



National Association of
Conservation Districts

Northern Plains Region Board Meeting

Sunday, August 4, 2019; 3:30 PM Mountain Time
Library Room, Drury Plaza: Summer Conservation Forum and Tour

MEETING NOTES

Welcome and Introductions: *Orval Gigstad, Northern Plains Chair.* The meeting was called to order by Chair Gigstad at 3:33 PM.

Roll Call: States Present: Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota. States Absent: Montana

Review of Minutes from 6.13.19 Meeting: Approved without objections.

NACD Updates

Bevin Law, NACD Executive Board Member for Northern Plains:

The NACD Board meeting was on Friday, August 1st. They discussed listening sessions, the 2020 Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, the annual budget, and strategic plan. Grants and agreements remain important in the budget- as well as membership from districts. Grants are doing well and the memberships remain very important. Peter Green (event planning contractor) was on recent call to discuss the 2021 meeting in New Orleans and gave some advice on booking and securing contracts. Other locations for other meetings were discussed. The annual meeting will typically be completed in southern states due to weather. There was discussion on making sure NRCS is able to attend national meetings (resort locations can be an issue, but not to the degree that it previously was). Cost for attending and planning will always be a consideration for all attendees (thus Hawaii is challenging). Vendor attendance can be affected somewhat by the location.

Tim Palmer, NACD President: *The anticipated meeting attendance of 750-1000 people allows for a good selection of options. Best turn out has been San Antonio.*

Tim led a discussion about getting the information out to districts about the work of NACD. The communications seem to be part of the problem with the message not getting to all those who should receive it. There was discussion on the legacy accomplishments that have been completed along the way and other work like the updated MOU / cooperative agreement. There was also discussion on how NRCS is positioned to describe the benefits of both the State associations and NACD, and how the work that happens at the federal level comes back to the local landowners. Area meetings were discussed as a place where messaging is important and other ways to improve communications with district staff and supervisors.

Sunni Heikes-Knaption, NACD Northern Plains Region Representative

Northern Plains Investment Report: Districts support for the work of NACD is crucial. In our region, 249 of 314 districts paid dues (80%) compared to 1872 of 2939 nationally (64%). State status: KS: 84% MT: 70% ND: 96% NE: 100% SD: 60%



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NACD Awards: A flyer was provided with information about the NACD Friend of Conservation and Distinguished Service awards, which are now open for nominations. The deadline for nominations is August 31, 2019.

Listening Session Summary: The results of the listening session were provided to meeting attendees and the approaches for the national outcomes were discussed.

Summer meeting 2020: Discussion on Bismarck planning. The local flavor is important- make it the best for you and others will like it. The business meetings are well scheduled, and the fun is letting people get out to explore the area. There was a discussion on the Northern Plains region meeting in Kansas in 2021.

Committee Updates

Communications (NE) The work of this committee continues to expand as the value of communication is consistently emphasized.

District Operations/Member Services (MT) Kim LaFleur gave the update at the meeting this morning for the plan to develop a grant program and adding levels to recognition for the District Official Training Program.

Legislative (SD) committee (Bylaws): Update from the Wisconsin proposal to update the bylaws to allow an employee to serve with NACD. Fran has talked with all states to get input about the topic. There was discussion on the structure in Wisconsin. They are considering a waiver of some kind. Once the committee makes their recommendation, the full board will need to vote on it. There was discussion on official/employee status and role, and the potential future of the structure. Fran is open to additional input.

Natural Resource Policy (ND) Reclaim Act: A bill to release funds for economic development. The request was made to support the bill, but doesn't seem to have a direct tie with land reclamation projects. The topic will be discussed further.

Stewardship and Education Committee (KS) Working on youth in education, conservation education hub, stewardship week themes (deciding whether to update or rebuild), potential for outreach for invasive species.

Partner Reports

NRCS: Salvador Salinas, Acting Central Region Conservationist: Discussion on the last two months to get fiscal year allocations done and the CSP grassland initiative requests that were submitted. After those funds are dedicated the balance will be shifted over to general CSP funding. Recent disasters have gotten support from EQIP, especially in Northern Plains. Other areas also dealing with hurricane and fire impacts. Unspent funds are being reallocated.



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NRCS is operating under 2014 farm bill rules, and they expire Sept 30. They hope for new rules but may get an extension on the current rules. The updates from NCPP from this morning were provided. NRCS will be holding a training scheduled the last week in August in Oklahoma on NRCS implementation, partnerships, TA, new programs and tools. The intent is for attendees to be at the state level and then to bring that down to field office level.

CD employees can still attend the conservation boot camp in Lincoln. Boot camp completion should be sufficient for level 1 planner certification; additional discussions are underway. There was a discussion on the concerns that have been voiced about the distance to attend the national boot camp. States have an option to create their own, but it needs to be approved for consistency. This is still in planning stages.

NASCA: Kent Zimmerman: *The NASCA Annual meeting will be in Lexington KY Sept 30 -Oct 2, a cooperative effort of NASCA and National Watershed Coalition. Go to nascanet.org for registration and agenda.*

National CD Employee Association: Rhonda Kelsch: *Discussion on getting the NCPP communications down to the local level. The upcoming Sioux falls leadership conference is scheduled for August 13-14, there is a broad range of states that have signed up. There was discussion on having leadership training as part of cooperative agreements.*

Missouri River Team Update: Dick Iverson from MT is interested in replacing Bruce Biermann, Jack Majere's alternate, this year and stepping up to be the replacement next year when the Conservation District seat is up for reappointment. Jack talked with Bruce and he wants to step down because he is no longer on his local CD board in MO. There is still a need to find someone that would agree to be Dick's alternate when he fills Jack's seat on MRRIC. No news from the Niobrara NRDs; they are still dealing with higher flows from the excessive rain.

President, Vice President Status for each state: States will update Sunni if anything changes.

Upcoming Meetings

2020 Annual Meeting – Feb 8-12, Las Vegas, NV

5:19 PM adjournment *Kansas moved and seconded. Adjourn*