



December 4, 2017

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

Thank you for taking time last week to meet with us, the four Presidents of the non-federal partners of the Conservation Delivery Partnership. As you referenced, continued dialogue and communication will only help the partnership and like you, we hope this will continue. We appreciated having the opportunity to hear directly from yourself the direction you are expecting USDA's reorganization to go and for your willingness to hear feedback on our concerns.

Specifically, it was good to hear your expectations that NRCS's core mission will not change and that you believe that conservation delivery will continue to rely on the partnership in order to get the work of conservation delivery accomplished. As we relayed to you, each of the four non-federal partners provides a unique aspect to conservation delivery and together we can do more to protect our nation's natural resources that we could ever do alone.

Because the local level of the federal, state and local delivery system is where our nation's farmers, ranchers and private forest owners interact with the partnership, it is critical that these local offices operate in a manner that allows for prompt customer service and effective conservation delivery. That is why it was also welcoming to hear your goal that, from the ground level, the partnership, as well as the customers we serve, shouldn't see any changes to the way things operate.

We certainly want to work with you and your staff to ensure that your goals and expectations are realized when the final reorganization product is rolled out and we appreciate the offer to continue communicating with you if we begin to see that this is not taking place. As we told you

in person as well as through our two public comments submissions, we agree with your desire to increase efficiencies and reduce redundancies but are equally focused on ensuring that the reorganization is ultimately effective.

We will be sure to continue communicating with you the concerns we have thus far in the process in addition to any future concerns we may have as further details are announced of exactly how the new Farm Production and Conservation Business Center will operate. We would also once again invite you to join us in Nashville on Tuesday, January 30 so that additional engagement can occur with USDA's non-federal partners and others within the conservation stakeholder community. Thank you again for your time and to your commitment to agriculture and natural resources conservation.

Sincerely,



Brent Van Dyke, President
National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)



Tim Riley, President
National Conservation Districts Employees Association (NCDEA)



Marc Cribb, President
National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA)



William Hodge, President
National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils (NARC&DC)