

NACD: Working for Pennsylvania

Jeremy Peters, NACD CEO

PACD Annual Meeting

July 28, 2016



NACD is the nonprofit organization that represents America's 3,000 conservation districts and the 17,000 men and women who serve on their governing boards.

NACD's mission is to serve conservation districts by providing national leadership and a unified voice for natural resource conservation.



National Projects and Initiatives



National Conservation Planning Partnership

- Three overarching objectives for this initiative are:
 - Reinvigorate conservation planning
 - Improve capacity of conservation partnership to deliver conservation planning assistance
 - Ensure Science-based Assistance
- Led by representatives of NRCS, NASCA, NCDEA, NARC&D, and NACD



Conservation Bootcamp

- Direct outcome of NCPP
- Opportunity for 60 conservation district employees to attend bootcamp in Lincoln, NE alongside NRCS employees.
- To date, 36 district employees have participated in bootcamp with 24 yet to attend this year.
- NACD anticipates future year opportunities for district employees to attend conservation bootcamp.



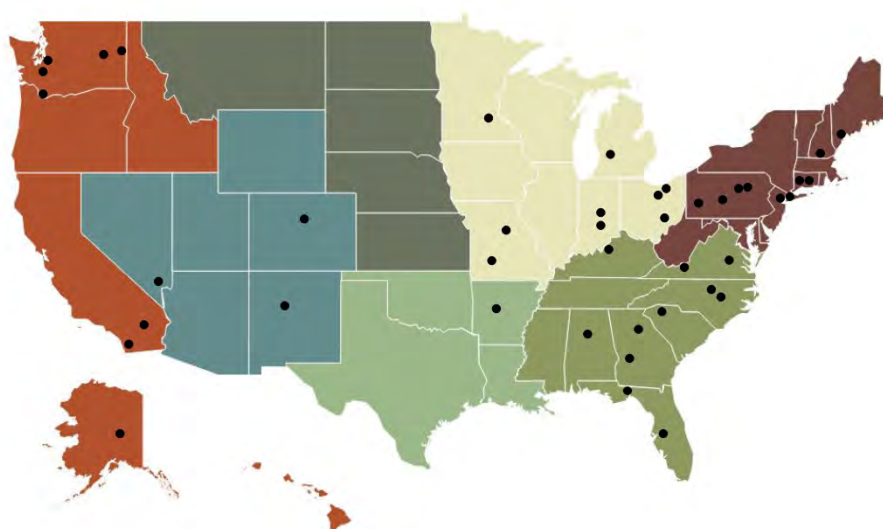
Urban Agriculture Conservation Initiative



- Competitive RFP Issued May 12
- Provided 42 grants to conservation districts to build technical capacity support in community agricultural conservation initiatives
- Maximum \$50,000 grant award
- Congratulations to Allegheny, Blair, Lycoming and Montgomery County Conservation Districts



Urban Agriculture Conservation Initiative



Water Quality Trading



- National Network for WQT charter member
- Raising awareness of SWCD opportunities/best practices for WQT
- Ohio River Basin Interstate WQT Program (IN, KY, OH)
- Opportunities to strengthen SWCD involvement in point (industry, municipalities) to non-point (agriculture) trading



Regulatory Pressure

- Numerous states exploring the concept of regulatory certainty
- Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program
- Certified producers receive regulatory certainty, recognition, priority for technical assistance
- Resource Stewardship Evaluation Tool (NRCS)
 - strengthens and modernizes conservation planning



Source Water Collaborative

- Twenty-six national organizations comprised of federal, state and local partners
- Originally formed in 2006 with the goal to combine the strengths of member organizations to protect drinking water sources
- NACD has SWC contacts in each state



Advocacy



SMCRA Funding

Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act reauthorized in 2006.

- Fees to Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund secure through 2022
- Reclamation fees are scheduled to end in 2022
- Future of Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund beyond 2022 uncertain



2017 Appropriations

NACD requested the following funding levels for priority conservation programs in FY 2017:

- \$860.374 million for Conservation Operations
- \$400 million for Watershed Operations
- \$100 million for Watershed Rehabilitation Program
- \$237 million for State and Private Forestry programs
- \$164.9 million for Section 319 Nonpoint Source grants



2018 Farm Bill

- Reauthorization process will begin with 115th Congress early 2017
- NACD Farm Bill Task Force guiding process
- Survey out to membership in May 2016
 - Closes July 31
 - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QW629Y9>
 - Link is available from your NACD board member or state contact



2018 Farm Bill

- NACD already engaged
 - President Lee McDaniel testified in May before Chairman Glenn Thompson and the conservation subcommittee on voluntary solutions to regulatory pressure
- Challenges in next bill
 - Funding
 - Voluntary approach to conservation being challenged
- How will NACD and PA's conservation districts respond?
 - Power of grassroots
 - Local knowledge and expertise



Going Forward

- Many opportunities for NACD and Pennsylvania's conservation districts to collaborate and deliver effective conservation
- Unique challenges, but districts can offer solutions
- If not, what are the alternatives?
- What do you want to do?



Thank You

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