



# North Central Region Board Meeting

The Pfister Hotel

Milwaukee, WI

July 27, 2025 | 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. (CDT – local time)

## ATTENDANCE

Dale Shumaker, IL

Josh Curry, IL

Roger Wenning, IN, Region Vice Chair

Ethan Truax, IN

Jeri Thornsberry, IA

Jerry Miller, MI

Rivka Hodgkinson, MI Exec.

Randy Smith, MN

Ron Willis, MO

David Hutsel, MO

Jim Boschert, MO Exec.

Matt Peart, OH

Kris Swartz, OH, Region Chair

Bob Micheel, WI

Monte Osterman, WI

Matt Krueger, WI Exec.

Ryan Britt, NACD Second Vice President

Beth Mason, NACD Region Representative,

Recorder

## DRAFT MINUTES

**Welcome and Introductions** ..... Kris Swartz, Region Chair

### Approval of Minutes

IN – motion to approve the minutes from the 2/9/25 region meeting.

Second

Motion was unanimously passed

**Region Account Update** ..... Beth Mason, Region Representative

All deposits and expenses are up to date for the year except for the IL dues payment which is currently being processed and mailed.

The latest statement was provided to the board.

**Region Scholarship Update** ..... Beth Mason, Region Representative

See *Appendix A* for the submitted report

**Executive Board Report**..... Ryan Britt, NACD Second Vice President

The report consisted of details on NACD's finances – concerning budget and membership dues, meeting planning, and the bylaw amendments.

**January Region Meeting Program Discussion** ..... Beth Mason, Region Representative

1. IASWCD proposal for evening event – the board did not want to spend the funds in this way, so the proposal was declined.
2. Region Workplan – Mason explained the idea for a region workplan evolved from NACD's MOU with the NFWS. The board was receptive to moving forward with plans to establish a region workplan at the January Partners Meeting, January 13 – 14 which would bring all conservation partners in attendance to the table to discuss. Mason, Swartz and Sergio Pierluissi (USFWS) will meet for any preliminary work/planning for the meeting.
3. Partner Spotlight – Mason explained the idea of continuing with a "Partner Spotlight" at the January Region Partners Meeting. In 2025, the Partner Spotlight was with the USFWS. She proposed a partner not explored could be RC&D Councils, as an underutilized conservation partner and one of the NCPP partners. Most of the board gave their approval to move forward with this suggestion.

**North Central Region Survey Report Discussion** ..... All  
After discussion, Mason shows where the survey report will be posted online for future reference (the region webpage). Swartz suggests keeping the previous report there as well rather than replace it.  
<https://www.nacdnet.org/general-resources/conservation-district-directory/north-central-region/>

**Board Discussion: Challenges to Conservation Delivery Systems in North Central**..... All

Jeri Thornsberry shared a poster from a nine-year old for their poster contest.

Monte Osterman wanted to discuss the proposed bylaw amendment from the NACD board meeting. He proposed an edit (highlighted) to the amendment which was being proposed:

Adding Article 9.60 #10

10)..... The Executive Board shall be responsible for the development, ~~adoption,~~ and implementation of a Code of Conduct for members of the Board of Directors. **The Code of Conduct and any updates shall be brought before the Board of Directors for adoption by majority vote.** The Executive Board shall be empowered to enforce the Code of Conduct. This enforcement may include suspension, removal from office and removal from the board of directors for violations of the Code of Conduct. Any enforcement action may be overturned by the board of directors.

Michigan – motion to support Osterman’s bylaw amendment

Second

The North Central Region Board unanimously approved to support Osterman’s bylaw amendment at the full board meeting where it will be up for a vote.

Briefly, there was discussion on codes of conduct at the state level.

Guest Ken Gunkel from Indiana was given the opportunity to share the problems they are having in areas throughout Indiana regarding leases with NRCS and co-locating with NRCS. Board members shared they are having similar problems in their states. NRCS state conservationist Scott Edwards (MO) who is stationed at NRCS headquarters, filling in for Angela Biggs, Deputy Chief for Management and Strategies, says they are aware of this on-going issue at headquarters. So far, no resolution has been reached, however.

**Association of Conservation Executive Directors (ACED) update**..... Matt Krueger, WI  
Report includes the date of the annual conference in the first week of October. Stipends to attend may be available, so please contact Matt or Janelle Mead for more information

**National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA) update**..... Kate Bussanmas, IDALS

**National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA) update** ..... Melissa Higbee, NCDEA  
Higbee also gives an update for the **National Conservation Planning Partnership (NCP)**

Other business as time allows

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Announcements:

- [NACD Service Awards](#) Nominations open through August 31, 2025
- [NACD North Central Region Partners’ Meeting](#), Indianapolis, IN, January 13 – 14, 2026
- [NACD Annual Meeting](#), San Antonio, TX, January 14 – 19, 2026

Region Scholarship Update submitted by Beth Mason

These scholarships help cover some of the costs for a conservation district board member to attend either the NACD Summer Meeting or Annual Meeting for the first time.

This past summer the board updated their scholarship offerings from two \$500 scholarships to three \$600 scholarships in memory of the passing of Minnesota's Board Member Kurt Beckstrom last April.

We also started a new rotation with this year's scholarships.

1. Indiana with Ken Gunkel – this summer meeting
2. Michigan with Rivka Hodgkinson – and note that Rivka is also board member of her local district which is how she qualifies for this scholarship – not for her role as the MACD Executive Director – this summer meeting
3. Missouri with Jeff Deshon – 2026 Annual Meeting

That uses all our special scholarships of \$600 for this year.

We will have this on our agenda to discuss any renewal of scholarship offers at our January meeting in Indianapolis. So, no action is needed on this.