

2018 Summer Meeting Northeast Region Notes

Sunday, August 5, 2018

Northeast Region Board Meeting

NACD Board Members in Attendance: Linda Brownson (NH), Joe Gumm (WV), Rick Hopkins (VT), Kim LaFleur (NACD Secretary-Treasurer), Joe Lomax (NJ), Frank Richardson (MD), Denise Savageau (CT), Cal Steuart (Executive Board), Dick Went (RI)

Agenda:

- Welcome and Call to Order
- NACD Updates
 - NACD Northeast Executive Board Update – Cal Steuart
 - NACD Officer Update – Kim LaFleur
- Committee Reports
 - Communications Committee – NY, RI, WV
 - District Operations and Member Services – DE, ME
 - Legislative Committee – CT, PA
 - Natural Resources Policy Committee (including any RPG news to note) – NH, NJ
 - Stewardship and Education – MD, MA, VT
- Resolutions Process Overview
- Partner Reports – NRCS, NECDEA, NASCA, NARC&DC
- Upcoming Meetings
 - 2019 Annual Meeting - Feb 2-6, San Antonio, TX
 - 2018 Summer Meeting - Aug 3-7, Santa Fe, NM
- Other Business
- Adjourn

Notes:

NACD Northeast Executive Board Update - Cal Steuart:

- The Executive Board has spent a lot of time focusing on the bylaw amendment changing the resolutions hearing process. This amendment failed in the full Board meeting. The Executive Board was very concerned that some members do not have a role in looking at resolutions, but are asked to vote on them.
 - Board members understood that there was an issue with the current process, but suggested that a more comprehensive look at the committee structure and the bylaws would yield a better outcome.
 - Board members were also concerned that the final vote on the amendment happened before they had a chance to discuss it in the region meeting.
- In the context of the NACD Budget, most of the Executive Board's focus has been on membership income. We are looking to increase membership and we are currently up \$3,000 year-to-date.

NACD Officer Update - Kim LaFleur:

- NACD is trying several new approaches to retain and increase membership:
 - At the meeting, Board members signed thank you notes to individual districts in their state that have paid their dues.

- There is money in the FY19 budget for listening sessions that will get staff and leadership out into the field to talk with members.
- NACD is putting together talking points for Board members to use when thanking districts for their support and asking for support.
- NACD is working on securing another round of Urban Agriculture grants and Technical Assistance grants for FY19.

Committee Reports:

- Communications
 - They have been focused on public relations and marketing. NACD has an app now and will be working to make the website easier to update. Staff has a really good handle on who is watching our organization, where people are not watching us, and how to get more people watching us.
 - There is going to be a roundtable discussion in San Antonio on what the committee can be doing.
- District Operations and Member Services
 - They have been focused on membership incentives and how these incentives can change behavior.
- Legislative
 - The committee spent time talking about communications and grassroots engagement. When NACD sends out an alert, it mostly goes to the Board, but maybe not the state association executive directors. There needs to be more thought about the way we are reaching out.
 - FY19 Appropriations has passed out the Senate.
 - There are three main issues NACD is tracking in the Farm Bill:
 - The RCPP grant program and the distribution of RCPP dollars amongst the funding pools,
 - The proposed EQIP and CSP merger, and
 - Overall funding for the conservation title.
- Natural Resources Policy Committee
 - There is a push right now to update the Endangered Species Act (ESA). While the committee supports the ESA, they believe it needs amendment to ask for more state and local input; streamline the consultation process; allow individuals to petition for species delisting; and force individual listing applications to stand on their own accord.
 - RPG Updates:
 - Invasives - The RPG is looking at ways to support districts working on this issue. In the Northeast, the spotted lanternfly is a real issue.
 - Public Lands - The RPG has been supporting a push to manage existing public lands, rather than acquire new public land through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
 - Forestry - The RPG is developing a national forestry network with a contact from each state. In the Northeast, they still need a contact for CT, DE, ME, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VT, and WV. They anticipate that this group will have 2-3 conference calls per year.
 - Coastal - The RPG is looking at the strategies that the Urban and Forestry RPGs have used to be so effective.
- Stewardship and Education
 - Since NACD stopped producing print materials, the committee has been working to shift its focus to become an educational committee. NACD is now working on developing curriculum.

