



## The effective management and conservation of public and private forestland is essential to the health and sustainability of ecosystems across our country.

The U.S. contains hundreds of millions of acres of public forests, but more than half of forestland in our country is privately owned and managed. It is critical that private land managers are provided with the resources and tools needed to effectively manage forests under their care. It is also important to extend these resources to underserved communities, urban communities, and land managers who are currently unable to access federal programs. Conservation districts play a key role in managing forestland across the country and NACD is actively engaged with Congress, federal agencies, and other partners to address barriers to forest health. As a member of the Forests in the Farm Bill Coalition, NACD worked to develop the Coalition's recommendations for the 2023 Farm Bill and will continue working with our partners to advance these priorities.

Each month, NACD publishes Forestry Notes, a monthly newsletter that highlights district-led forestry projects and partnerships to address modern forestry challenges. As a member of the Joint Forestry Team, NACD also works closely with the U.S. Forest Service, National Association of State Foresters, and USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service to strengthen the interagency delivery of forestry and conservation assistance on working forests, farms, and ranches. NACD also worked with federal agencies to publish Friends of the Forest, a comprehensive survey of forestry activity completed by conservation districts. More information about these and other resources can be found on NACD's website.



### Forestry Management Priorities:

Maintaining healthy forests serves several important functions, including increasing carbon sequestration, preventing pest and disease outbreaks, improving water quality, mitigating wildfires, preventing soil erosion, and protecting wildlife habitats. To maintain and enhance our forest resources, it is critical for Congress to support:

- Site appropriate silvicultural techniques and advanced, scientifically proven forest management practices to promote the growth and maintenance of healthy, diverse forests.
- Good Neighbor Authority allows the U.S. Forest Service to work with states to conduct critical management practices work that keep forests healthy and productive.
- Stewardship Agreements allows the U.S. Forest Service to contract with nonfederal partners to manage National Forests.
- State and Private Forestry Programs provide technical and financial assistance to resource managers to sustain our nation's forests, protect communities from wildfires, and restore fire-adapted ecosystems.



### Urban Forestry Priorities:

The trees, vegetation, and green spaces that make up America's urban forests support many essential components of our lives including water quality, economic activity, clean air, and resilience. Urban forests also play a large role in extending these benefits to historically underserved communities. To support sustainable urban and community forestry, NACD encourages Congress to:

- Support Tree Equity to ensure urban forests benefit all neighborhoods across cities, particularly historically underserved communities.
- Support a growing workforce within the U.S. Forest Service and partner organizations to plant and manage urban trees, including job training.
- Incorporate neighborhood and community input into urban forestry projects to support local needs and address extreme heat, poor air and water quality, and economic disparities

### Wildfire Management Priorities:

The frequency and intensity of wildfires has increased significantly across the United States. Recent fires have destroyed land and infrastructure, depleted soil, increased flood risks, and decimated wildlife habitats. NACD worked closely with federal agencies to conduct listening sessions across the Western United States to identify effective wildfire mitigation solutions and publish a Community Wildfire Desk Guide and Toolkit to share strategies and tools with stakeholders. NACD and districts across the country are also working closely with federal agencies and other partners to administer investments provided by the Inflation Reduction Act to help communities prepare for and mitigate wildfires. To help mitigate and respond to wildfires, NACD encourages Congress to:

- Support wildfire mitigation and management activities on public forests and rangelands.
- Reauthorize and strengthen U.S. Forest Service programs and bolster workforce capacity at the federal and local levels.
- Improve Post-Disaster Landowner Assistance through the Emergency Forest Restoration Program.
- Support the use of appropriate prescribed burning and silvicultural treatments.
- Increase pre- and post-fire grazing on at-risk public lands.

#### About NACD

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) represents a nationwide network of 3,000 conservation districts, working with millions of landowners and farmers to manage and protect private and public working lands in the United States. Districts are local units of government that help put locally-led, voluntary, and incentive-based conservation programs into action.

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