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The NACD eResource

Weekly news briefs from the National Association of Conservation Districts

NACD IN THE NEWS: MARCH MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

NACD's officers and staff advocate for conservation every day – check out last month's media coverage to learn how NACD is working for you. Be sure to [follow and like us on Facebook](#) for more interviews, articles and GOOD READS about conservation.

[NACD President Pleased Omnibus Bill Helped Restore Conservation Funding: Radio 570 WNAX](#)

By Tom Riter

NACD members were pleased with the recent omnibus funding bill passed by Congress and signed by the President. **NACD President Brent Van Dyke** says when their members met with lawmakers last week in Washington, D.C., they were concerned about funding shortfalls for conservation programs. Van Dyke was encouraged by the conservation funding included in the bill.

[President-Elect Tim Palmer speaks on the results of a three-year cover crop and no-till study:](#)

Successful Farming

By Jodi Henke

Conservation practices such as cover crops and no-till can limit soil loss, reduce run-off, and provide economic advantages.

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NACD seeks Natural Resource Policy Specialist

NACD is currently seeking candidates for a Natural Resource Policy Specialist to assist the government affairs team with natural resource policy related topics. [Click here](#) to view the full position announcement – all resumes and writing samples must be received by Friday, April 6 to receive priority for interviews.

Celebrate Stewardship Week with us!

NACD's 63rd Annual Stewardship Week is weeks away – how will your district be participating?

Tim Palmer is president-elect of NACD and says they have favorable results from a three-year study where corn and soybean farmers experimented with cover crops, and/or no-till. "Even though it costs extra to put cover crops on, there was a return on investment from having them out there to the producer, up to \$110 per acre extra profit for adopting," **Palmer said.**

[Adams on Agriculture with NACD Director of Government Affairs Coleman Garrison:](#)

American Ag Network

By Mike Adams

Adams: When I look back thinking about covering conservation efforts in the last 20-30 years, you have a great story to tell. We've seen the benefits of these programs and how that partnership with government funding and the private partnership working together—so much has been accomplished.

Garrison: Absolutely. Conservation districts were created back in the 30's to be that local partner to help deliver conservation. It's that voluntary, incentive-based conservation delivery model that's been so successful over all these decades, and we believe this is certainly not a time when less investment needs to be done. Granted, we understand the budget constraints that Congress is facing, that's why we are hoping that, at a bare minimum, no more funding be taken out of the Conservation Title of the farm bill.



GOOD READS



NACD's 63rd Annual Stewardship Week gives conservation districts the opportunity to educate the next generation on the significance of conservation, and we need your help to promote it! Please [send us the events](#) your district or state associations are either planning or attending to celebrate Stewardship Week.

NACD's Stewardship Week will be celebrated from April 29 to May 5. This year's theme is "Watersheds, Our Water, Our Home." You can access free educational materials, as well as activity sheets, flyers, coloring pages and more [on our website](#). There, you'll also find Stewardship Week materials, like sample news releases, proclamations and public service announcements.

Do you know a farmer or rancher making a difference for pollinators?

Pollinator Partnership and NACD are seeking nominations for the 2018 Farmer-Rancher Pollinator Conservation Awards. Visit <http://pollinator.org/awards> for more information and help celebrate the contributions of the

[Trump signs giant spending package after veto threat:](#)

Agri-Pulse

By Philip Brasher

The bill also eliminates the requirement that landowners who participate in conservation programs obtain System for Award Management (SAM) and Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) numbers.

“Removing the burdensome task of SAM/DUNS reporting allows landowners and operators to prioritize conservation program participation without hindrance,” **NACD CEO Jeremy Peters said.**

[Conservation Funding Expected to Lag Behind When Farmers Need it Most:](#) **Civil Eats**

By Bryce Oats

“Good conservation programs provide pathways to treat local conservation concerns, and those can vary quite drastically across the country,” **said NACD President-elect Tim Palmer**, a crop and livestock farmer from Madison County, Iowa. “The improvements that solve local resource challenges, like erosion and damage from nutrients [i.e., nitrogen and phosphorous] in Southern Iowa, require funding and boots on the ground from conservation professionals to provide farmers with the guidance they need.”

NACD SUMMER MEETING APPROACHES

Save the date! NACD's 2018 Summer Conservation Forum and Tour and Southeast Region Meeting will be held Aug. 2 – 8 in historic Williamsburg, Va. Registration for the meeting will open Tuesday, May 1.

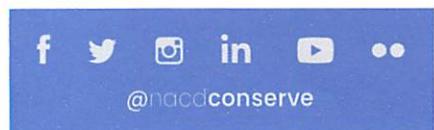
A [draft agenda](#) is available on our summer meeting webpage. During our time in Williamsburg, meeting attendees will have the opportunity to attend one of four conservation-themed tours, including agriculture conservation, urban and forestry, education and coastal and cultural tour options.

agricultural community to pollinators. Nominations are due Friday, July 6.

State NRCS CIG opportunities

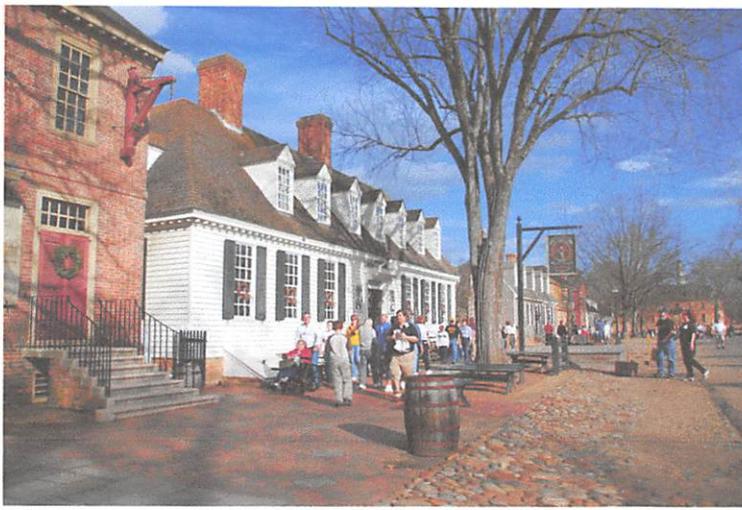
Twenty states are offering Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) opportunities to address local or state-level natural resource concerns. Louisiana, Oregon, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Virginia, Arizona, Maine, California, Idaho, Kansas, South Dakota, Pennsylvania, Georgia, New Mexico, Rhode Island, New York, Iowa, Oklahoma, the Pacific Island Area and the Caribbean Area are all still accepting project proposals – contact your state’s NRCS office for more information.

Follow us!



NRCS seeks partners for easement restoration

CalFire and the U.S. Forest Service teamed up to create a free, online toolkit. The Urban Forest Management Plan TOOLKIT helps tree care professionals use proactive management to provide for maximum, long-term benefits and save money. The TOOLKIT is a guide that helps communities develop plans that are science-based and proactive. The new 2.0 TOOLKIT provides a step-



Williamsburg played a significant role in the American Revolution as the former capital of the Virginia Colony. Make sure you plan time to visit Colonial Williamsburg, a living-history museum depicting Colonial life, during your time in Virginia. [Book your flights today!](#)



RUSSELL HEDRICK HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA

As a first-generation farmer, Russell Hedrick had the opportunity to set up his operation in a way that would enable him to try new methods and practices to increase his soil health.

In 2012, Hedrick started with 30 acres of row crops and has since expanded to roughly 1,000 acres. In the beginning, he was unable to afford tillage equipment, but with guidance from his district conservationist, he was able to incorporate soil health management systems on his operation.

Through a systems approach, he built his operation to include no-tilling, cover crops, grazing livestock and precision technology to manage seeding and nutrient application. Some of the benefits he experiences include

by-step, user friendly process with many examples and resources for both large municipalities and small campuses.

Step 1 is to develop a work plan to organize and manage the planning process. Step 2 includes following through the website and/or downloading questions that lead through the process.

Contact Us

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(202) 547 6223

[email us](#)

NACD Events Calendar

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 - Northern Plains Leaders Meeting - June 4 - 6
 - Northeast Region Meeting - July 15 - 18
 - NACD Summer Meeting - Aug. 2 - 8
-

weed suppression and control, erosion control, less herbicide and fertilizer use and much more. His soils have increased moisture retention and lower temperatures, which helps during drought and summer heat.

