



National Association of Conservation Districts

Fiscal Year 2023 Congressional Appropriations

NACD supports strong funding for several important conservation programs administered by federal agencies, including:

USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS):

Full authorized funding for Farm Bill conservation programs: The 2018 Farm Bill maintained funding for USDA conservation programs, a key priority for NACD. It is critical that Congress ensures that this funding is not reduced through the annual appropriations process. NACD supports maintaining all mandatory farm bill conservation program funding at the full authorized levels.

At least \$1.2 billion for Conservation Operations: This account provides funding for NRCS to administer critical conservation services, including:

- **Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA):** Nearly 90 percent of the funding under Conservation Operations is dedicated to CTA, which allows NRCS to hire local staff to facilitate conservation planning and the implementation of voluntary conservation projects across the United States. Additional funding for CTA will help NRCS address staff shortages and provide resources for conservation districts and other conservation facilitators to assess, implement, and monitor critical conservation practices across the country. Strong funding for CTA is among NACD's top legislative priorities.
- **Soil Surveys, Snow Surveys, Water Supply Forecasting, and Plant Materials Centers:** Conservation Operations also supports these services, which provide important information and tools to help producers manage their land more effectively.

At least \$200 million for the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Operations Program: This program helps to protect and restore watersheds by facilitating joint projects between the Federal Government and local governments. These projects conserve land and prevent erosion and sediment damage.

At least \$75 million for the Watershed Rehabilitation Program: This program helps rural communities strengthen their local economies by rehabilitating aging infrastructure, like dams and water storage facilities. The program generates about \$2 billion worth of improved water quality and erosion control benefits each year. For many decades, conservation districts across the country have stepped up to sponsor these projects, which often require significant financial commitments and long-term technical assistance.



USDA's National Forest Service (NFS):

At least \$300 million for State and Private Forestry Programs: These programs are administered by the NFS in collaboration with states, tribes, communities, and organizations like conservation districts to protect and manage forest lands. The program provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and resource managers to sustain our nation's forests and grasslands, protect communities from wildfires, and restore fire-adapted ecosystems.

At least \$30 million for the Forest Stewardship Program: The Forest Stewardship Program works in partnership with state forestry agencies, cooperative extensions, and conservation districts to connect private landowners with the information and tools they need to manage their forests and woodlands.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

At least \$200 million for the Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program: This program allows EPA to award grants to states, territories, and tribes to mitigate nonpoint sources of water pollution, such as agricultural runoff, abandoned mine drainage, and soil erosion. Conservation districts across the country have partnered on projects supported by Section 319 grants to increase the utilization of agricultural best management practices and enhance water management.

