



National Association of Conservation Districts

March 17, 2017

Senator Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Senator Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman and Ranking Member:

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) represents America's 3,000 conservation districts and the 17,000 men and women who serve on their governing boards. Conservation districts are local units of government established under state law to carry out natural resource management programs at the local level. Districts work with millions of cooperating landowners and operators to help them manage and protect land and water resources on all private lands and many public lands in the United States.

Recent events across the country have shown the importance and continued benefit of proper management of our water and forest resources. **For Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, NACD respectfully requests an appropriation of \$184.9 million for Environmental Protection Agency's 319 Nonpoint Source Grants. We also request maintaining level funding for the Forest Service's State and Private Forestry program at \$237 million in the FY18 Interior appropriations bill.**

The 319 Nonpoint Source Grants are critically important to stream bank stabilization, stormwater management, low-impact development, and other projects led by conservation districts to address water quality at the local level. Working lands are under increased pressure to produce food, feed, fuel, and fiber for the world's growing population. Because of this reality, it is more important than ever that we dedicate the resources necessary to ensuring local communities continue to have access to and realize the benefits of clean water.

State and Private Forestry is one of the few U.S. Forest Service (USFS) programs that provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners. For this reason, State and Private Forestry programs should be staffed and funded at levels that allow for strong public-private partnerships and ensure greater forest management and economic opportunity on private, non-industrial forest lands.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. We look forward to working with you as we continue to serve the nation through natural resource conservation.

Sincerely,

Brent Van Dyke
NACD President