With the decrease in inputs, Russell's bottom line has decreased and his yields have actually increased. Hedrick has reported that his corn and soybean yields are 20 – 30 percent higher than the county average. Additionally, due to the nutrient boosts associated with using cover crops, his fertilizer usage has decreased by more than \$70 per acre.

Russell encourages farmers to start small – trying no-till and cover crops on twenty percent of their land, making it more manageable and leaving a safety net if farmers don't get the economic results they wanted. As a soil health advocate, he takes his message of encouragement and experience across the country, speaking at various conferences and workshops. One of Russell's presentations on cover cropping is available online as part of a series called "[*Treating the Farm as an Ecosystem.*](#)"

To learn more about Hedrick and his operation, be sure to visit [his profile](#). If you or someone you know is interested in soil health and would like to become a member of this growing network, please contact NACD North Central Region Representative Beth Mason at beth-mason@nacdnet.org or 317-946-4463 for more information.

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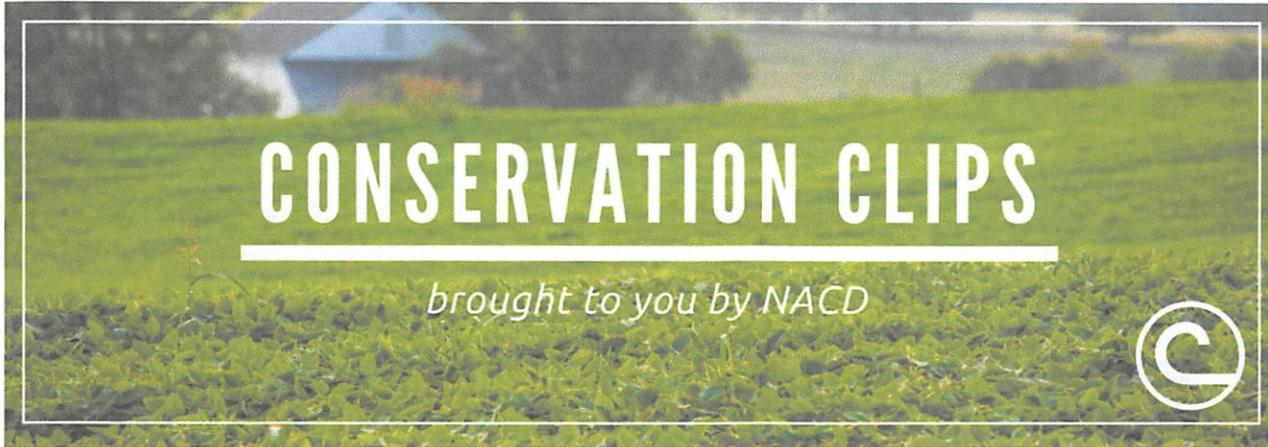
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Conservation Clips are a weekly collection of articles distributed by NACD that provides our members and partners with the latest news in what's driving conservation. If you have a relevant submission, please contact your NACD Communications Team.

Agri-Pulse: Opinion: To Move Our Planet Forward, Food and Agriculture Must Think about Sustainability Differently

By Chris Policinski
04/05/18

(Opinion) Bringing together big-picture, company-level sustainability commitments and the acre-by-acre conservation efforts of farmers makes both more effective. It engages farmers in advancing conservation solutions across millions of acres of farmland in a more coordinated way. It allows us to collect and then translate data that not only helps farmers continuously improve their stewardship, but also helps consumers access clear information about how their food was produced.

The Wall Street Journal: In the Battle for the American West, the Cowboys Are Losing

By Jim Carlton
03/30/18

Ranchers who rely on public land to raise their cattle say they have

shrinking access to wide open spaces, grass and water because of an array of regulations. Over the last four decades, the number of cows grazing on public lands has dropped by nearly half.

U.S. News and World Report: Minnesota Watershed Uses Woodchips, Wetlands to Treat Water

04/01/18

Watershed experts are using wetlands and woodchips to try and reduce nitrate runoff in Vermillion River and other Minnesota waters.

The Orange County Register: California fights wildfires aggressively — but prevention takes a back seat

By Julie Cart

04/04/18

Last year's wildfires, the worst in modern California history, have put a microscope on the forests that cover a third of the state—in particular, on managing these wooded lands in ways that would reduce the frequency and intensity of such blazes.

Scientific American: Bats Are Migrating Earlier, and It Could Wreak Havoc on Farming

By Inga Vesper

04/02/18

This trend creates a risky situation in which bats may not find enough food for themselves and their young, as the insects they prey on may not yet have arrived or hatched. If bat colonies shrink as a result of this schedule snafu, their pest control effect could fall out of sync with crop-growing seasons—potentially causing hefty losses.

CNN: Leaked memo: Pruitt taking control of Clean Water Act determinations

By Rene Marsh

04/04/18

Key provisions in the Clean Water Act are now under the control of one person at the US Environmental Protection Agency -- Administrator Scott Pruitt. In the new directive, Pruitt states he will make final critical decisions about preservation of streams, ponds and wetlands.

The Daily Yonder: Federal Bill Attempts to Block State, Local Regulation of Ag

By Bryce Oates

04/04/18

A bill introduced by an Iowa member of Congress would strip states and local governments of their ability to regulate industrial agriculture in their communities. It would prohibit state and local governments from adding any restrictions on agriculture and food production if the product is offered for sale in another state.

High Plains Journal: Adapting methods and equipment can make life easier on cattle and handlers

By Jennifer M. Latzke

04/02/18

Experts agree that grazing cattle can be part of a healthy soil system. But for many farmers, the idea of the extra labor involved with livestock can be daunting.

Colorado Public Radio: When Snowpack Is The Concern, Science Keeps A Wary Eye Out For Dust

By Grace Hood

04/03/18

Dust pulls more solar energy into the snowpack, which is essentially a reservoir of water for managers across the West. In dusty years, snow melts earlier. The rate of runoff can increase substantially compared to low dust-on-snow years.

Des Moines Register: A smarter farm bill can protect natural resources as well as farmers' livelihoods

By Seth Watkins

04/05/18

(Opinion) Modern agriculture produces remarkable yields but has become highly reliant on scarce resources and is often not profitable without subsidies. These systems also show increasing warning signs of failure: decimated soil health, water pollution, habitat loss, rural poverty, and chronic disease are all in some way connected to a fundamentally flawed farm bill.

Agri-Pulse: California fights costly battle against invasive species

By Tyler Ash

04/04/18

Every year, California acquires on average nine new invasive species, including exotic insects, spiders, mollusks and even South American mammals. Three of those invaders usually try and settle down, start a large family and stake a claim on some of the Golden State's endless buffet of agricultural crops, becoming the bane of farmers and researchers.

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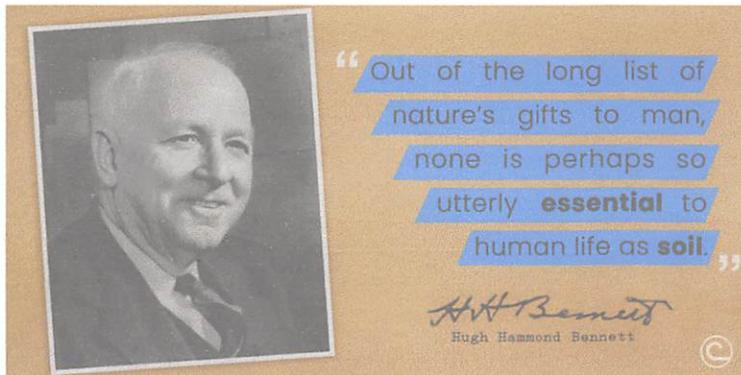
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NACD CELEBRATES FATHER OF SOIL CONSERVATION



On April 15, 1881, **Hugh Hammond Bennett** was born in Anson County, N.C.

Bennett worked in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Soils in the early 20th century, beginning his career with soil surveys across the country. He began steadily publishing articles increasing awareness about soil erosion's decimation of farmland and its threat to rural America, and he advocated for the passage of the Soil Conservation Act, which established the Soil Conservation Service at USDA. Shortly after, the first soil conservation district was established in North Carolina, covering part of Bennett's home county.

Learn more about Bennett's critical work and

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New section of Members Only section

This week, NACD introduced a curriculum section to the Members Only section of our website.

Just in time for Stewardship Week, districts who have completed their membership dues payment will have access to a wealth

enduring legacy by watching [this video](#). NACD celebrates the life of Hugh Hammond Bennett and his commitment to enacting conservation practices nationwide. [Click here](#) to watch a short video by the Walton Family Foundation describing conservation solutions in action today in the Mississippi River Basin because of the work of conservationists like Bennett.

