664,462

2028 Projection

-8,217,652

Growth With No Plan:

CCD was given a five-year lifeline by Commissioner Johnson and the other commissioners. Instead of using this time to secure an alternative , non-taxpayer-funded safety net, the district focused on growth. While the county's financial outlook worsened, CCD expanded staff by 42%, growing from three full-time equivalents to 4.25 today.

Now, instead of right-sizing, CCD plans to prolong and INCREASE the burden on taxpayers. If it successfully secures \$200,000 annually from a \$5 parcel fee, the district would net \$75,000 more than its previous \$125,000 deal with the commissioners.

During the hearing, members were asked how the additional money would be used. District Manager Kim Williams suggested increasing water conservation efforts and growing the Firewise programs. Board Chair Christy Cox floated rainwater collection as another area of expansion.

But that isn't the whole story. CCD plans to increase salaries and benefits by 22.7%—funded in-part by **your** parcel fee. As of June 30, 2025, the district reported annual salaries and benefits of \$441,513.63. In 2026, that number is projected to jump to \$541,778.23 — an increase of \$100,264.60.

When asked for clarification, District Manager Williams confirmed by email that the increase reflects cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and expanded staff hours. She also claimed that most of CCD's salaries are funded by grants, but has yet to provide supporting details.

Number of Grants	Income July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025	Amount	Expenses July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025	Amount
1	Inter governmental Grants	14,695.22	Salaries and Benefits	\$441,513.63
1	Federal Grants	\$66,298.79	Professional Services	\$58,168.59
2	RCO Grants	\$195,683.00	Grant Operating Costs	\$46,711.28
3	Dept. of Ecology Grants	\$169,590.00	Cost Share programs (financial assistance)	\$335,203.33
9	State Conservation Commission Grants	\$433,243.43	Grant Partnerships	\$156,314.49
1	Clallam County	\$60,000.00	Soil Tests	\$5,389.89
	Plant sale	\$47,380.70	Plant Sale	\$35,652.57
	Soil test fees	\$3,666.47	Operating Costs	\$31,703.91
17 grants	Total	\$990,557.61	Cultural Resources	\$11,781.14
			Total	\$1,126,302.79

	2026	Projected Income	2026	Projected Expenses
	SCC Grants	\$688,552.00	Salaries and Benefits	\$541,778.23
	DOE Grants	\$136,000.00	Professional	\$40,000.00
	RCO Grants	\$150,000.00	Services	\$10,000.00
	Federal Grants	\$20,000.00	Contracted Services	\$42,000.00
	County Grants	\$10,000.00	Plant Sale	\$508,000.00
	Rates and		General supplies	\$10,000.00
	Charges	\$195,316.00	Elections	\$30,000.00
	Plant Sale	\$ 41,000.00	OH	\$81,000.00
	Soil tests	\$ 3,500.00	Bookkeeping	\$10,000.00
	Other	\$ 9,200.00	Services	
	Revenues		Total	\$1,272,778.23
	Total	\$1,253,568.00		

For now, CCD promises to keep the parcel fee flat at \$5 for ten years. But, under [Washington House Bill 1488](#), that fee could climb to \$25 per parcel with commissioner approval.

CCD's strategy is clear: expand operations, then demand more from taxpayers. Approving today's \$5 fee would surely chart the course toward a \$25 fee and a \$1 million annual slush fund.

HB 1488 Passed by House and Senate, What Happens Next?

What is House Bill 1488?

House Bill 1488 contains language that WACD members have been working toward for two years. It's a simple little bill with significant impact for conservation districts and the communities they serve. HB 1488 allows conservation districts to propose a fee structure on real property sufficient to meet the needs of the communities they serve. That fee structure is adopted, or modified and adopted, by the local county legislative authority.



Passage

On March 3, the Washington State House passed a substitute version of HB 1488. The substitute removed the cap that has existed on rates-and-charges per-parcel fees adopted by the local county legislative authority.

