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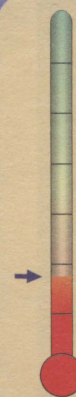
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509 Capitol Court Campaign

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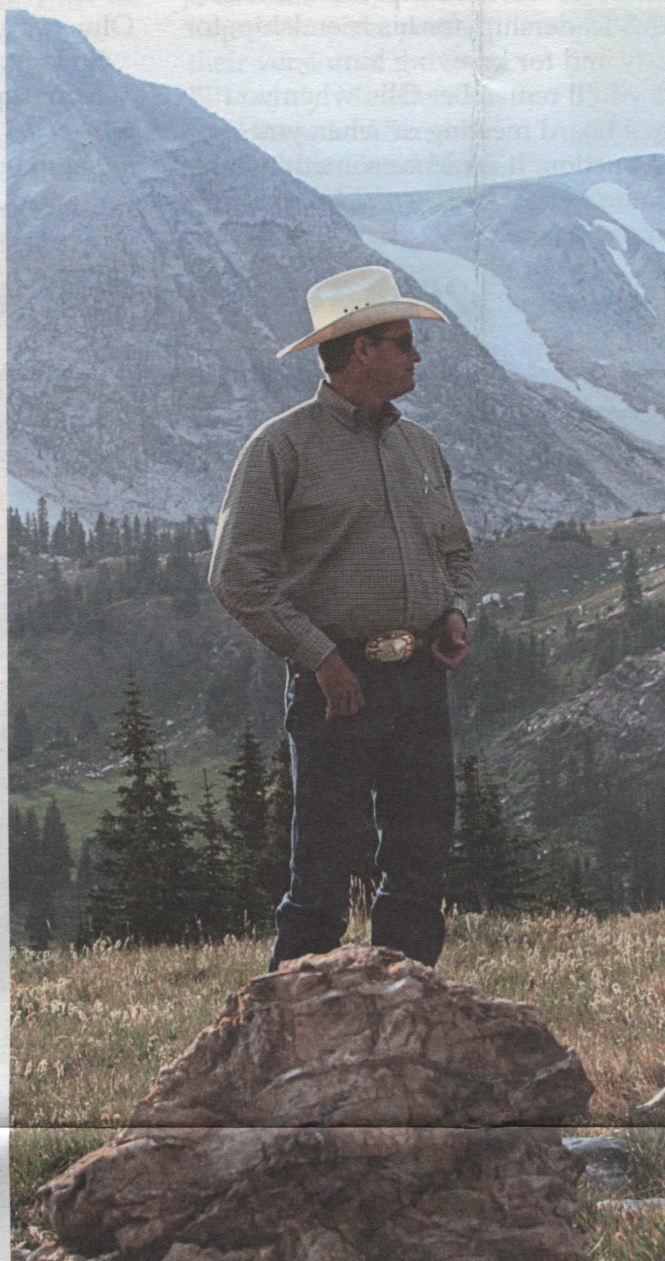
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N · A · C · D news & views

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



2007 NACD President Olin Sims had a passion for the land and served conservation districts with distinction.

Olin Sims: A True Conservationist

Olin Sims did many things, and he did them all well. He was a father, a husband, a brother, a son, a rancher, a volunteer fireman, an auctioneer, a musician, a skilled mechanic and welder, a carpenter, a conservation district supervisor, a perfectionist, a mentor, a leader, a conservationist and a friend.

Members of the conservation district family may not have known all these sides of Olin. We knew him as our President, a man with a firm handshake, a ready smile and a word that was true. He was passionate about the work of districts. He was proud of his family's Wyoming ranch. You did not have to talk to him for long to know that he loved the land.

We knew him as the auctioneer that could draw in the crowd—and the money—at NACD's Annual Live Auction. He loved conservation policy and could explain how legislation passed by Congress impacted producers. He was a cowboy with a nerdy streak who often carried a laptop. He asked a lot of questions, and he knew how to listen.

He spoke with confidence in Congressional offices and testified often on behalf of districts. He made an effort to meet people from across the nation and to learn about the issues their conservation districts dealt with on a daily basis. He left a lasting impression on everyone he met.

At times, Sims was a renegade. If he did not think things were as they should be, he came forward with suggestions of a better solution. Sims brought youthful energy to the board floor when he first came representing Wyoming on NACD's Board of

Continued on page 2

New Farm Bill Pushed to 2008

Following weeks of negotiations and debate, the Senate passed their version of a new Farm Bill on December 14 by a vote of 79-14. This action was too late in the year to secure passage of a conference report—a compromise bill between the House and Senate proposals—and a new law in 2007. To ensure continuation of programs, Congress passed a short-term extension of the existing law until March 15, 2008.