NACD WELCOMES NEW MISSISSIPPI SENATOR



NACD Executive Board Southeast Region Member Jim Harreld traveled to Washington, D.C., this week to view the swearing-in of Mississippi's first female Senator: **Cindy Hyde-Smith**. The former state agriculture and commerce commissioner, Hyde-Smith, a beef cattle farmer, was sworn in yesterday by Vice President Mike Pence.

NACD SOIL HEALTH WEBINARS: YOUR TOOL FOR OUTREACH

With the establishment of the NACD Soil Health Champions Network, NACD has started to conduct monthly webinars

of NACD curriculum and educational materials.

There, you'll find "Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home" activity sheets, coloring pages, sample proclamations, news releases and more! You'll also find free educational materials for ages K-12.

Will your district be participating in Stewardship Week? Please send stewardship@nacdnet.org the events your district or state associations are either planning or attending to celebrate.

Alabama, Georgia name teams for NCF-Envirothon competition

Congratulations to the **Bob Jones High School** team from Madison for winning the Alabama state Envirothon Competition held April 6 at the Alabama 4-H Center in Columbiana. The students will now go on to represent their school and state at the international NCF-Envirothon competition in Pocatello, Idaho in July.



Joining them will be the team from **Vantage Point Education High School**

focused on soil health to assist in further education and outreach. Each month, topics include aspects of soil health such as exploring the soil ecosystem of beneficial insects and invertebrates, nutrient management and soil biology, companion and cover crops, the incorporation and impacts of grazing, as well as current and on-going research. Speakers include NACD Soil Health Champions and experts in cooperating organizations and members of the USDA NRCS Soil Health Specialists Team.

While the live webinars are promoted within the network, each webinar is recorded and available online for the general public to utilize as a way to further soil health education and encourage more acres to be managed for soil health. To view the soil health webinars to date, please be sure to visit the [NACD Soil Health Champions Network webpage](#) and [contact Beth Mason](#) with any suggested topics and speakers for future webinars.

NRCS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is seeking proposals to assist with restoration work of degraded wetlands, floodplains and forestlands. [Click here](#) to learn more; applications must be received by May 18 at 5:00 p.m. EDT.

Twenty states are seeking Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) proposals to address local or state-level natural resource concerns. Louisiana, Oregon, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Virginia, Arizona, Maine, California, Idaho, Kansas, South Dakota, Pennsylvania, Georgia, New Mexico, Rhode Island, New York, Iowa, Oklahoma, the Pacific Island Area and the Caribbean Area are all still accepting project proposals – contact your state's NRCS office for more information.

(pictured) from Suwanee, Georgia. On March 27 – 28, ten teams competed at the Georgia state Envirothon Competition at Hard Labor State Park, where Vantage Point earned top honors. Stay tuned to eResource for more team announcements, and please submit any Envirothon news and photos to NCF-Envirothon Program Manager Carly Burton at carly-burton@nacdnet.org.



Montana Association seeks executive director

The Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) is currently seeking an executive director candidate to represent the non-profit and the state's 58 conservation districts. The executive director is responsible for providing leadership and overall management of the organization. This includes communication with conservation districts and partners, legislative duties, representing conservation districts at a variety of events, and the administration and management of daily operations.



DURHAM COUNTY SWCD, N.C.

Thanks to funding from NACD's 2016 Urban Agriculture Conservation Grant Initiative, the Durham County Soil and Water Conservation District in North Carolina was able to accomplish its goal to bolster urban agricultural efforts within the county. The district provided eight training events, hired contractors to survey and educate producers regarding available technical services, and supported two existing entities – the Bull City Cool Food Hub (BCCFH) and the DPS Hub Farm – which serve Durham's urban agricultural community.

The workshops covered key elements of urban agriculture, including operations and resource management. They were attended by a mix of farmers, gardeners, homeowners and conservation professionals interested in managing their land more sustainably and making more connections within Durham's local food system.

The Piedmont Conservation Council, Inc. was contracted to identify and survey existing agricultural operations, including community gardens. Over 257 farms and 24 community gardens were visited and provided information about technical services available to them through the Durham SWCD and NRCS.

Visit

www.macdnet.org/careers for a complete description of position responsibilities, qualifications, and how to apply. This full-time, salaried position is located in Helena, Montana. Complete applications must be submitted to [hiring@macdnet.org](mailto: hiring@macdnet.org) by May 1 at 5 p.m.

Job opportunity: Soil Health Liaison

The Soil Health Institute (SHI) is seeking a part-time Soil Health Liaison to work with central SHI Action Team stakeholders. [Click here](#) to read the full position description and application details.



Registration open for Conservation in Action tour!

The Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) has launched registration for their 11th annual Conservation in Action Tour, which will take place in Annapolis, Md., July 10 –11. This year's tour celebrates the theme "Bringing Back the Bay: Partnerships, Profitable Farms, Clean



The BETC Summer Green Team (pictured here) was created, made up of Durham Public School teachers and high school students participating in the Durham YouthWorks Internship Program. Teachers and students worked together for six weeks, visiting nine schools and community sites, to establish and maintain storm water management projects and vegetable gardens. Field trips to a large-scale nursery, an organic farm, and traditional agricultural farms with produce and animals introduced students to potential career opportunities.

Water and Innovative Conservation.” [Click here](#) to register!

Earth Day resources

Since its inception in 1970, millions of people have celebrated Earth Day each April 22. Looking for ways you and your district can get involved? Visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)’s [Earth Day webpage](#) for volunteer opportunities, activities, lesson ideas for teachers, testimonials and the history of Earth Day.

NACD Events Calendar

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- NACD Summer Meeting - Aug. 2 - 8

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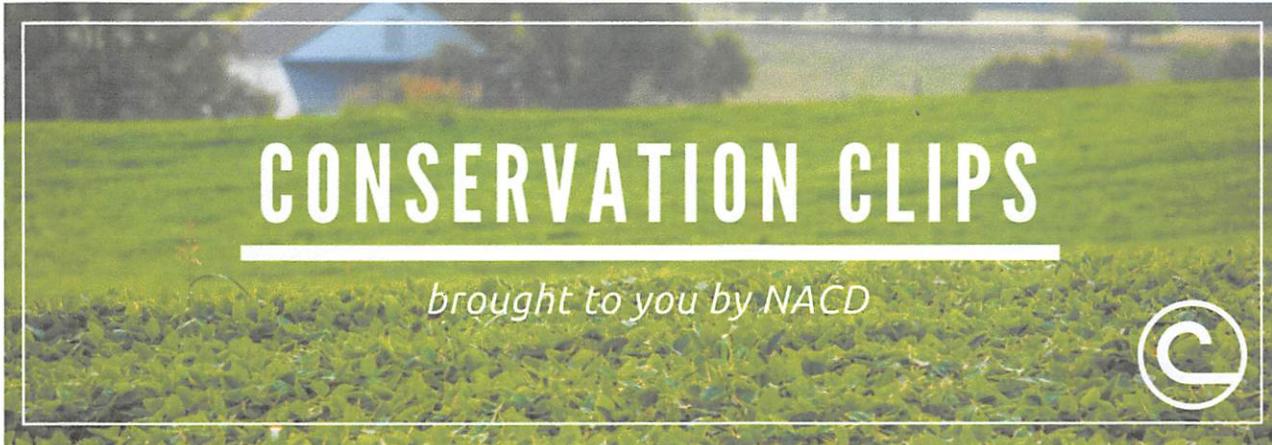
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NACD Blog: [Conservation Districts and the Sustainability Puzzle](#)

By Laura Demmel

04/12/18

Conservation districts offer the Field to Market Alliance an opportunity to catalyze better natural resource management on the farm. In order for sustainability initiatives to be successful, on-the-ground needs for local, voluntary conservation efforts must be met.

Agri-Pulse: [New farm bill tweaks commodity title, overhauls conservation](#)

By Philip Brasher

04/12/18

The bill would make major, and widely anticipated, changes to conservation programs by folding the Conservation Stewardship Program into the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and increasing the cap on the Conservation Reserve Program from 24 million acres to 29 million acres.

NPR: A Grass-Roots Movement For Healthy Soil Spreads Among Farmers

By Dan Charles

04/09/18

In American farm country, a grass-roots movement is spreading, a movement to keep more roots in the soil. Its goal: Promoting healthy soil that's full of life.

Agri-Pulse: Opinion: CRP: Ripe for Reform?