On March 26, the Washington State Senate amended the bill to put a \$25-per-parcel cap on rates-and-charges fees. A mechanism to adjust the cap in response to inflation was added. The adjustment is intended to help rates-and-charges fees keep pace with inflation, i.e., to help communities enjoy a continuous level of service from the conservation district that serves them.

Learn more about HB 1488 at: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/bills/summary/?BillNumber=1488&Year=2025&Initiative=false>

Who Really Benefits?

The Conservation District insists its work provides “public benefits for all.”

PUBLIC BENEFITS **FOR ALL**

Our programs provide,

**Clean Water
Viable Agriculture
Healthy Soil
Drought Mitigation
Habitat Restoration
Reduced Risks from Wildfire**



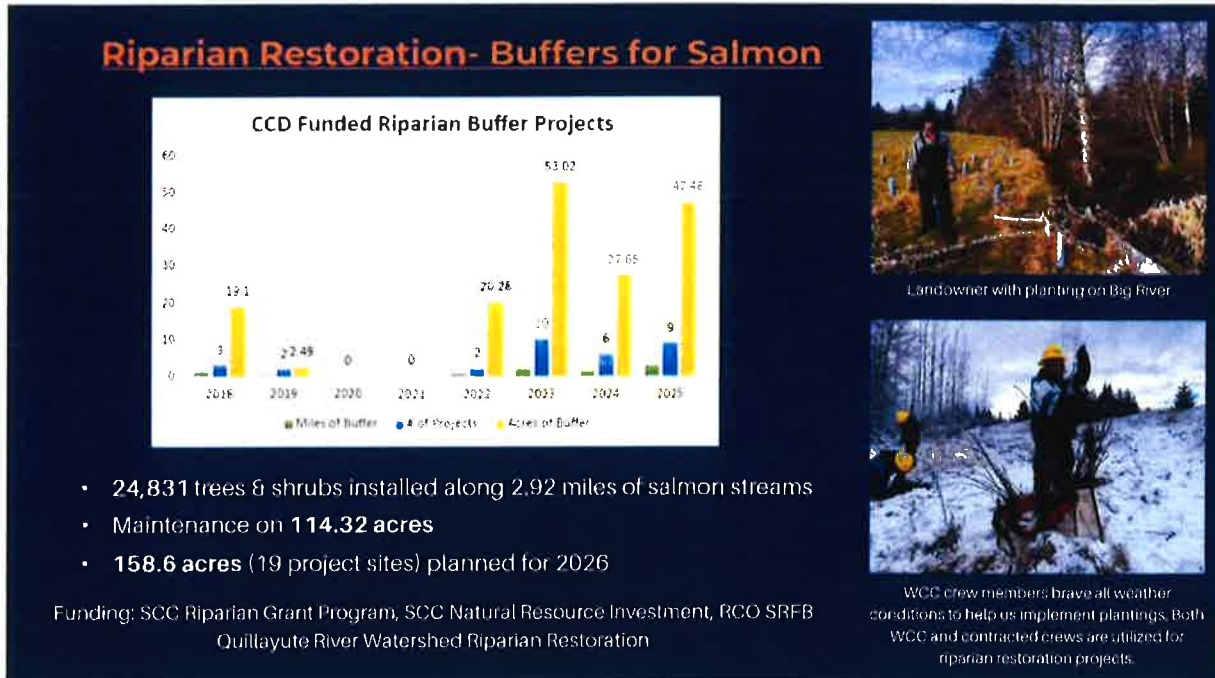
*“The CCD has strong public benefit to the citizens of Clallam County and plays an important role in the
“ecosystem” of working land services.”*
Clea Rome, WSU extension Director

But while CCD highlights services for farmers and water conservation, its funding and staff time appear overwhelmingly geared toward fish, not people.

Examining CCD’s 2024 grant funding confirms its fish-centric philosophy. A conservative calculation demonstrates that at least 87% of grant funding is tied directly to fish or fish habitat efforts.