NACD endorsed the Senate proposal. The bill increases funding for conservation over the next five years, maintaining all major conservation programs. The bill also includes provisions for RC&D Councils, the Watershed Rehabilitation Program, the Great Lakes Basin Program and the Chesapeake Bay and Mississippi River Basin.

In addition, the Senate proposal increases funding for the revised Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), previously the Conservation Security Program. The new CSP would be an acreage-limited enrollment program of over

Continued on page 3



House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson and Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom Harkin are key players in Farm Bill conference activities. They are pictured above at NACD's summer legislative meeting.

Congress Takes Action on Climate Change

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee finalized climate change legislation by passing the Lieberman Warner Climate Security Act on December 5, 2007.

The legislation places caps on the emissions of the six greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, sulfur hexafluoride, perfluorocarbons and hydrofluorocarbons). The bill also provides for a trading system to buy, hold, sell and retire emission allowances. Under the bill, covered facilities can satisfy up to 15 percent of their compliance level with off-

sets generated within the United States.

Many conservation districts are already participating in a pilot emissions trading program created by the Chicago Climate Exchange, serving as verifiers of conservation practices that sequester carbon.

Senate Committee action came as 180 nations were gathering in Bali, Indonesia for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The result of this two-week UN meeting is a Bali Roadmap that aims to establish a treaty by 2009 that would set emission reductions for all countries.

Olin Sims... Continued from page 1

Directors in 1998. He quickly gained the respect of his peers, and took the fast track to leadership. Sims was one of NACD's youngest presidents when he took office in February 2007.

Olin was not one to rest on his laurels. He challenged the NACD Board and Staff to go beyond what had always been done and work toward efficiency and effectiveness. He challenged us to live up to our vision—to serve as "America's Voice for Natural

Resources Conservation." Emphasizing the need to leave the land better than we found it, he often spoke of the need to consider and involve the next generation.

When Sims died unexpectedly in a ranching accident in December, the loss was felt far and wide, and it was deep. But fellow conservationists across America expressed thankfulness for his leadership, for his friendship, for his honesty and for knowing him.

Maybe you'll remember Olin when you walk into a board meeting or when you attend an auction. It could be something as

simple as checking your email that reminds you of him. Or maybe just seeing a black hat will bring his remembrance to mind.

Regardless of the time or circumstance, the man you remember was a true conservationist who taught each of us many things. His legacy will continue in each of our minds and in our work. We are fortunate to have known Olin as our leader, and as our friend.

So long, cowboy. Ride tall.

Note from the editor: Additional memories of Olin and a message from his family are available online at www.nacdnet.org/olin/tribute.

Leaders Sign off on Joint Forestry Team Charter



(l-r) NACD President Olin Sims, NASF President Kirk Rowdabaugh, USFS Chief Abigail Kimbell and NRCS Chief Arlen Lancaster sign the Joint Forestry Team Charter at the Joint Leadership Meeting in November.

Leaders of USDA-Forest Service (USFS), USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), National Association of State Foresters (NASF) and NACD formally chartered the Joint Forestry Team at a Joint Leadership Meeting in late November. A live webcast broadcasted the charter signing by USFS Chief Abigail Kimbell, NRCS Chief Arlen Lancaster, NASF President Kirk Rowdabaugh and NACD President Olin Sims.

Joint Forestry Team leader, John Burwell, State Forester of Oklahoma, presented the Team's first report. The report summarized results of an informal poll of state foresters, state conservationists and conservation districts to determine current levels of cooperation in delivery of forestry assistance to landowners.

Survey results indicated that forestry is not a priority for many State Technical Committees; funding devoted to forestry and agroforestry practices is inadequate and inconsistent; and the availability of technical expertise and assistance is insufficient to meet the need. The Joint Forestry Team will next propose recommendations to improve program delivery.

The recorded webcast of the Joint Forestry Team's November meeting is available at www.visualwebcaster.com/event.asp?id=44277.

President Signs Energy Bill into Law

On December 19, President Bush signed into law the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. The new law increases renewable energy use, fuel efficiency standards for automobiles and efficiency standards on household appliances. The Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS) increases from 8 billion gallons in 2008 to 36 billion gallons by 2022. The law requires that increasing amounts of the RFS be generated from advanced biofuels, including cellulosic ethanol.

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards are increased from today's 27.5 miles per gallon (mpg) for cars and 22.5 mpg for light trucks to 35 mpg for both cars and light trucks by 2020. The current standards have been in place since 1985.