By Bruce Knight

04/09/18

(Opinion) Whether we get a farm bill this year or after the mid-term elections, I think it's important to look at some of the ideas under consideration, especially regarding the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Should Congress adjust payment rates or expand acreage? Can we tweak the program to better safeguard the most environmentally sensitive land?

WGCU: Agriculture Producers To Get \$2.36 Billion For Hurricane Recovery

By Jessica Meszaros

04/09/18

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced that his department will divvy up \$2.36 billion to agriculture producers across the country who lost business in areas where disasters were declared due to hurricanes or wildfires last year.

The Mercury News: Opinion: Water conservation bills offer map to California water security

By Mike Mielke

04/07/18

(Opinion) Two bills moving through the state legislature – AB 1668 and SB 606 – offer a roadmap to a reliable, affordable water future for California. These bills will establish efficiency targets for local water agencies that take into account each region's population, land use, climate and other factors that impact water needs.

Lancaster Farming: Predators & Cover Crops Fight Field Critters

By Philip Gruber

04/06/18

Controlling animal pests in a grain field often requires a combination of practices. In the case of slugs and voles, wild animals and cover crops are two of a farmer's best allies.

The State Journal-Register: After delay, Illinois soil and water districts to receive \$5 million

By Brenden Moore

04/07/18

After a long delay, \$5 million in funding for Illinois' soil and water conservation districts will soon be released. Though in line with funding levels of the previous few years, it is much less than the nearly \$13.5 million appropriated by lawmakers for the budget year that ends June 30.

Local 10: Gov. Rick Scott signs bill to target invasive species, like tegu lizard

By Sanela Sabovic

04/06/18

There has been a spike in the population of tegu lizards found in South Florida, leading Gov. Rick Scott to sign a bill this week targeting them and other non-native species, like Burmese pythons and lionfish.

Wallaces Farmer: Cover crop acres growing in Iowa

04/10/18

According to the Iowa Learning Farms 2017 Field Day Evaluation Report, Iowa cover crop acres grew last year by about 22% to 760,000 total acres.

Beef Magazine: What's the big deal about soil? Everything

04/12/18

Soil health has become a frequent topic of conversation and for good reason—it's the basic element of the cattle industry. Healthy soil grows abundant forage which keeps cattle producing in good body condition. Unhealthy soils can cause ranchers to file for bankruptcy.

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NACD REACTS TO FARM BILL IN LETTER TO HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Today, NACD [sent a letter](#) to House Agriculture Committee leadership outlining the organization's reaction to the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (H.R. 2) introduced on Thursday.

"We appreciate the committee's due diligence in preparing this legislation," **NACD President Brent Van Dyke said.** "Farmers and ranchers utilize farm bill conservation programs every day to improve soil, water and wildlife habitat. These programs give producers the necessary tools and resources they need to implement voluntary, locally-led conservation practices. We hope both sides of the aisle can come together to get a farm bill across the finish line."

OKLAHOMA WILDFIRES CAUSE STATE OF EMERGENCY

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Annual Meeting theme contest launches

NACD's 2019 Annual Meeting is fast approaching. Held Feb. 2 - 6 in San Antonio, Texas, the 73rd Annual Meeting will join together leaders in conservation from across the nation - but we need your help! **Please submit your ideas** for a theme and



NACD's thoughts and prayers go out to all the producers and landowners in Oklahoma affected by the recent wildfires. **Governor Mary Fallin** has declared a state of emergency due to the fires across nine counties, which have consumed more than 306,000 acres, 242,000 acres in Dewey County (pictured) alone. A majority of the acres involved are either rangeland or cropland for agricultural production.

To help producers in the state, the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Foundation (OCF) has established a fire relief fund. More information about OCF's fire relief fund can be found on the [Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association website](#). For up-to-date fire conditions, please visit the [Oklahoma Forestry Services website](#).

STEWARDSHIP WEEK APPROACHES!

corresponding logo for the 2019 Annual Meeting by Thursday, May 17. If your concept wins, you are eligible to receive a full registration to the 73rd Annual Meeting!

NACD promotional videos online



In January, NACD premiered three promotional conservation district videos at our 72nd Annual Meeting in Nashville. These videos, ranging in length from 30 seconds to just under three minutes, provide context on the integral work districts accomplish every day. [Click here](#) to access the videos online. Need a downloadable version to present at a meeting? Contact NACD Communications Manager Sara Kangas at sara-kangas@nacdnet.org.



NCF-Envirothon competitions continue in all weather!

Congratulations to the **Granada Hills Charter High School** team (pictured) for winning the California State



NACD's 63rd Annual Stewardship Week starts next Sunday, April 29! Are you prepared? It's not too late to download [free "Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home" materials](#). Visit the [NACD Marketplace](#) to access free, downloadable educational materials on a range of topics. And don't forget, Stewardship Week is a great time to complete your [photo and poster contest](#) submissions!

If your district has an activity planned for Stewardship Week, please let us know! Email stewardship@nacdnet.org with the event details.

NACD SITS DOWN WITH KFAF

NACD's Forestry Specialist **Mike Beacom** sat down with **Keeping Forests as Forests (KFAF) Project Coordinator Scott Davis** for a Q&A.

Together, the two discussed the most astounding threats facing the future of forestry and how KFAF and conservation districts can work to mitigate them.



"It's time to move away from thinking about our forests as particular places on the landscape and reframe the conversation around the inherent social, biological and economic values that functional forests represent to people today and in the future," **Davis said.** [Click here](#) to read the full

Envirothon Competition held at Wind Wolves Preserves last week! Granada Hills took the top honors over defending state champions Palisades Charter High School, and Arlington High School, who placed third.



The Granada Hills team will be joined in Pocatello, Idaho, this July by Oklahoma Envirothon winners **Ninnekah High School's** team and **Ladysmith High School's** team from Wisconsin. Held April 13, the Wisconsin competition in Rosholt required students to battle rain, sleet, ice and snow in order to complete their soil testing!

Congratulations to all three teams for advancing to the international NCF-Envirothon competition. Stay tuned to eResource for ongoing announcements, and please submit any Envirothon news and photos to NCF-Envirothon Program Manager Carly Burton at carly_burton@nacdnet.org.

interview.

CONSERVATION PLANNING BOOT CAMP BENEFITS EMPLOYEES, DISTRICTS, LANDOWNERS

Are you considering sending your district employee to Conservation Planning Boot Camp? There are still spots available for the June, July, August and September sessions.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Planning Boot Camp is a three-week, intensive training course for technical employees that covers current conservation planning policy, procedures and guidelines as outlined in the National Planning Procedures Handbook.

Each year for the next five years, 75 conservation district employees will have the opportunity to participate in this Lincoln, Neb.,-based program. District participants are trained in and out of the classroom alongside NRCS field staff to gain the skills they need to develop and implement comprehensive conservation plans.

Nash County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Chairman and NACD North Carolina Alternate Board Member John Finch (pictured)

encourages all district chairs and board members to take advantage of the opportunity, as the experience benefits the employee, the district and its landowners.

“The Conservation Planning Boot Camp not only benefits district employees,” **Finch said.** “District participation in the course ensures technical assistance is provided to local landowners and operators in a consistent manner across the country. Every conservation district technical employee should strive for excellence in natural resources conservation planning. Boot Camp equips district employees with the skills and



Happy bat appreciation day!

Today, NACD is celebrating #NationalBatAppreciationDay, in recognition of some of our favorite pollinators. In addition to their assistance with pollinating, some bat species eat pests that might otherwise become a nuisance to crops.



NACD Events Calendar

For additional details regarding meetings listed below, [click here](#).

- Stewardship Week - April 29 - May 5
 - Northern Plains Leaders Meeting - June 4 - 6
 - Northeast Region Meeting - July 15 - 18
 - NACD Summer Meeting - Aug. 2 - 8
-

resources necessary to implement sound conservation programs both locally and nationwide.”

[Click here](#) to learn more about Conservation Planning Boot Camp and how it could help your district.

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Roberts–Ratliff Takes Pride in Inspiring Others to Become Good Stewards



Vickie Roberts–Ratliff is using personal experiences as a sixth-generation Mississippi landowner to assist small property owners in Georgia’s Fulton and

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New agroforestry report

The USDA Forest Service has published a new report **Agroforestry: Enhancing Resiliency**

Cobb counties. She serves as a program assistant for the Georgia Association of Conservation Districts (GACD).