2024 Revenues: Clallam Conservation District		
Implementation Grant (IM)	\$ 131,624	NOT INCLUDED IN CALCULATION: Unsure of % allocation to Grants below
Fish-related	\$ 918,054	
Shellfish Grant (SH) Rivers Edge	\$ 384	
Irrigation Efficiencies Grant	\$ 69,891	Restore in-stream flows "for the benefit of salmonids listed as endangered"
Natural Resources Investments (CREP)	\$ 55,089	"natural resource priorities – such as salmon recovery, climate resilience, and forest health."
Salmon Recovery Funding (SRF)	\$ 47,588	pays farmer septic cost-share for riparian restoration
Riparian Grant Program	\$ 16,966	
Sustainable Farms and Fields (SFF)	\$ 30,822	
OSS County-wide program	\$ 68,089	
PIC Project Implementation	\$ 189,443	(On-Site Sewage: septic program- CCD salmon-bearing waterway requirements
Salmon Recovery Fund Hermison	\$ 11,636	Help restore shellfish growing areas in the Sequim-Dungeness Clean Water District
FFFPP Gunther	\$ 192,646	
Non-fish or Unsure	\$ 235,500	Fish Passage Projects
Livestock (LT)	\$ 10,111	Unsure
Sustainable Farms and Fields (SFF)	\$ 68,089	Not explicitly, but "Salmon Safe" promotes cover-cropping and manure storage
CCD Share of Engineering Cluster Grant	\$ 7,823	Unsure
Well-metering pilot	\$ 26,487	Potential for future regulation
Horse and Livestock	\$ 21,239	Unsure, but CCD promotes protection of habitat with livestock containment
Total Grant Funding (excluding implementation)	\$ 1,051,804	
Fish-Related	87%	
Non-Fish or Unsure	13%	

Additionally, in her August 8th update to the county commissioners, District Manager Kim Williams emphasized the extensive effort required to restore 2.92 miles of fish habitat in the past year: 24,831 trees and shrubs planted across 19 sites and 158.6 acres, invasive blackberry thickets cleared, and a five-year obligation for buffer maintenance.



Fish passage projects are similarly resource-intensive.

2 Fish Passage Projects completed and funding and designs for 5 more

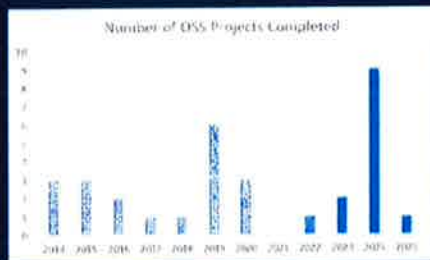
- **Hermison Creek** (trib. to Quillayute R.) - 1 fish passage barrier corrected
- **Trib. to Big River** - 1 fish passage barrier corrected (*see photos*)
- **Trib. to Swanson Creek** (Sol Duc watershed) - Funding for designs secured for replacement of 2 fish passage barriers
- **Trib. to Bogachiel & Dickey Rivers** - Funding secured for removal of 1 fish passage barrier and replacement of 2 fish passage barriers.

Funding through RCO, FFFPP, and partnership with Wild Salmon Center



When it comes to clean water for human consumption, the most compelling service that CCD offers is the “on-site septic cost-share program”.

On-site Septic Cost Share Program



- CCD has replaced 32 failing onsite septic systems since the program began in 2014.
- 5 Systems replaced during this reporting period
- 3 replacements are in progress

To date, \$599,698 of cost share funding has been provided to low-income homeowners to help repair/replace failing onsite septic systems.



Funding: DOE Clallam County On-Site Sewage System Cost Share Program, DOE Enriched PIC in Clallam County's CWD (through Clallam County), SCC Shellfish

But only a handful of septic systems are replaced annually and this too is driven by salmon preservation. Ms. Williams elaborated, “Our [criteria for septic replacement] are very specific

for the resource concern. They have to be close to salmon-bearing waterways or water that goes into a salmon-bearing stream.”

The few homeowners who do qualify for septic assistance are responsible for 25% of the cost. But, this can be covered by the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), another salmon-centric grant.

