



## National Association of Conservation Districts

November 8, 2011

Dear Senator Barrasso and Senator Heller:

We support your Clean Water Act (CWA) Amendment to H.R. 2354, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill for Fiscal year 2012. NACD is a strong supporter of the CWA and believes in the importance of enhancing and protecting the integrity of our nation's waters. Efforts to limit the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as consistent with the CWA and its subsequent jurisprudence, especially in light of *Rapanos v. United States* (2006) are within the best interests of our conservation districts.

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) represents 3,000 local conservation districts across the country and on the Pacific Islands. These districts are local units of government established under state law to carry out natural resource management programs at the local level. Seventeen-thousand officials committed to conservation serve on their governing boards. Conservation districts work with private landowners and local communities to carry out conservation programs, including some CWA programs administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Conservation districts across the country work to improve and protect this priceless resource through several CWA authorities, including Section 319 nonpoint source grants, stormwater permits and source water/drinking water protection.

As conservationists, we fully support the common goal of achieving cleaner, healthier watersheds across the nation. Districts work closely with state and local governments, agricultural producers, forest landowners, homeowners, and developers to address local water resource concerns and protect our streams, rivers, and lakes. The best way to achieve clean water is through locally-led conservation efforts, rather than a one-size-fits-all, top-down federal regulatory approach. States, local governments and private landowners play a critical leadership role in water management.

As a nation we need to be fully committed to providing the necessary tools and assistance to landowners and local communities to achieve clean water goals. This investment—along with appropriate conservation incentives—will provide for the implementation of conservation strategies and make the necessary changes to the landscape to accomplish these vital goals. We look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve the important public benefits of clean water and healthy watersheds across the nation.

Sincerely,

Gene Schmidt  
NACD President

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