Roberts–Ratliff left a successful career in pharmaceutical sales to return home to her parents’ 500–acre farm in Montgomery County, Miss. Purchased in 1927, the property has seen a variety of land uses. In 2001, her father died, and the farm responsibilities fell to her and her mother. The following year, they transitioned from row crop acreage to timber and began working on a timber management plan. In 2008, the land was certified by American Tree Farm System and shortly thereafter, she joined the Montgomery County (MS) Forestry Association. Since then, she has been assisting other property owners, specifically with female and African–American landowners, in navigating processes and helping them understand the importance of having a forest and conservation activity management plans.

All her efforts are working toward empowering landowners and helping them identify and implement long–range plans that fully utilize agroforestry and land management practices. [Read more>>>](#)

Forestry Notes Q&A:

Scott Davis

Keeping Forests as Forests

Scott Davis is the project coordinator for Keeping Forests as Forests (KFAF), a 13–state southern forest conservation initiative. The group is supported by a diverse coalition of both private and public stakeholders ranging from human health professionals to traditional forest products manufactures and conservationists.



Davis spent more than a decade living and working in Belize, Ecuador, Indonesia and

in U.S. Agricultural Landscapes Under Changing Conditions that presents the first–ever synthesis on agroforestry as a mechanism to provide mitigation and adaptation services in the face of a changing climate. With contributions from more than 50 experts from the U.S., Canada and Mexico, this report draws upon recent science and shows how tree–based management strategies can improve agricultural production and resiliency, especially under increasingly fluctuating environmental conditions.

Forestry News

Tree rings provide vital information for improved climate predictions [\[link\]](#)

Prescribed burns aid in the restoration of Alabama’s longleaf pine forests [\[link\]](#)

3 things you didn’t know trees did for you [\[link\]](#)

Statewide tree inventory tallies value and benefits of Montana’s urban forests [\[link\]](#)

the Bahamas on a variety of fishery, aquaculture and coastal management projects. After that, he worked for The Nature Conservancy for nearly 25 years in various roles until accepting his post with KFAF in 2017. He shared time with NACD Forestry Notes recently to discuss KFAF's ongoing work. [Read more >>>](#)

Forestry Briefs

Michigan – District receives DNR grant for deer habitat improvement



The Marquette County Conservation District (MCCD) has been approved for a grant by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for a Deer-Wildlife Habitat Improvement project. The DNR recently awarded a total of \$100,000 in deer habitat improvement. Through its project, MCCD will target critical deer wintering habitat in the county and work with a contractual tree planting company to plant overwintering conifer habitat as well as soft and hard mast trees on seven private landowner parcels totaling 55 acres. [Read more>>>](#)

Maine – Woodland stewardship tour will give local woodland owners hands-on experience



The Waldo County Soil and Water Conservation District is working with the Maine Forest Service to organize a woodland stewardship tour in April. The two-hour tour includes a hands-on “tree marking” exercise for those exploring a thinning project on their property, and also a tree planting demonstration. Participants will take home a small seedling to plant. [Read more>>>](#)

Minnesota – Districts contribute to Sentinel Landscapes Partnership project

**Important
DATES!**

Calendar

May 15–17

CWSF and WFLC Spring Meeting

Denver, Colo.

Aug. 2–8

NACD Summer Conservation Forum and Tour

Williamsburg, Va.

Aug. 6–8

NACD Forestry RPG Summer Meeting

Williamsburg, Va.

Sept. 26 – 27

NASF Annual Meeting

Whitefish, Mont.

Oct. 3 – 7

SAF National Convention

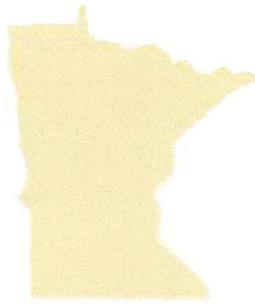
Portland, Ore.

Nov. 7 – 8

Partners in Community Forestry Conference

Irvine, Calif.

To help address the needs of lands surrounding Camp Ripley, a military facility that serves as the National Guard training center for Minnesota and six surrounding states, the U.S. Forest Service partnered with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Forest Resources Council, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Forest Service Northeastern Area, The Nature Conservancy and several county soil and water districts. As a result, the landscape is now part of the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership, dedicated to promoting natural resource sustainability in areas surrounding military installations. More than 250 private landowners in the area now have forest stewardship plans through the effort. [Read more>>>](#)



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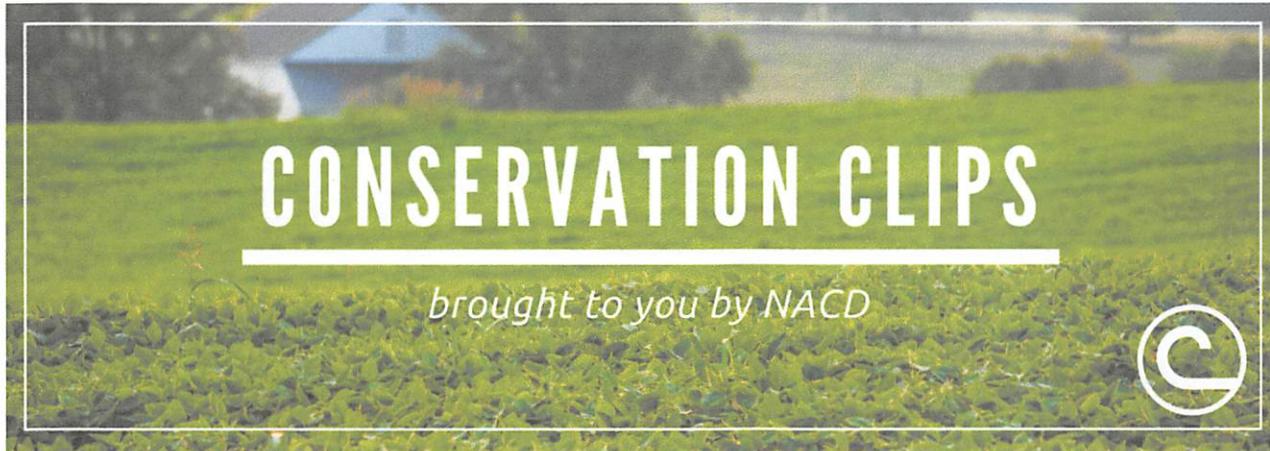
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NACD Blog: California District Brings Fresh Veggies to Low-Income Communities

By Susie Kirschner
04/16/18

In 2017, the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District (IERCD) located in southern California was awarded funding through NACD's Urban Agriculture Conservation Initiative to develop a community supported agriculture (CSA) program to ensure that lower-income residents have access to affordable, organic, local produce.

NACD Blog: Forestry Notes Q&A: Scott Davis, Keeping Forests as Forests

By Mike Beacom
04/17/18

Scott Davis is the project coordinator for Keeping Forests as Forests (KFAF), a 13-state southern forest conservation initiative. He shared time with NACD Forestry Notes recently to discuss KFAF's ongoing work.

DTN/The Progressive Farmer: Vote Clears House Farm Bill

By Chris Clayton

04/18/18

After hours of criticism by Democrats on changes to food programs, the House Agriculture Committee passed a farm bill out of committee Wednesday on a strictly partisan 26-20 vote as every Republican voted for the bill and every Democrat opposed it.

Agri-Pulse: CBO: Farm bill taps CSP, reworks SNAP to fund priorities

By Philip Brasher

04/13/18

House Republicans are relying on elimination of the Conservation Stewardship Program and tightened eligibility rules and work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to fund other priorities in the new farm bill, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

BeefProducer: What's really happening with the soil health marketplace?

By Alan Newport

04/17/18

A few weeks back, the Noble Research Institute announced it is working with partners to develop a soil health marketplace. To learn more, I contacted this Oklahoma-based foundation and asked some questions about how the soil health marketplace is going to work.

Agri-Pulse: Wild spring weather: Disastrous for farmers in the Southwest and Upper Midwest

By Sandra Cowherd

04/17/18

Mother Nature is taking a toll on farmers and ranchers, with wildfires in Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona and harsh wintry conditions in the Dakotas, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Feedstuffs: Hubbard named to lead USDA Forest Service

By Jacqui Fatka

04/16/18

The U.S. Department of Agriculture could soon have another important undersecretary on staff with the announcement over the weekend that President Donald Trump had selected James Hubbard to serve as undersecretary for natural resources and environment. Under the proposed USDA reorganization plan, the Natural Resources & Environment area comprises only the Forest Service; the Natural Resources Conservation Service is under the Farm Production & Conservation mission area

overseen by undersecretary Bill Northey.