What is CREP?

CREP is a program that engages farmland owners as partners in restoring salmon habitat. Farmers are compensated for voluntarily planting native vegetation along salmon-bearing streams, rather than crops. Vegetation forms a buffer between agricultural land and salmon streams, keeping water clean and cool for salmon. Riparian buffers are preserved under 10-15 year renewable contracts.

CCD farmer services, touted as “free of charge,” are largely confined to three categories: soil testing, cover-cropping and livestock containment/manure storage.

Climate Smart Practices

Building Healthy Soil

Cover Crop Seed Program

- 15 farms received 20,500 lbs of cover crop seed to plant on 272.82 acres of cropland
- 1 cover crop workshop

Soil Testing

- 171 soil tests total processed for 123 individuals
- Presentations and free soil tests provided to 3 Clallam County schools for their school garden programs

Funding: SCC Implementation, SCC Irrigation Efficiencies, SCC Sustainable Farms & Fields



Cover crop planting on River Run Farm (Noah Brester)



Soil testing on Bent Gate Farm (Anna Swanberg)

Yet, even these efforts closely mirror the “Salmon-Safe” certification promoted by the [Cascadia Conservation District](#), CCD’s counterpart in Chelan County. Listed below are CCD services that promote the requirements placed upon Salmon-Safe certified farms.

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST HAS 900+ **SALMON-SAFE CERTIFIED FARMS**

Farms and vineyards that are Salmon-Safe certified use ecologically sustainable agricultural practices that protect water quality and wildlife habitat. The certification focuses on six primary areas:

CCD Farm Programs:

- Riparian Area Management **(CREP funding to cover farmer's portion of cost-share)**
- Water Use Management **(Irrigation ditches, cover-cropping)**
- Erosion and Sediment Control **(Soil-testing/cover-cropping)**
- Integrated Pest Management and Water Quality Protection **(Soil-testing/cover-cropping)**
- Animal Management **(Manure collection/livestock containment)**
- Biodiversity Conservation **(Native plant sale)**

Qualifying candidates have a farm in the Northwest (from British Columbia to northern California, Oregon, Washington, or Idaho). Farms utilize integrated pest management techniques, biodynamic, GlobalG.A.P., or organic practices, and do not apply chemicals harmful to fish and wildlife. Specialty crops, ranching, commodity crops, and dairy are also eligible. The farmland may be situated on rivers or upland sites where management may impact downstream conditions.

While these services may offer farmers some gains in soil health and crop yields, they also neatly align with CCD's fish-first agenda. And compared to riparian restoration, farmer support appears far less staff-intensive. Last year, CCD handed out 20,500 pounds of cover crop seed—just 410 fifty-pound bags—and farmers conducted the on-site sampling for 171 soil tests themselves. CCD's role was simply to mail the samples and help interpret the results.

Since CCD does not actively promote traditional fertilization techniques, soil testing seems to function as a funnel for its cover-crop program, which supports salmon habitat.

To their credit, the Clallam conservation district coordinates an annual native plant sale that is enjoyed by 375 county residents. The plant sale generated nearly \$12,000 in income for the district last year.

While fish habitat restoration may be a worthy cause, our county doesn't need another tax that prioritizes "wants" over "needs." July budget meetings made one thing clear: Washington State legislative mandates are a significant source of Clallam's budgetary bottlenecks. Compliance with these "wants" undercuts fiscal flexibility and has left our county facing a public safety deficit.

"Stable funding" for the Clallam Conservation District is a "want." Fortunately, it is optional, giving commissioners flexibility to remove it from the county's overburdened budget. Unfortunately, the commissioners have the power to turn this discretionary spending into a long-term taxpayer obligation.

But, who should pay to back-stop this growing grant-fueled team? Since 2019, Clallam taxpayers have already provided CCD with \$730,000 in "stable funding" through the county's general fund. In return, what alternative, sustainable sources of funding—beyond the proposed

parcel fee—has CCD explored during that time? To date, their most ambitious effort seems to be auctioning a 2012 Subaru with a minimum bid of \$8,500 (thanks, Jeff)!



