

# Funding for Urban and Community Conservation in Washington

NACD Urban and Community Webinar  
October 16, 2014

# I promise this won't be....

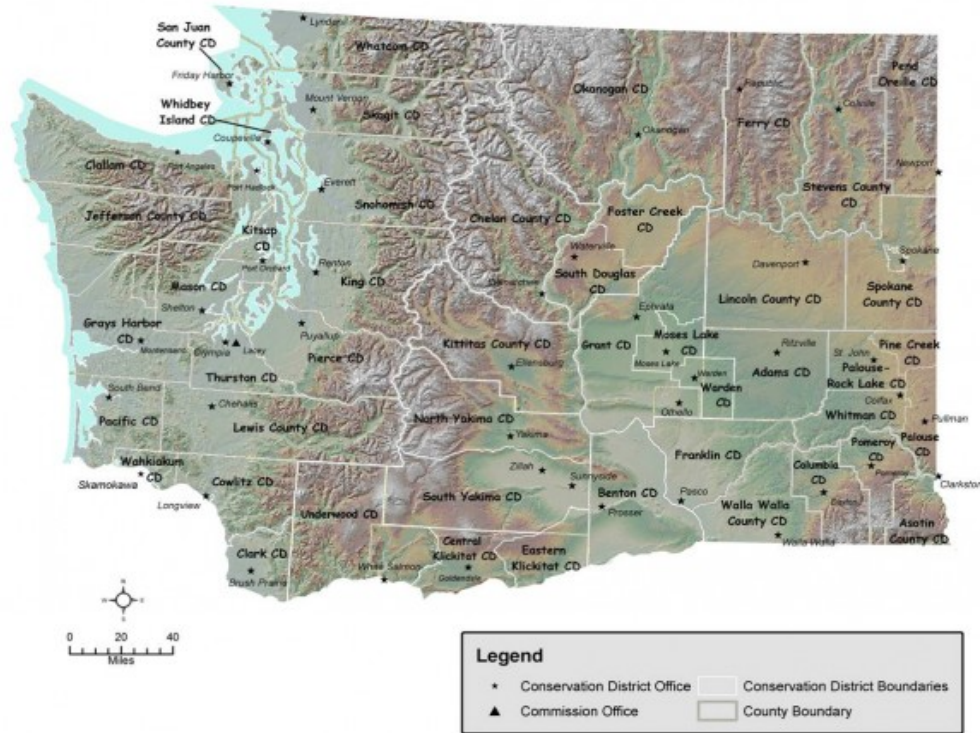
Paraphrasing Steve  
Martin...

*“How can I be a  
millionaire, you ask?  
First, you get a million  
dollars.....”*



# Washington's 45 Conservation Districts Believe...

- Their role is to provide non-regulatory, incentive-based assistance to local citizens
- The role of regulatory agencies is to regulate
- Caveat – lots of gray area. Regulatory agencies will refer citizens to conservation districts to fix potential regulatory issues



# A Conservation district is only as good as its partnerships

- Local Governments
- Tribal Governments
- Watershed Groups
- State and Federal Agencies
- Local Nonprofits
- Neighborhood Groups
- Farmers and local food advocates
- Local Businesses
- ....and on and on...





## Urban & Community Conservation in Washington

Inventory stormwater LID work being done in Puget Sound

Statewide inventory being developed



# LID work in Puget Sound

## Outreach

- Includes events, publications, social media, videos, public meetings, door-to-door surveys, and neighborhood meetings.
- A few districts do not have funding for outreach, or have minimized allocations due to the apparent lack of public support for LID.
- Outreach to real estate agents, developers, municipal agencies, professional engineers and planners, farm landowners, urban residents, and young people.

# LID work in Puget Sound Implementation

- **Cost share. 63% offer cost share** for on-the-ground projects, but only 2 districts have incentives available for homeowners (up to \$1000).
- Several districts have invested more in highly visible public projects – such as at ports and industrial locations, neighborhood cluster projects, and other collaborative green infrastructure projects.
- **90% of districts have built a diverse suite of LID demonstration sites** at schools, neighborhood clusters, green streets, and other public locations.

# LID work in Puget Sound

## Incentives

- Landowner support and buy-in for stormwater projects and retrofits has met with some challenges in certain cases.
- Other projects have met with great response, especially from homeowners that face drainage issues.
- In some cases, money in term of rebates to landowners has not been found successful.
- A few districts are exploring innovative incentives



# LID work in Puget Sound Funding

- **44% receive funding specifically for LID** – through state grants, and local partnerships with counties and cities to assist them in their NPDES requirements and DOE Capacity funds.
- Some districts fit LID activities into other funding, such as State Shellfish Protection funds or Forest Health Management monies, etc.

# LID work in Puget Sound

## Regional Coordination

- The majority of districts are not members in any regional stormwater forums, though they see the need and are interested in being more involved and collaborative and are receiving contacts for service.
- Regional groups that districts have participated in include: PIC grants, NPDES Coordination Meetings, Puget Sound Partnership, watershed-targeted grants, and STORM (a regional municipal storm water outreach coalition).

