



Office of the Washington State Auditor  
Pat McCarthy

## Accountability Audit Report

# Chuckanut Community Forest Park District

For the period January 1, 2019 through September 21, 2023

*Published September 28, 2023*

Report No. 1033361



Scan to see another great way  
we're helping advance  
#GoodGovernment



**Office of the Washington State Auditor  
Pat McCarthy**

September 28, 2023

Board of Commissioners  
Chuckanut Community Forest Park District  
Bellingham, Washington

**Report on Accountability**

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The Office of the Washington State Auditor takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for District operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

Attached is our independent audit report on the District's compliance with applicable requirements and safeguarding of public resources for the areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor  
Olympia, WA

***Americans with Disabilities***

*In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, we will make this document available in alternative formats. For more information, please contact our Office at (564) 999-0950, TDD Relay at (800) 833-6388, or email our webmaster at [webmaster@sao.wa.gov](mailto:webmaster@sao.wa.gov).*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Audit Results.....	4
Information about the District.....	5
About the State Auditor's Office.....	6

# AUDIT RESULTS

## Results in brief

The District officially dissolved operations as of September 21, 2023. This report marks the last audit of the District.

This report describes the overall results and conclusions for the areas we examined. In those selected areas, District operations complied, in all material respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, and provided adequate controls over the safeguarding of public resources.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity, policy, internal control, or area. As a result, no information is provided on the areas that were not examined.

## About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the Chuckanut Community Forest Park District from January 1, 2019 through September 21, 2023.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

This audit was conducted under the authority of RCW 43.09.260, which requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to examine the financial affairs of all local governments. Our audit involved obtaining evidence about the District's use of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters. The procedures performed were based on our assessment of risks in the areas we examined.

Based on our risk assessment for the years ended September 21, 2023 and December 31 2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. We examined the following areas during this audit period:

- Dissolution of the district
- Accounts payable – general disbursements, reimbursements, petty cash, and payroll
- Open public meetings – compliance with minutes, meetings and executive session requirements
- Financial condition – reviewing for indications of financial distress

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISTRICT

The Chuckanut Community Forest Park District was a voter approved Metropolitan Park District created in 2013 by a public vote, concerning city-owned property of approximately eighty-two acres located on the south side of the City of Bellingham.

The District consisted of an elected, five-member Board of Commissioners and one employee. The District was primarily funded through property taxes and its purpose was to ensure the property is protected in public ownership in perpetuity, with respect for its ecological, recreational and education functions and to serve as a fiscal mechanism through which the District, via a tax levy, to repay the City of Bellingham for the Greenways Endowment Fund loan.

On September 21, 2023 the District dissolved per the creating interlocal agreement as the final loan payment had been made completing the purpose of the District.

### Contact information related to this report

Address:	Chuckanut Community Forest Park District P.O. Box 4283 Bellingham, WA 98227
Contact:	Andrew Asjbornsen, City of Bellingham Finance Director
Telephone:	(360) 778-8020
Website:	<a href="http://www.chuckanutcommunityforest.com">www.chuckanutcommunityforest.com</a>

*Information current as of report publish date.*

### Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for the Chuckanut Community Forest Park District at <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

## ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the Washington State Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the people of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with state agencies, local governments and the public to achieve our vision of increasing trust in government by helping governments work better and deliver higher value.

In fulfilling our mission to provide citizens with independent and transparent examinations of how state and local governments use public funds, we hold ourselves to those same standards by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency, and by developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits, attestation engagements and investigations. Our work is designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state and local laws. The Office also has an extensive quality control program and undergoes regular external peer review to ensure our work meets the highest possible standards of accuracy, objectivity and clarity.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with federal, state and local laws for all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits and cybersecurity audits of state agencies and local governments, as well as state whistleblower, fraud and citizen hotline investigations.

The results of our work are available to everyone through the more than 2,000 reports we publish each year on our website, [www.sao.wa.gov](http://www.sao.wa.gov). Additionally, we share regular news and other information via an email subscription service and social media channels.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously. The Office provides training and technical assistance to governments both directly and through partnerships with other governmental support organizations.

### Stay connected at [sao.wa.gov](http://sao.wa.gov)

- [Find your audit team](#)
- [Request public records](#)
- Search BARS Manuals ([GAAP](#) and [cash](#)), and find [reporting templates](#)
- Learn about our [training workshops](#) and [on-demand videos](#)
- Discover [which governments serve you](#) — enter an address on our map
- Explore public financial data with the [Financial Intelligence Tool](#)

### Other ways to stay in touch

- Main telephone:  
(564) 999-0950
- Toll-free Citizen Hotline:  
(866) 902-3900
- Email:  
[webmaster@sao.wa.gov](mailto:webmaster@sao.wa.gov)