



## Conservation Leaders from Across the U.S. Advocate for District Priorities on Capitol Hill



On March 26, NACD's officers, executive board, and over 100 leaders of conservation districts and their partners from across the country gathered in Washington, D.C. for NACD's annual Spring Fly-In: a day meeting and talking with legislators on Capitol Hill about the importance and impact of voluntary, locally led conservation.

Throughout the day, Spring Fly-In participants met with legislators and their staff to:

- Share how funding freezes, grant terminations, staff reductions, and office closures have significantly impacted district operations, producers, and our country's locally led conservation delivery system.
- Call on legislators to maintain full mandatory funding for Farm Bill conservation programs in Fiscal Year 2026, including \$1.2 billion for Conservation Operations.
- Urge legislators to pass a bipartisan Farm Bill that supports producers, bolsters locally led conservation, and keeps conservation investments provided by the Inflation Reduction Act in conservation programs and integrates them into the conservation title of the Farm Bill.

Participants also spoke with legislators and their staff about the importance of managing

and conserving public and private forestland and maintaining the health and productivity of working lands through invasive and noxious species management.

Learn more about NACD's board-adopted positions on key conservation policy priorities in this year's issue papers on the NACD Fly-In webpage.

Please use these issue papers to continue to be a voice for locally led conservation with your representatives.



To close the day, **Senator Amy Klobuchar** of Minnesota, the Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, spoke at the evening's reception. NACD continues to work closely with the Senate and House Agriculture Committees to support critical conservation efforts.

## Celebrate Habitat Education during Stewardship Week!



Join NACD in celebrating Stewardship Week 2025, taking place **April 27 – May 4**. This year's theme, *Home is Where the Habitat Is*, highlights the importance of protecting and restoring both native and managed habitats across the U.S. and its territories.

The NACD Stewardship and Education program offers year-round conservation-themed resources to help districts engage students and communities in meaningful soil, water, and natural resource conservation education. These materials, all available as free downloads or printed options, include student journals, lesson plans, and outreach kits designed for classrooms, youth groups, and community events. Conservation districts can also use these resources to support local schools, libraries, and organizations in promoting natural resource conservation beyond Stewardship Week.

To help conservation districts maximize their outreach, NACD offers a Media Toolbox with ready-to-use graphics, messaging, and promotional materials for Stewardship Week and poster contests. These tools make it easy to engage local communities, spread awareness, and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.

Start planning today! Visit NACD's online Education Hub or email [stewardship@nacdn.net](mailto:stewardship@nacdn.net) for more information.

**Want more frequent updates from NACD?** Subscribe to our weekly email newsletter eResource at [bit.ly/NACD-eResource](http://bit.ly/NACD-eResource).

## Investing in Each Other: Friends of NACD Grants

Since 2020, Friends of NACD have awarded over \$96,000 in grant funding to 39 districts across the country! The Friends of NACD District Grants Program is perfect for both small districts looking to gain experience with grants and seasoned teams that want to fund an innovative project.

What makes this program truly unique is that it is NACD's only grant program supported by individual contributions. The grant funding awarded each year comes from NACD board members, past presidents, district officials and employees, friends, family, and our supportive partners. Kim LaFleur, NACD Immediate Past President says, "Friends of NACD is at the heart of what we do—invest in each other."

Consider becoming a Friend of NACD with a donation to support this program. A small grant like \$2,500 may not seem like a lot, but it can have big impacts for locally led conservation, like:

- Attracting 250 residents to a community garden and introducing them to the fundamentals of beekeeping.
- Creating environmental education experiences for all 400 of the K-12 students on an island in the Northern Mariana Islands.

## Membership Corner: NACD Membership Updates

### Welcome New NACD Secretary-Treasurer Karl Jensen

You may see a new name on your NACD invoice this quarter, Karl Jensen, our newly elected NACD Secretary-Treasurer. Secretary-Treasurer Jensen joins the NACD officer team as a rancher and conservation district official from South Dakota. Prior to being elected to this role, he served on NACD's Executive Board for two years. As NACD Secretary-Treasurer, he will provide transparency and oversight to NACD's finances, which your membership contributions greatly support. You can reach out to Karl with questions about your dues, or the organization, at any time, and learn more about all of our newly elected officers on our "Who We Are" section of our webpage.

### New Committee Appointments

Spring has sprung, and with it comes new activity at NACD. Our committees and subcommittees are a way to get involved in the association, learn more from other members, and network for your own professional development. Appointments to committees and subcommittees have changed with the election of our new NACD President, Gary



- Purchasing a rainfall demonstrator and helping communicate the positive effects conservation practices have on reducing runoff and erosion in our backyards
- Empowering volunteers and getting them the tools they needed to remove invasive plants and replace them with important native species.

These are just a few of the amazing things grant recipients have carried out in the past year. Visit [www.nacdnet.org/friends](http://www.nacdnet.org/friends) to read more about what each of these districts did in their communities. The next application round opens in the fall of 2025, so start brainstorming for your own Friends of NACD proposal!

Blair, and we encourage you to learn more about each of the standing committees (District and Partner Relations, Legislative, and Natural Resources), and the various subcommittees that work with them by reaching out to your state or territory's NACD board member. You can also check in with your NACD Region Representative about ongoing region activities and meetings, join our events, recruit members for or join the NACD Soil Health Champions Network, or come to NACD's annual and summer meetings and we'll find a way to immerse you in the network!

### Member Services

You may have heard we have revamped access to our Member's Only page, and we're working diligently to update the materials on that site. If you have ideas for resources that would be helpful, or something your district has created that you think others can benefit from, please reach out to the Membership Team at [membership@nacdn.net](mailto:membership@nacdn.net). If you have a resource or product you are particularly proud of, we'd be happy to feature you on an upcoming Conservation Coffee to share the work and provide opportunities for other districts to learn from you!

## Join us in Wisconsin this July!

NACD's 2025 Summer Conservation Forum and Tours, hosted in partnership with Wisconsin Land + Water, will be held on July 25-30, 2025 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Get ready to enjoy a great time in the "Badger State" filled with networking, board meetings, panel and breakout sessions, and of course fun and informative tours to learn more about topics like stormwater management, wetland restoration, and more.

Online registration will launch this spring. Be on the lookout for more details to reserve your seat at this event!

## NACD Releases Report on Sustaining Our Locally Led Conservation Delivery System

NACD has released a report about the impacts of recent Executive Orders on America's locally led conservation delivery system, including conservation districts and the producers and communities they serve. The report was informed by nearly 400 survey responses received from 48 states and territories.



Visit NACD's Reports webpage or scan this QR code to read the report.

## Guide to Measuring Success for Conservation Projects

Measuring project success involves more than just numbers; it's also about capturing the full story of your conservation district's work. With this Guide to Measuring Success for Conservation Projects, conservation districts can develop a holistic approach to project measurement that reflects the actual value of their efforts in enhancing the environment, engaging communities, and supporting sustainable development.

By following these steps, conservation districts can create a lasting impact by demonstrating accountability, resilience, and innovation in conservation efforts.

Access these and other district resources at [nacdn.net/org/general-resources/district-guides](http://nacdn.net/org/general-resources/district-guides).