



National Association of Conservation Districts

October 29, 2020

Acting Chief Kevin Norton
Natural Resources Conservation Service
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250

Acting Chief Norton,

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) represents America's nearly 3,000 conservation districts and the more than 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. Conservation districts work with millions of cooperating landowners and operators to help them manage and protect land and water resources on private and public lands in the United States.

During consideration of the 2018 Farm Bill, NACD was pleased to see Congress address the feral swine problems affecting large swaths of the United States. Conservation districts within these areas have already been working with landowners to address the natural resource problems caused by this species, and the \$75 million provided to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a much-needed investment toward these efforts. This investment is even more important due to growing concerns about the potential for cross contamination of African Swine fever between wild and domestic pig populations.

As NRCS moves into Round 2 of the Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program (FSCP), we encourage the agency to consider the strong local relationships and historical successes of the conservation delivery system between NRCS, state conservation agencies and local conservation districts. Conservation districts have already shown to be successful partners through Round 1 of FSCP by being the local link between landowners and the assistance provided through the program.

NACD encourages NRCS to continue supporting applications that provide direct assistance through local conservation districts, their state association or the state conservation agency. These longstanding partners of NRCS offer the best opportunity to leverage this existing delivery partnership and ensure landowners are aware of the opportunities provided through FSCP.

NACD thanks you for your consideration and for your continued support of conservation districts throughout the country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Palmer".

Tim Palmer
President
National Association of Conservation Districts