KTVB: BLM using cattle to decrease wildfire risk

By Dean Johnson

04/13/18

The Targeted Grazing Project is a three- to five-year experiment taking place in the Soda Fire Burn Scar on the Owyhee Front to see if cattle grazing can be used to provide fuel breaks for firefighters.

The New York Times Magazine: Can Dirt Save the Earth?

By Moises Velasquez-Manoff

04/18/18

Unlike trees, grasses don't shed their leaves at the end of the growing season; they depend on animals for defoliation and the recycling of nutrients. The manure and urine from grazing animals fuels healthy growth. If done right, Creque said, grazing could be restorative.

Huffington Post: Historic Floods, Landslides Devastate The Hawaiian Island Of Kauai

By Carla Herreria

04/19/18

An estimated 28.1 inches of rain fell in 24 hours in the town of Hanalei over the weekend. "It's the worst natural disaster to occur on Kauai in 25 years, since Hurricane Iniki."

ABC News: Tracking the river: Mississippi model may help save coast

By Rebecca Santana

04/17/18

The model will help experts study one of the most important rivers in North America and how sediment from it can be used to fight coastal erosion.

MPR News: Carrot vs. stick: How should Minnesota get to cleaner water?

By Kirsti Marohn

04/16/18

The governor set an ambitious goal of improving Minnesota's water quality 25 percent by 2025. But consensus on how to achieve that goal has been elusive. Part of that trick is finding the right balance between voluntary programs that encourage landowners to take action, and regulations that force them to.

The New York Times: A Plan for New York City's Forests. Yes, Forests.

By James Barron

04/15/18

If nothing else, forests can slow rising temperatures by reducing what foresters call urban “heat-island effects.” Trees lower the nearby temperature by up to nine degrees. There is also the worry that forests could be overrun by invasive species that can change soil conditions.

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The NACD eResource

Weekly news briefs from the National Association of Conservation Districts

NACD GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE



On April 18, the House Committee on Agriculture passed the 2018 Farm Bill out of committee. Following the committee's action, the bill will proceed to the floor of the House of Representatives for debate. The Senate Agriculture Committee is also writing their own version of the farm bill, which we expect will be released in the coming weeks. A final bill must be passed into law before September 30 when current farm programs are scheduled to expire. [Click here](#) to read NACD's review of the legislation and our outlook for its next steps.

On April 23, NACD joined a range of conservation, forestry, and industry groups

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**Important
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Win free registration to
NACD's 2019 Annual
Meeting!

NACD's 2019 Annual Meeting will be held Feb. 2 - 6 in San Antonio, Texas, joining together leaders in conservation from across the nation. Please [submit your ideas](#) for the meeting theme and corresponding logo by Thursday, May 17. If your concept wins, you are eligible to receive a full

conservation, forestry and industry groups in writing to the Senate Agriculture Committee in support of **James "Jim" Hubbard's** nomination as Under Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment, which will oversee the U.S. Forest Service under USDA's reorganization plan. Hubbard is retired from the U.S. Forest Service, where he served as Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry, and previously served as state forester in Colorado. [Click here](#) to read the letter.

NCPP LISTENING SESSIONS CONTINUE IN MINNESOTA AND TEXAS

The National Conservation Planning Partnership (NCP) consisting of NACD, the National Association of State Conservation Agencies, the National Conservation District Employees Association, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils held two listening sessions in April to discuss and receive feedback on conservation planning.

NACD CEO Jeremy Peters traveled to Belton, Texas, on April 11, where an audience of 70 NRCS, district supervisors, field staff, state and national partnership leaders, along with additional online participants heard comments from conservation planners, landowners and operators, including several conservation district supervisors.

NACD North Central Region Representative Beth Mason presented at the Minnesota listening session held in Bloomington on April 18, where 45 participants, including district staff, were in attendance along with additional online participants. This session featured a producer panel – a time where landowners and operators could share their experiences

and are eligible to receive a free registration to the 73rd Annual Meeting!

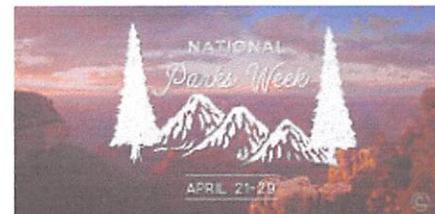
ICYMI: Adams on Ag interview with Van Dyke



Adams on Agriculture - April 20, 2018
Friday on Adams on Agriculture Brent Van Dyke, President of the National Association of Conservation Districts discusses conservation changes in the House...
adamsonag.podbean.com

Last week, NACD President Brent Van Dyke sat down for an interview with American Ag Network's Mike Adams to discuss conservation changes in the House's 2018 Farm Bill. [Click here](#) to listen to their discussion, which begins at 12:40.

NACD graphics available for district use



If you [follow us on Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), you might have seen some of our graphics celebrating and honoring events like Earth Day, Hugh Hammond Bennett's birthday, Stewardship Week and National Parks Week. These graphics, made by NACD, are for your use as districts and state associations as well! Simply share our posts on social media, or [click here](#) to access the original files for your newsletters or emails.

S.C., N.M., Texas, China

and operators could share their experiences with the conservation planning process and the assistance they receive from their local district office or NRCS service center.

Peters and Mason provided presentations regarding the results of the 2016 NCPP Field Staff and Producer surveys and how to assess the needs of field staff and producers. NCPP will be holding listening sessions in Washington state, New York, Nebraska, North Carolina, and Wyoming in the coming months in order to develop and implement plans for strengthening and reinvigorating conservation planning.

STEWARDSHIP WEEK BEGINS SUNDAY!



NACD's 63rd Annual Stewardship Week starts Sunday! It's not too late to download free ["Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home" materials](#). Visit the [NACD Marketplace](#) to access free, downloadable educational materials on a range of topics. And don't forget, Stewardship Week is a great time to complete your [photo and poster contest](#) submissions! You can find Stewardship Week graphics free for your district or state association to use by [clicking here](#).

Next Friday, May 4, NACD will celebrate Stewardship Week at the opening day of the USDA's Farmers Market on the National Mall! If your district has an activity planned for Stewardship Week, please email stewardship@nacdnet.org with the event details.

name top Envirothon teams

Envirothon season is in full swing, with South Carolina, New Mexico, Texas and China each naming the teams which will represent them in July at the international NCF-Envirothon competition in Pocatello, Idaho.



The Texas state Envirothon competition was held at the historic San Jacinto Battleground, where **Richardson High School's** team took top honors. **Spartanburg High School's** Envirothon team (pictured) won the South Carolina state competition on April 20. They will be joined this July by New Mexico's **Hot Springs High School** repeating champions, the "Scat Cats," who placed third last year in Maryland.

Earlier this month, China held their third annual Envirothon competition at Duke University in Shanghai, where they named winning teams for both the Senior and Junior divisions. Congratulations to these teams, we look forward to seeing you on the Idaho State University

HONOR A MENTOR OR LOVED ONE WITH NACD'S HALL OF DISTINCTION

In 2016, NACD past president **Clarence Durban** became the first inductee to our [Hall of Distinction](#) for his contributions to the national conservation movement. As president of NACD from 1985 – 1988, Durban helped to secure NACD's headquarters on Capitol Hill, along with tirelessly promoting the benefits of locally-led conservation.



On April 24, Durban's daughter, **Barbara Bruning** and her husband **Joe Jenkins** visited the NACD offices her father made possible (pictured) and talked with CEO Jeremy Peters and Director of Projects and Partnerships Rich Duesterhaus about the history of NACD.

If you'd like to honor a past or present local conservation district official through NACD's Hall of Distinction, the process is simple: contact your state or territory office and have them complete [this online form](#). [Click here](#) to learn more about Hall of Distinction qualifications and application information.

MISSISSIPPI LANDOWNER EMPOWERS OTHERS

campus in a few months!

Forest Service seeks grant proposals for community forests

The U.S. Forest Service's [Community Forest and Open Space Program](#) is a competitive grant program that provides assistance to tribal entities, local governments and qualified conservation non-profit organizations to acquire and establish community forests that provide benefits such as clear water, wildlife habitat, educational opportunities, recreation and economic benefits from active forest management. Applications are due July 27; [click here](#) for more information.



Wyoming district seeks water/range technician

Campbell County Conservation District (CCCD) in Wyoming is currently accepting resumes for a full-time water/range technician position. [Click here](#) to learn more and to view the full position description; applications are due next Friday, May 4.

