



National Association of Conservation Districts

March 16, 2010

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Interior and Environment
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior and Environment
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman and Ranking Member:

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 and have 17,000 producers and others interested in promoting conservation serving on their governing boards. Conservation districts work with private landowners to carry out conservation programs, including the 319 Nonpoint Source Grants Program, authorized by the Clean Water Act and administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This program helps to provide the necessary technical and financial assistance to landowners and land managers for continued water quality improvement.

We respectfully request **\$227.715 million** in funding for 319 Nonpoint Source Grants in the Fiscal Year 2011 Interior Appropriations Bill, which is \$26.858 million above the President's request. This increase in funding is justified by the continuing need to address nonpoint source pollution, ensuring that local communities continue to realize the benefits of clean water. The increase in funding will also help leverage cost-share funding at the state and local level, providing added benefit for the federal dollars spent.

The 319 Nonpoint Source Program addresses water pollution from diffuse sources that affect water quality and can include nutrient runoff from agriculture, faulty septic systems from residential properties, or stormwater runoff such as oil, toxic chemicals, and sediment. Under this program, EPA awards funding to states that are then used by the state and local governments to address nonpoint source pollution problems. The 319 program is critically important to conservation districts to address water quality at the local level through a variety of projects including streambank stabilization, stormwater management, and low-impact development. The program also provides flexibility to address resources concerns that are outside the scope of many traditional United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) conservation programs.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you as we continue to provide the benefits of natural resource conservation across the country.

Sincerely,

Steve Robinson
NACD President

National Headquarters
509 Capitol Court, NE, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: (202) 547-6223 Fax: (202) 547-6450
www.nacdnet.org