Resolutions Process Overview:

- At the capacity building meeting we learned that there is some confusion about NACD's resolutions process. NACD has a new PowerPoint overview of the process that Eric will distribute.

Partner Reports:

- NRCS - Terrell Ericson
 - NRCS invests \$8 million per day in conservation. In FY17, NRCS spent:
 - EQIP - \$1.3 billion on 12 million acres
 - CSP - \$168 million on 16 million acres
 - ACEP-ALE - \$291 million on 207,000 acres
 - Undersecretary Northey will be rolling out NRCS's new three-year strategy for the Chesapeake Bay during his address tomorrow.
 - Secretary Perdue is focused on customer service. He wants farmers to be able to spend time farming, not on paperwork. NRCS is in the process of realigning into the FPAC Mission Area. The first phase of the FPAC Business Center will be rolled out on Oct 14th.
- NASCA - Mike Brown
 - NASCA is a little weak in the Northeast, though they have made some progress in NJ and RI. State agencies tend to not have a lot of capacity in the Northeast. NASCA is doing what they can to address this. Districts have the ability to move the needle on this.
- NCDEA
 - No Report
- NARC&DC
 - No Report

Upcoming Meetings:

- 2019 Annual Meeting - Feb 2-6, San Antonio, TX
- 2018 Summer Meeting - Aug 3-7, Santa Fe, NM

Northeast Region Partnership Roundtable

Attendees: Mike Brown (NASCA), Linda Brownson (NH), Patricia Brunner (WV), Denise Coleman (NRCS), Terrell Ericson (NRCS), Joe Gumm (WV), Rick Hopkins (VT), Edsel Lafferty (WV), Joe Lomax (NJ), Lee McDaniel (NACD Past President), Tim Reilly (NCDEA), Frank Richardson (MD), Denise Savageau (CT), Cal Steuart (NACD Executive Board), Dick Went (RI)

Agenda:

- Welcome and Call to Order
- NRCS of the Future Discussion
- Capacity Building Pilot Project Roundtable Discussion
- Other Business
- Adjourn

Notes:

NRCS of the Future:

- NRCS is reviewing and reimagining their processes and policies to improve customer service. This effort grew out of a concern that if NRCS did not undertake this work, something similar would be forced on them. They are focused on five areas:
 - Improving Programs and Services
 - Redefining out Roles and Responsibilities
 - Structuring Teams for Success
 - Bringing Technical Assistance into the Future
 - Harnessing the Power of Partnership
- NRCS has 56 different teams working on these focus areas. Some of these are just internal to NRCS and for some they will be looking to engage with partners. These teams include:
 - Streamlining Farm Bill programs, including EQIP and CSP;
 - Making special programs, like the snow surveys, plant materials centers, Emergency Watershed Protection Program, etc, more efficient;
 - Exploring the creation of a partnership office; and
 - Improving Conservation Technical Assistance.
- As a part of this effort, NRCS has been conducting a time study and workload analysis. This will help NRCS understand how much time it takes to complete individual activities, which can then be ladder up to a staffing plan. In a few offices, NRCS will be asking partners to conduct this study on their activities as well.
- NRCS's mission is voluntary conservation on private lands. This includes urban land, agriculture, and forestry. NRCS has a broader audience than FSA. NACD members would like to continue to elevate this part of NRCS's mission.
- NACD members were very interested in what they can do to help with this effort and continue to demonstrate the value of NRCS staff and operations.

Capacity Building Pilot Project Roundtable Discussion:

- This discussion will continue at a later time.