2008 Tentative Congressional Schedule

JANUARY 22	TENTATIVE RECONVENE
JANUARY 28	STATE OF THE UNION
FEBRUARY 16 - 24	DISTRICT WORK PERIOD
MARCH 15 - 30	DISTRICT WORK PERIOD, EASTER
MAY 24 - JUNE 1	DISTRICT WORK PERIOD, MEMORIAL DAY
JUNE 28 - JULY 6	DISTRICT WORK PERIOD, INDEPENDENCE DAY
AUGUST 9 - SEPTEMBER 7	DISTRICT WORK PERIOD
AUGUST 25 - 28	DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION
SEPTEMBER 1 - 4	REPUBLICAN CONVENTION
TBD	TARGET ADJOURNMENT DATE

Foundation Committees to Support NACD

During recent revisions to the bylaws to address NACD's region structure, the implementation task force was also charged with strengthening the association's committee structure. "The task force felt the strength of the organization and its ability to make things happen should be centered in the work of our committees. That is why we chose the name of Foundation Committees—to reflect the importance of the committees as the foundation for the building of our activities, programs and services," stated Steve Robinson, NACD Acting President and chair of the Implementation Task Force.

Beginning February 2008, the five Foundation Committees and chairs will be as follows:

Committee	Chair
District Operations and Member Services	Jack Majeres, South Dakota
Communications	Paul Leishman, Utah
Legislative.....	Steve Robinson, Ohio
Stewardship and Education	Gene Schmidt, Indiana
Natural Resources Policy	Cliff Lundin, New Jersey

Membership of each committee will consist of approximately ten NACD board members, with each state and territory serving on one committee. States were asked to indicate their top three preferences and members were appointed based largely on those preferences. Committee chairs and members will serve two-year terms in conjunction with the NACD President.

Each committee may establish subcommittees and task forces to assist with special projects or issues. The Natural Resources Policy Committee may also set up Resource Policy Groups (RPGs) to tackle special interest issues. RPGs have already been established to address forestry and urban issues. Membership of subcommittees, task forces and RPGs will be at the discretion and appointment of each committee chair.

"I feel the changes the board approved will strengthen the committee structure and provide for a more informed and involved NACD board," stated Steve Miller, NACD board member from Idaho and Implementation Task Force member.

Conservation Policy

New Farm Bill... Continued from page 1

13 million acres per year. Under the revised CSP program, producers would be required to meet or exceed the stewardship threshold on at least one priority resource of concern. Stewardship threshold is defined as the level of conservation required to maintain, conserve and improve the resource of concern.

The Senate-passed version of the Farm Bill would include conservation planning through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and CSP, similar to comprehensive nutrient management planning under EQIP today. The bill defines technical assistance as technical expertise, infrastructure and tools necessary to conserve natural resources, and states

that technical assistance can be provided directly, through a contract or agreement with a third party provider or a payment to a producer for a third party provider.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed their version of the Farm Bill in July. Members of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, Finance and Ways and Means Committees will meet in early 2008 to work out the differences between the two proposals. The most controversial issues are the financial provi-

Farm Bill VETO Threats

Top Bush Administration officials have recommended vetoing the Farm Bill proposals passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate. The bills contain different provisions, but each have garnered criticism from USDA and others in the Administration on the basis that they increase taxes on all Americans, do not provide sufficient reforms to Title I commodity programs and fail to lower the adjusted gross income cap (AGI) as the Administration proposed.

sions, tax alterations, payment limitations, adjusted gross income cap and provisions dealing with continuation or modification of commodity programs.

Members Renew Commitment to Conservation Partnership



Conservation Partnership leaders recommit to the National Partnership Statement at a recent meeting in Washington, D.C. (Front, l-r) NCDEA President Cindy Moon; NARC&DC President Sharon Ruggi; (Back, l-r) NRCS Chief Arlen Lancaster; NACD President Olin Sims; and NASCA President Pete Jahraus.

Leaders and staff from each organization and agency involved in the Conservation Partnership gathered in late November to discuss future plans and renew their commitment to the partnership. Partnership members, including NACD, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the National Association of State Conservation Agencies, the National Conservation District Employees Association and the National Association of RC&D Councils, collaborate to provide national conservation leadership.

By renewing the joint statement, members agreed to continue collaborating to best meet landowners' and communities' natural resource needs. Signing on behalf of the respective partners were NACD President Olin Sims, NRCS Chief Arlen Lancaster, NASCA President Pete Jahraus, NCDEA President Cindy Moon and NARC&DC President Sharon Ruggi.



A recent Supreme Court case deemed interpretations of "jurisdictional waters" under the Clean Water Act (CWA) as unclear. Legislation has since been introduced to clarify CWA jurisdiction to "Waters of the United States."

Congress, Administration and Courts Navigate Clean Water Act Jurisdiction

Water resources are increasingly receiving attention at the federal level regarding questions of jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The definition of jurisdictional waters was addressed by the Supreme Court in 2006 when it issued a decision in the consolidated cases of *Rapanos v. United States*. The high court concluded interpretations of jurisdiction under the CWA were unclear related to the navigability and permanency of streams, and proximity of related wetlands to those streams.