Vickie Roberts-Ratliff is using personal experiences as a sixth-generation Mississippi landowner to assist small property owners in Georgia's Fulton and Cobb counties.



She serves as a program assistant for the Georgia Association of Conservation Districts (GACD) and assists other property owners, specifically female and African-American landowners, in navigating processes and helping them understand the importance of having a forest and conservation activity management plans.

"Mississippi has the second highest percentage of landowners that are female and African-American," **Roberts-Ratliff said**. "I want to do everything I can to help those landowners keep their land in family."

Learn more about Roberts-Ratliff and her support of agroforestry practice implementation by [clicking here](#). Make sure to [subscribe to Forestry Notes](#) to keep up-to-date with the latest forestry news and resources, as well as ideas for your district!

Upcoming EVENTS!

CTIC Conservation in Action Tour Reminder

Registration is open for the Conservation Technology Information Center's 2018 Conservation in Action Tour, held July 10-11 in Annapolis, Md. Details of the tour and registration information can be found at www.ctic.org/CIATours.

NACD Events Calendar

For additional details regarding meetings listed below, [click here](#).

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NACD BLOG: Roberts-Ratliff takes pride in inspiring others to become good stewards [4]
04/19/18

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NACD BLOG: NACD's Take: The 2018 House Farm Bill [5]
By Coleman Garrison
04/24/18

On Thursday, April 12, the House Ag Committee released its 2018 Farm Bill (H.R. 2) and the legislation passed out of Committee on Wednesday, April 18. NACD staff have been busy analyzing the bill to see how our priorities fared.

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT: Chesapeake Bay grass surpasses 100,000 acres for "first time in modern history" [6]
By Katherine Hafner
04/24/18

Underwater grass covered nearly 105,000 acres of the Chesapeake Bay in 2017, marking the third time it's set a record in as many years. That's almost 15,000 acres more than the Chesapeake Bay Program's target for the year, and 57 percent of the amount it ultimately wants to reach.

FORBES: Inside An Epic Experiment: Where The Buffalo Roam, Texas Agriculture Thrives [7]
By Maggie McGrath
04/24/18

Today, this piece of Texas Hill Country is in recovery--all thanks to the bison, which have been reintroduced to the area as part of an agricultural experiment. True to their hypothesis, the addition of animals--and particularly, large grazing animals like bison--has done wonders for the land.

INDY WEEK: Urban Agriculture Could Potentially Produce a Tenth of the World's Food. Is Grass Really the Best Use for Your Yard? [8]
By Amanda Abrams
04/25/18

There are roughly forty million acres of lawn in the U.S.--three times more acreage than any other irrigated crop. That's a lot of land, and an enormous amount of lost potential.

FARM FORUM: MN Dept. of Ag releases proposed groundwater protection rule
[9]
04/24/18

The proposed rule, which is based on the input of the farmers and landowners who the rule would apply to, would regulate the use of nitrogen fertilizer in areas of the state where soils are prone to leaching and where drinking water supplies are threatened.

TRI-STATE LIVESTOCK NEWS: Oklahoma fires seen from space, more than 400,000 acres lost and counting [10]
By Lindsay King
04/25/18

Over a third of the state, 52 counties, are in a state of emergency due to the weather conditions and fire danger. The two largest fires are located in northwest Oklahoma: Dewey County, known as Rhea, and Woodward County, known as 34 Complex. The Rhea fire has burned 289,078 acres while the 34 Complex fire has burned 62,089 acres.

HOOSIER AG TODAY: Indiana Remains a Top State for Cover Crops [11]
04/26/18

Indiana farmers planted 970,000 acres of cover crops in 2017, according to a recent survey. Cover crops are now the third-most planted crop in the state, next to corn and soybeans.

AGRI-PULSE: Opinion: Earth Day calls for conservation that starts from the ground up - literally [12]
By Moira McDonald
04/22/18

(Opinion) This Earth Day, it may be the earth right under our feet that matters most. Healthier soil means healthier crops, and for farmers, healthier profits.

DES MOINES REGISTER: Iowa, other Midwest states see resurgence of predator animals such as bears, bobcats and wolves [13]
By John Kruse
04/22/18

Bobcats, gray wolves and mountain lions are among the predators that are expanding into Midwest territory they have not inhabited in years.

U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT: Michigan Develops Plan to Battle Land-Based Invasive Species [14]
04/22/18

Agencies have developed a plan to prevent land-based invasive plants, animals, insects and tree diseases from reaching Michigan, while limiting the damage caused by those already in the state.

DELMARVA NOW: Chesapeake Bay funding for agricultural cleanup could land in Farm Bill [15]
By Jeremy Cox
04/25/18

A bipartisan group of senators is calling on the Senate Agriculture Committee to ratchet up funding for cleaning up farms that discharge nutrients and other pollutants into the Chesapeake Bay.

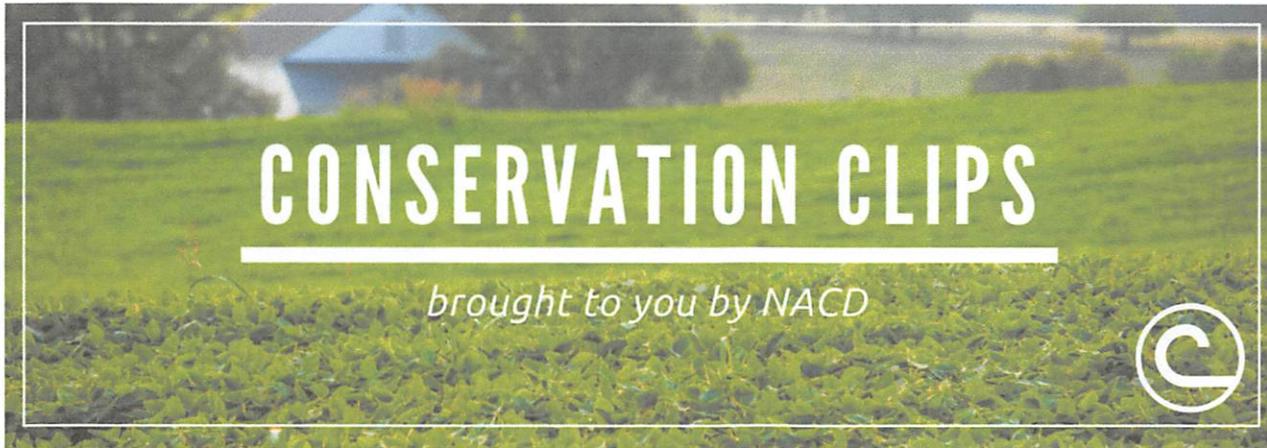
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By Maggie McGrath

04/24/18

Today, this piece of Texas Hill Country is in recovery—all thanks to the bison, which have been reintroduced to the area as part of an agricultural experiment. True to their hypothesis, the addition of animals—and particularly, large grazing animals like bison—has done wonders for the land.

Indy Week: Urban Agriculture Could Potentially Produce a Tenth of the World's Food. Is Grass Really the Best Use for Your Yard?

By Amanda Abrams

04/25/18

There are roughly forty million acres of lawn in the U.S.—three times more acreage than any other irrigated crop. That's a lot of land, and an enormous amount of lost potential.

Farm Forum: MN Dept. of Ag releases proposed groundwater protection rule

04/24/18

The proposed rule, which is based on the input of the farmers and landowners who the rule would apply to, would regulate the use of nitrogen fertilizer in areas of the state where soils are prone to leaching and where drinking water supplies are threatened.

Tri-State Livestock News: Oklahoma fires seen from space, more than 400,000 acres lost and counting

By Lindsay King

04/25/18

Over a third of the state, 52 counties, are in a state of emergency due to the weather conditions and fire danger. The two largest fires are located in northwest Oklahoma: Dewey County, known as Rhea, and Woodward

County, known as 34 Complex. The Rhea fire has burned 289,078 acres while the 34 Complex fire has burned 62,089 acres.

Hoosier Ag Today: Indiana Remains a Top State for Cover Crops
04/26/18

Indiana farmers planted 970,000 acres of cover crops in 2017, according to a recent survey. Cover crops are now the third-most planted crop in the state, next to corn and soybeans.

Agri-Pulse: Opinion: Earth Day calls for conservation that starts from the ground up - literally

By Moira McDonald
04/22/18

(Opinion) This Earth Day, it may be the earth right under our feet that matters most. Healthier soil means healthier crops, and for farmers, healthier profits.