Clallam Conservation District

19h · 🌐

...

Clallam Conservation District is offering for sale a 2012 Subaru Forester through a sealed bid process. No bids were received in the initial timeframe. The deadline has been extended to September 9th. For more details, check out our website:

<https://clallamcd.org/s/Notice-of-Sale-Subaru-1.pdf>

If there are any questions, please call the Clallam Conservation District office at 360-775-3747.

***Clallam Conservation District is
selling a 2012 Subaru Forster!
See details in post.***



I asked CCD officials this question directly at the Fee Hearing. I suggested that farmers, septic owners, and native plant enthusiasts—who are the primary human beneficiaries of CCD services—could be asked to contribute more.

The response? “Do you like drinking water?” “Do you eat? Then you are a recipient of the benefits.” As if clean water and food are unattainable to 70,000+ Clallam County residents without CCD’s salmon-centric efforts.

This non-answer revealed CCD staff’s unwavering belief system: their ideology is irrefutable. If they ask, taxpayers must give.

I was reminded of a lesson with my oldest son, who asked to be paid for basic chores like cleaning his room and washing dishes. I explained that some tasks are part of life. To earn money, he must develop skills that are scarce and valuable. People will pay for services that save or make them money or provide otherwise unattainable benefits.

A local example is trash clean-up and temporary shelter non-profit, [4PA](#), which is also in the business of habitat restoration (human habitat, that is). Residents and businesses have supported 4PA’s efforts because it delivers tangible, innovative solutions to problems that have long eluded government.

In 2024, 4PA raised \$340,000—all private donations, no grants.

CCD raised \$25.

Annual Revenues	Projected 2024	Actual 2024
FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	
Plant Sale and riparian plants	\$40,000.00	\$41,241.64
Soil testing	\$2,000.00	\$2,665.00
Interest	\$1,000.00	\$8,704.05
Donations	\$500.00	\$25.00
General Funds	\$42,550.00	\$52,635.69

Apparently, fish don’t have pocketbooks.

Based on CCD’s [Accomplishments Report](#), the district generated a 2024 SURPLUS of \$169,487, NOT counting a \$125,000 contribution from the county’s general fund. [Projections](#) indicate a similar surplus in 2025.

Annual Revenues	Projected 2024	Actual 2024	Corrections
FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT		
Plant Sale and riparian plants	\$40,000.00	\$41,241.64	
Soil testing	\$2,000.00	\$2,665.00	
Interest	\$1,000.00	\$8,704.05	
Donations	\$500.00	\$25.00	
General Funds	\$42,550.00	\$52,635.69	OK.
Implementation Grant (IM)	\$128,395.00	\$131,624.23	
Shellfish Grant (SH) Rivers Edge	\$29,062.50	\$384.32	
Irrigation Efficiencies Grant (IE)	\$260,000.00	\$69,891.35	
Natural Resources Investments	\$40,000.00	\$55,089.06	
Livestock (LT)	\$10,000.00	\$10,110.69	
(CREP)	\$35,000.00	\$47,588.37	
Salmon Recovery Funding (SRF)	\$41,000.00	\$16,965.72	
Riparian Grant Program		\$30,821.78	
Sustainable Farms and Fields (SFF)	30,000.00	\$68,089.14	
CCD Share of Engineering Cluster Grant (PE)	\$50,000.00	\$7,823.46	
Washington State Conservation Commission total	\$623,457.50	\$407,566.34?	\$438,388.12
Well Metering pilot	\$40,000.00	\$26,487.29	
OSS County wide program	\$148,634.00	\$189,442.71	
Horse and Livestock	\$22,000.00	\$21,238.97	
Total Department of Ecology	\$210,634.00	\$237,168.97	OK.
PIC Project Implementation	\$17,000.00	\$11,635.55	
County General Funds	\$125,000.00	\$125,000.00	
Total Clallam County	\$142,000.00	\$136,635.55	OK.
SRFB Hermison	\$197,550.00	\$192,646.44	
FFFP Gunther	\$235,500.00	\$235,500.00	
Total Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO)	\$268,050.00	\$263,146.44?	\$428,146.44
Federal Bureau of Reclamation	290,00.00	\$3,500.00	OK.
TOTAL REVENUE Projected/Actual	\$ 1,451,691.50	\$1,105,022.73	\$1,296,474.77
Net WITHOUT Clallam General Funds:			\$1,171,474.77
2024 Expenses Per CCD:			\$1,001,987.76
2024 SURPLUS:			\$169,487.01

