



National Association of Conservation Districts

February 24, 2015

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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.

NACD respectfully requests approval of the President's 2016 budget of \$164.9 million in funding for Environmental Protection Agency's 319 Nonpoint Source Grants. We also request re-approving the FY 2015 level of funding for the Forest Service's State and Private Forestry at \$237 million in the FY 2016 Interior Appropriations bill.

The 319 Nonpoint Source Grants are critically important to stream bank stabilization, storm water management, low-impact development and other projects 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 (S&PF) is one of the few U.S. Forest Service programs providing technical and financial assistance to private landowners, making this funding critical to ensure this partnership continues to benefit our nation's landowners and forestlands. S&PF programs should be staffed and funded at a level that ensures strengthened partnerships, better stewardship, and increased flow of goods and services from private non-industrial forest lands. Successful conservation requires a strong public, private partnership; efforts begin at the local level with technical assistance and funding from federal, state and local governments and the private sector.

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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Lee D. McDaniel'.

Lee D. McDaniel
NACD President