Des Moines Register: Iowa, other Midwest states see resurgence of predator animals such as bears, bobcats and wolves

By John Kruse
04/22/18

Bobcats, gray wolves and mountain lions are among the predators that are expanding into Midwest territory they have not inhabited in years.

U.S. News and World Report: Michigan Develops Plan to Battle Land-Based Invasive Species

04/22/18

Agencies have developed a plan to prevent land-based invasive plants, animals, insects and tree diseases from reaching Michigan, while limiting the damage caused by those already in the state.

Delmarva Now: Chesapeake Bay funding for agricultural cleanup could land in Farm Bill

By Jeremy Cox
04/25/18

A bipartisan group of senators is calling on the Senate Agriculture Committee to ratchet up funding for cleaning up farms that discharge nutrients and other pollutants into the Chesapeake Bay.

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Date: 2018-05-01 14:13
From: NACD News <nacdnews@nacdn.net>
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[1] [2]

Summer meeting registration is open

Registration is now open [3] for NACD's 2018 Summer Conservation Forum and Tour and Southeast Region Meeting! Click here [4] to begin planning your stay in Williamsburg, Va., Aug. 3-7.

The meeting will take place at the Williamsburg Lodge in historic downtown Williamsburg, which used to serve as the state's capital! Room rates start at \$137 per night. To reserve your room, click here [5] or call 1-800-261-9530 and say you're with the 2018 NACD Summer Conference.

Your full registration includes your choice of one of four tour options [6] organized by the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD). Tour options include an agriculture track, an education and coastal topics track, an urban and forestry-themed track and a historical track. All four of these options include a provided lunch, but you'll want to save your seat as soon as possible! Early registrations receive tour preference priority, and registrations completed after July 13 cannot be guaranteed a tour slot.

This week in Williamsburg will provide you with numerous education opportunities in a range of topics. From Monday's Conservation Forum to breakout sessions to Tuesday's tours, you'll have a chance to learn about the deep history of the region as well as the unique natural resource concerns it faces. Click here [7] to view the draft meeting agenda, and stay tuned to future editions of eResource for more updates!

Districts nationwide celebrate
Stewardship Week

Districts across the nation are celebrating the 63rd Annual Stewardship Week and its theme "Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home."

Shavano Conservation District (SCD) in Montrose, Colo., provided 44 non-source pollution presentations using EnviroScape models to grades K-5 for 47 classes at eight elementary schools—a total of 852 students! SCD also will host a Natural Resource Festival for 600 fourth-graders from 11 local elementary schools.

On April 25, Pedernales SWCD in Texas hosted their 34th annual Soil Stewardship Breakfast on Whittington's Mountain (pictured). In addition to an inspirational message and fellowship, attendees witnessed Blanco County Judge Brett Bray sign a proclamation announcing Stewardship Week. Additionally, the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts (ATSWCD) celebrated the importance of pollinators.

In Guam, acting governor Ray Tenorio and Southern Guam Soil and Water Conservation District chair Benny Chargualaf planted an ifit tree at the governor's complex. Tenorio also signed a proclamation declaring Guam Soil and Water Stewardship Week.

If your district is still planning activities, don't forget to download free "Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home" materials [8] Visit

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the NACD Marketplace [9] for supplies, including pens, erasers, drawstring bags, pencils, rulers and more! You can find free promotional Stewardship Week graphics by clicking here [10].

Noah Williams
Wasco, Oregon

NOAH WILLIAMS and his wife, Tawnya live in Wasco, Ore., farming 2,800 acres of wheat in parts of both Wasco County and Sherman County.

In an area of the country where rainfall mainly occurs in the wintertime at a rate of approximately 10–14 inches annually, Williams has taken up the challenge of making cover crops work for his operation, building up the health of his soil. He acknowledges he is working against the general opinion that you can't make cover crops work in a dryland wheat cropping system. But with the initial assistance of the Wasco Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and his local USDA NRCS office, he has been experimenting and analyzing the use of cover crops and other soil health practices.

In the spring of 2016, with a small grant from Wasco SWCD, Williams installed soil moisture sensors on two neighboring fields – one with cover crops and one without. From the data collected, he can see exactly how much moisture was utilized by the cover crop and determine the best time to terminate.

With the integration of this tool into his operation, Williams can make decisions and changes based on the data provided while gaining a better understanding of soil infiltration and other benefits of cover crops. Today, Williams continues his work with the local NRCS agent to collect and analyze this data.

"To me, it's not about the short-term gain, but it's about the long-term benefit. I know I'm not going to have an instant return. If it takes 10 years of cover crops so I can farm for 20 years longer without depleting my soils, that's a benefit to me," WILLIAMS SAID.

Williams and his journey with cover crops has been showcased in the USDA NRCS campaign "Unlock the Secrets in the Soils" through his USDA NRCS Profile in Soil Health [11] as well as the companion YouTube video entitled, "Cover crops on dryland wheat? Challenge accepted. [12]"

To learn more about Williams and his operation in Oregon, be sure to visit his profile [13] at the NACD website along with many other Soil Health Champions. If you or someone you know is interested in soil health and would like to become a member of this network, please contact NACD North Central Region Representative Beth Mason at beth-mason@nacdn.net or 317-946-4463 for more information.

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HAPPY STEWARDSHIP WEEK FROM NACD!

Be sure to use the hashtag #NACDStewardshipWeek this week as you celebrate in your district!

DO YOU HAVE A THEME IDEA FOR NACD'S NEXT ANNUAL MEETING?

NACD's 2019 Annual Meeting will be held Feb. 2-6 in San Antonio, Texas, joining together leaders in conservation from across the nation. Please submit your ideas [17] for the meeting theme and corresponding logo by Thursday, May 17. If your concept wins, you are eligible to receive a full registration to the 73rd Annual Meeting!

NACD AND NRCS DISCUSS CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES IN CARIBBEAN

NACD welcomed EDWIN ALMODÓVAR, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Director for the Caribbean Area, to the Washington, D.C., office on May 1 to discuss ongoing hurricane recovery efforts in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in the wake of 2017's catastrophic hurricane season.

Almodóvar met with NACD CEO Jeremy Peters to discuss how NRCS is working with conservation districts in the territories through programs like the Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) to assist landowners affected by the hurricanes to clear debris, address erosion and mudslides, and restore vegetation.

Almodóvar also discussed how conservation districts in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are participating in NACD's technical assistance grant program [18] in cooperation with NRCS. The technical assistance grants are providing much-needed capacity to deliver Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) assistance to landowners on diverse agricultural operations including livestock and poultry, coffee plantations and specialty crops, as well as conservation planning assistance to help mitigate future natural disasters.

ENVIROTHON COMPETITIONS CONTINUE NATIONWIDE

Envirothon competitions continue across the nation, with four more states naming their qualifying teams this week for the international NCF-Envirothon competition this July.

West Virginia's RAVENSWOOD FFA team took top place, additionally winning honors for the wildlife, oral presentation and the current topic – Rangeland Management – stations. They'll be joined in Pocatello, Idaho, by the Nebraska state championship team from CONCORDIA HIGH SCHOOL and the host state champions, the GOODING HIGH SCHOOL team from Gooding, Idaho.

On April 26, CHARTER SCHOOL OF WILMINGTON TEAM A (pictured) was named the champion of the 2018 Delaware Envirothon competition. Their win marks the school's 19th win in the event's 23-year history, including an unbroken winning streak since 2002. Charter School of Wilmington Teams B and C placed second and third, respectively, in this year's Envirothon competition.

NORTHEAST CONSERVATION LEADERS DISCUSS CAPACITY-BUILDING STRATEGY

From April 23-25, Northeast leaders from across the conservation partnership (NACD, NRCS, NASCA, NCDEA and NARC&DC) gathered in Tarrytown, N.Y., for a capacity building summit. At this meeting, participants from all the Northeast states shared best practices, crafted a vision for the conservation partnership, and drafted action plans for seven different projects that will help to achieve this vision.

The summit also provided an opportunity for new and emerging leaders to share their experiences in conservation. Moving forward, the Northeast region will begin implementing these action plans for the seven projects.

NACD EVENTS CALENDAR

For additional details regarding meetings listed below, [click here](#)

[19].

- * Stewardship Week - April 29 - May 5
- * Northern Plains Leaders Meeting - June 4 - 6
- * Northeast Region Meeting - July 15 - 18
- * NACD Summer Meeting - Aug. 2 - 8

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