

# NACD Update for 2023 WACD Annual Meeting and WSCC 11/30/23 Meeting

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## **NACD – National Association of Conservation Districts**

### **1. 2023 Farm Bill**

- The chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate agriculture committees are working to develop the bill but have recently collectively acknowledged that they will need to pass an extension of 2018 Farm Bill.
  - Congress is exploring attaching a year-long extension of the 2018 Farm Bill to a continuing resolution (a bill to keep the federal government funded at current levels), which will need to be passed by November 17 to avoid a government shutdown.
- Even though the 2018 Farm Bill expired on October 1, Congress will not be pressured to pass an extension until the end of this year.
  - Commodity programs can continue to function,
  - Crop insurance is permanently authorized,
  - And the IRA reauthorized conservation programs in addition to providing more funding – so programs, like EQIP, CSP, and RCPP will continue to be administered.

### **2. Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations**

- The most pressing job Congress has is funding the federal government when the existing continuing resolution expires on November 17. (NOTE – this hopefully occurs prior to our 2023 WACD annual meeting.)
- We narrowly avoided a shutdown at the end of September.
- Congress must pass an additional continuing resolution or all 12 full appropriations bills before that date to avert a government shutdown.
- If an agreement is not reached and the government shuts down on November 17, USDA and NRCS will be forced to cease operations, greatly impacting many districts operations, and negatively impact the administration of conservation as a whole.
  - Many districts are co-located with NRCS offices and would not be able to enter offices or use shared resources if a shutdown occurs.

### **3. NACD 2023 Farm Bill Requests**

- NACD's highest farm bill priority is to keep the \$18 billion the IRA provided for NRCS conservation programs (like EQIP and CSP) in those programs.
  - This funding is required so NRCS to continue progress in reducing the backlog in these programs.
  - NACD has also asked Congress to integrate this funding in the conservation title of the 2023 Farm Bill providing potential permanent increase in baseline funding for conservation programs.
- NACD has many other farm bill requests across USDA programs primarily focused on supporting locally-led processes, simplifying conservation program administration, and avoiding additional national carveouts.

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4. **Friends of NACD grant applications** are open for innovative, novel approaches. Application period is open until November 30, 2023. Click [here](#) for more information.

5. **EPA Seeks Comments on NPS §319 Grants Guidelines**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) seeks comments on a revised draft of the nonpoint source (NPS) §319 grant guidelines. The “Draft Revision for Public Comment: Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories” can be accessed [here](#). The EPA will be taking comments through **December 31, 2023**.

Comments can be submitted:

- via this [online form](#);
- emailed to [NPSguidelines2023@epa.gov](mailto:NPSguidelines2023@epa.gov); or
- mailed to 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, MC-4503-T, Washington, DC 20460.

EPA will host a webinar on **December 5, 2023** from **3:00-4:30 p.m. ET** to provide an overview of the guidelines. [Register here](#) to attend.

6. **New NACD Staff** –

- **Marquita Hall** is the new Southeast Region Representative. Her email is [marquita-hall@nacdnet.org](mailto:marquita-hall@nacdnet.org).
- **Chessa Frahm** is our new Grants Administrator. Frahm is based in Dawson, MN and can be reached at [chessa-frahm@nacdnet.org](mailto:chessa-frahm@nacdnet.org).
- **Caleb Griffin** is our new NACD Pacific region representative. His email is [Caleb-Griffin@nacdnet.org](mailto:Caleb-Griffin@nacdnet.org).

7. **NACD Annual Meeting** - 2024 Annual Meeting in San Diego, California on February 10-14, 2024 and with the themes below. [Registration](#) is open. There will be an evening on the *USS Midway*, the longest-serving aircraft carrier in the 20th century.

- Sustainable agriculture – compost, pollinators, and wine.
- Urban agriculture in southern San Diego County.
- Collaboration on forest health – a site managed by Girl Scouts

8. **Upcoming meetings**

February 10-14, 2024 .....NACD 2024 Annual Meeting in San Diego  
August 10-14, 2024 .....NACD 2024 Summer Meeting in Boston  
To Be Determined.....NACD 2024 Pacific/SW Region Joint meeting - Alaska  
February 8-12, 2025 .....NACD 2025 Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City  
To Be Determined.....NACD 2025 Summer Meeting in Milwaukee  
February 14-19, 2026 .....NACD 2026 Annual Meeting in San Antonio  
To Be Determined.....NACD 2026 Summer Meeting in Grand Rapids

*Farm Bill and Appropriations information graciously provided by NACD Government Affairs staff, Chris Young and Connor Simons. Doug Rushton has more background information.*

Submitted by [Doug Rushton](#), Thurston CD, WACD national director, NACD board member.  
Information current as of 11/10/23.

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