# LID work in Puget Sound

## The Future

- **Long-term Goals.** It is the long-term goal of all districts to establish or refine their LID program. The majority view it with broad potential, though current operation is more on an opportunistic than strategic level.
- **Steps Forward.** Suggestions include joint projects where districts could share staff, including landscape architects, habitat, and farm planners, regional efforts for targeted audiences like island communities, ability to share outreach and social marketing material and more funding opportunities

# Non Regulatory Sources of U&C Funding in WA

- Local
  - System of Assessments/Rates & Charges
  - Agreements with Cities and Towns
  - Agreements with Counties
- State
  - Conservation Commission Allocations
  - State Agency Grants

# Conservation Commission Funding

- The district plans of work matters
- Every two years we ask districts what their most important unfunded priorities are and submit that to the governor and legislature
- Unless appropriations come to us with provisos, we will ***help*** fund district priorities....
- Range of allocations \$70,000 - \$120,000/year
- Also project funding if prioritized by the district
- Examples – Technical assistance and implementation of practices for small acreage landowners, rain gardens, failing septic systems, urban creeks and streams, energy conservation, etc.



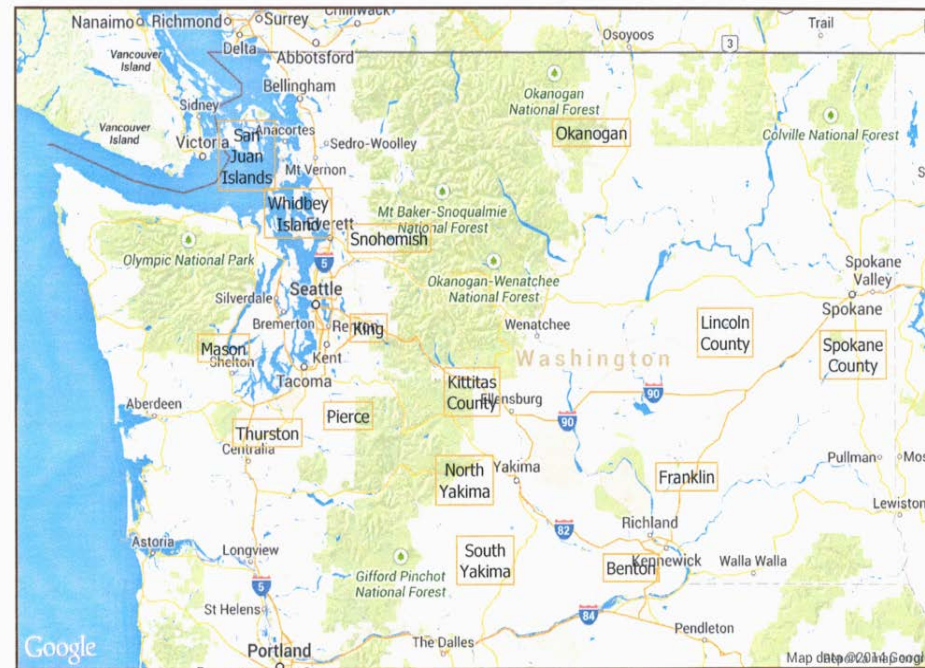
# Systems of Assessments

## Systems of Rates & Charges

- Assessments authorized in 1989
- Rates & Charges authorized in 2012
- Funding meets local priorities
- Districts work with their communities to agree on conservation needs and a program to address them
- District presents program to county legislative authority for approval
- Term of funding is up to 10 years

Google Maps JavaScript API Example

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# Examples of what assessments/rates & charges have paid for.

- Small acreage landowner technical assistance
- Urban agriculture technical assistance
- Green infrastructure technical assistance on
  - Rain Gardens
  - Permeable Surfaces
  - Backyard Conservation
  - Engineered Practices



# Kitsap Conservation District

- County Government wrote the district into the Surface Water Management (SWM) Fee paid by landowners.
- District did so well at that, the county added a Rain Garden Program.
- [See August 2013 U&C Webinar](#)



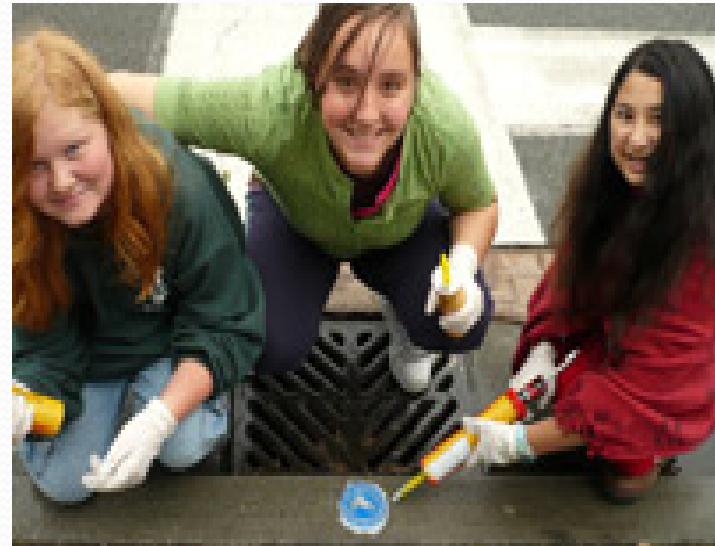
# Pierce Conservation District

- Urban agriculture and community gardens program.
- Massive amount of innovative partnerships
- [See February 2013 NACD U&C Webinar](#)



# Skagit Conservation District

- Through an interlocal agreement, SDC, for years, has taken on the educational requirement for Stormwater Phase II for the city of Mount Vernon





# King Conservation District



- Results of Unprecedented Program Development

# Reviewing....

- Partnerships!
- Partnerships!
- Partnerships!
- Partnerships!
- Partnerships!
- Partnerships!
- Partnerships!
- Partnerships!



Washington State  
Conservation Commission

# Thank You!