If CCD finds its budget surplus insufficient, it could reduce staff to 2019 levels or cut rent and utilities by working remotely.

If, instead, maintaining staff and growing payroll and services are priorities, CCD could pursue voluntary public support. After all, if “all of the public” truly benefit, there should be no difficulty matching 4PA’s success in raising contributions. A starting point might be the farmers, 375 native plant sale customers, and 104 volunteers who already engage with the district.

Instead, CCD is asking the commissioners to saddle taxpayers with a \$200,000 annual obligation—and the district seems confident it will get it. Unlike their 2019 predecessors, current management invested in a consultant to craft their “rates and charges” proposal, viewing the BOCC as a “partner” based on past history.



But, the county’s budget is fragile, and public funding is increasingly uncertain. Mandating taxpayer-backed support for discretionary, grant-funded projects sets a dangerous precedent and would deepen Clallam’s fiscal emergency. It is time to prioritize “needs” over “wants.”

It is fitting that a revised draft of the county’s 2026 budget will be presented by CFO Mark Lane at the very same September 2nd, 2025 Commissioner’s Board Meeting as CCD’s parcel fee hearing. With a multi-million-dollar shortfall looming, commissioners have claimed they are searching for expense reductions. They have already flagged discretionary funding to CCD as one of those cuts. But a vote for this parcel fee is not a reduction at all—it is an increase, a direct transfer of cost to the taxpayer, and a refutation of any commissioner claim to fiscal responsibility. If commissioners approve this fee, they aren’t cutting expenses—they’re simply disguising them as a new tax.

Because the commissioners will decide the fate of CCD’s philanthropic demands, they need to hear public opinion. Citizens should convey the expectation that the commissioners vote in partiality toward the desire of the people, leaving personal opinions at the door. It’s time for this oversized fish to swim on its own.

What can you do?

The Board of Clallam County Commissioners will hold a hearing on **Tuesday, September 2, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.** at the courthouse.

1. Please show up in person and share your opinion. Let's pack the courthouse. This is a big deal.

CLALLAM COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

223 East 4th Street, Room 160

Port Angeles, Washington

September 2, 2025 AT 10:30AM

2. Participate and share your opinion via Zoom:

If you would like to participate in the meeting via Zoom audio only, call 253-215-8782 and use

meeting ID: 836 9266 4344 and passcode: 12345 and use *9 to raise your hand.

If you would like to participate in the meeting via Zoom video conference,

Visit: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83692664344>

Meeting ID: 836 9266 4344

Passcode:12345

3. Submit written comments before the hearing to the Clerk of the Board, **Loni Gores**:

- o Email: Loni.Gores@clallamcountywa.gov
- o Mail: 223 East 4th Street, Suite 4, Port Angeles, WA 98362

Gores, Loni

From: Diana H <dianahender@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 10:16 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: CC Conservation District

Dear Commissioners,

As one of your constituents I am here to say the county tax burdens are too high.

I am opposed to any more financial burden being placed on me or my property.

I propose the CC Conservation District sharpen their pencils.

Sincerely,
Diana Henderson
Dungeness East

Gores, Loni

From: m b <mrs.airgood@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 10:20 AM
To: Gores, Loni
Subject: To the bocc

Re Conservation District Tax

Dear BOCC. Just vote no. Maureen McElravy, Clallam CO