



NACD has secured a second-round cooperative agreement of \$10 million with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to assist with high priority customer workloads and further build and enhance conservation district technical assistance across the nation.

Funds will be awarded directly to conservation districts to hire staff where additional capacity is needed to improve customer service and reduce workload pressure.

This agreement includes:

- \$9 million for Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) implementation assistance
- \$1 million for NACD to administer and manage the project (over a four-year period)
- A 20 percent match will be required for each agreement. Match is preferably cash, but in-kind or a combination will be considered. Contracts will cover funding for a 1-3-year period.
- Overall, NACD's agreement with NRCS requires a 25 percent match. However, for each NACD-district agreement, NACD is fulfilling the first 5 percent.

NACD will ask state/territory and tribal conservation partnership leaders to identify high-priority locations for the use of these funds. Funding will be awarded after proposals are received and evaluated by a partnership panel, with attention to parity across the country.

For **tribal conservation district applications**, state/territory partnership leaders must inform tribal leaders of this opportunity and send submissions directly to **NACD Director of Projects and Partnerships Rich Duesterhaus** at rich-duesterhaus@nacdnet.org.

NACD's goal is to get the \$9 million in the hands of conservation districts by the end of March 2019 so they can hire employees to help carry out the objectives of this agreement. NACD anticipates that the \$9 million will hire about 180 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE's). Some employees will likely be part-time and/or multi-district.

Initial Implementation Steps: Additional timeline items to be added

- Aug. 2018: Notify NACD Board of Directors
- Sept. 11 and 27, 2018: Brief all NACD staff via teleconferences
- Secure final concurrence on plan of work, timeline and reporting metrics
- Jan. 3, 2019: Distribute announcement, briefing materials and project FAQs to all state/territory partners
- Jan. 9-15, 2019: Hold national teleconference with NACD Board/Staff, State/Territory Partners
- Jan. – Mar. 2019: State/Territory partnerships begin determining workload priorities and conservation district participants, schedule regional teleconferences
- Feb. 2019: Brief/update state conservationists at NACD Annual Meeting
- Mar. 1, 2019: Application deadline
- Mar. 1 -31, 2019: Evaluation period
- Mar. 31, 2019: Goal date to have all funds (\$9m) approved to conservation districts/grantees and engaged in hiring