As a result, Congress has been considering legislative solutions. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman James Oberstar introduced legislation last year that would clarify CWA jurisdiction to all "Waters of the United States." In December, the Senate

Environment and Public Works committee heard testimony from state agencies and experts on the CWA.

Also in response to the Supreme Court decision, the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers have issued joint guidance to field staff. The agencies recently closed a public comment period seeking feedback from the public on case studies and experiences related to the guidance.

The question of CWA jurisdiction is critical for conservation districts in working with landowners to make property management decisions. As the 110th Congress enters its second session, NACD will be weighing in on the debate surrounding CWA jurisdiction as hearings are held and legislative action is taken.

Stretch Your Boundaries at the 2008 NACD Annual Meeting

Dynamic speakers, priority-setting board meetings, stimulating workshops and breakout sessions, and interesting tours are just a few of the things that promise to make the 2008 NACD Annual Meeting

one of the finest to date. This year's conference will take place February 10 - 13 in Reno, Nevada. The conference theme, "Conservation Beyond Boundaries," will be represented



throughout the meeting and will challenge participants to "think outside the box."

For more information about the meeting or for post-meeting resources and information, go to

the 2008 Annual Meeting webpage at www.nacd-net.org/events/annualmeeting/.

Also, be sure to mark your calendars for the 2009 Annual Meeting, scheduled for February 1 - 5, 2009 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

2007 Conserv

Excellence in Communications Awards

Top Winner - Muskingum County Soil and Water Conservation District - Ohio

Muskingum County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) effectively utilizes numerous outlets and mediums to reach both urban and rural community members. Muskingum SWCD publishes an annual report, website, informational brochures, bi-monthly district newsletter and an educator newsletter for local teachers. The District also hosts various events to increase district presence within the community, including art and photo competitions, a conservation air tour, "Camp Adventure" day camp for kids, an annual tree sale and county tours for elected officials. Muskingum County SWCD remains in the public eye through press releases and public service announcements, articles in local newspapers and a bi-monthly television segment on the local television news station. Through its outreach efforts, Muskingum County SWCD maintains an active and informative relationship with its local community. (10)

Honorable Mention - Marquette County Conservation District - Michigan

Marquette County Conservation District (CD) recognizes that it often takes repeated exposure to information to convince people that their day-to-day lives make a difference to soil, water, air, plants, animals and, consequently, their own quality of life. As a result, the District conducts an active year-round public outreach campaign. This campaign includes various outreach tools which include their website, brochures, events and workshops, as well as active relationships with local television and print news outlets. Marquette County CD also collaborates with partners such as Michigan State University and the UPRC&D Council to produce materials to reach targeted audiences such as landowners, students, volunteers and the general public. (8)

Distinguished Service Award

Milton "Bud" Mekelburg - Colorado

This year marks Bud Mekelburg's 50th year of conservation district work. His journey began in 1958 as the youngest founding member and first president of the Yuma Soil Conservation District (CD). Next, he carried his work to the state level, and later, Bud set his sights on conservation at the national level. He began as an NACD board member, stepping up to serve as NACD Vice President in 1980 and NACD President from 1982 - 1984. After his term in office, Bud continued his conservation efforts overseas and on Arizona Indian reservations. When his travels ended, Bud returned to his farming and ranching operation and continues to make a difference in conservation within his local community as a member of his local district board. (1)

Friend of Conservation Award

Janet Ayres - Indiana

Janet Ayres has dedicated herself professionally and personally to helping Indiana develop conservation leadership. She has played an integral part in the creation, development and implementation of the Natural Resource Leadership Development Institute and the Indiana Supervisor Leadership Institute. Throughout much of her work in Indiana, she has served as a representative from the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service. Also, as part of the Indiana Conservation Partnership, she has committed two years of pro bono work to launch the curriculum of the newly-formed SWCD Leadership Institute. Janet was instrumental in developing the core content for the institute which consists of a series of leadership training opportunities for district board members and key support staff. (4)

Collaborative Conservation Award

Butler Soil and Water Conservation District - Ohio

The Butler Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) prides itself in collaborating with partners to address watershed programs, construction site erosion and sediment control programs, water quality monitoring, river cleanup and wetland projects. Butler SWCD takes the time to know the community and its natural resources and all of the players involved. The District uses this knowledge to bring stakeholders to the table and craft win-win situations for all involved, increasing natural resource conservation awareness and benefiting the community. A few of Butler SWCD's partnerships include the Beckett Ridge Homeowners' Association, Butler County Engineers Office, Butler Storm Water District, Ground Masters Landscaping Company, YMCA Camp Campbell Guard, Butler county Sheriff's Office, Fort Hamilton Hospital and Friends of the Great Miami River. (3)

District Excellence Awards

Agricultural Lands Resources

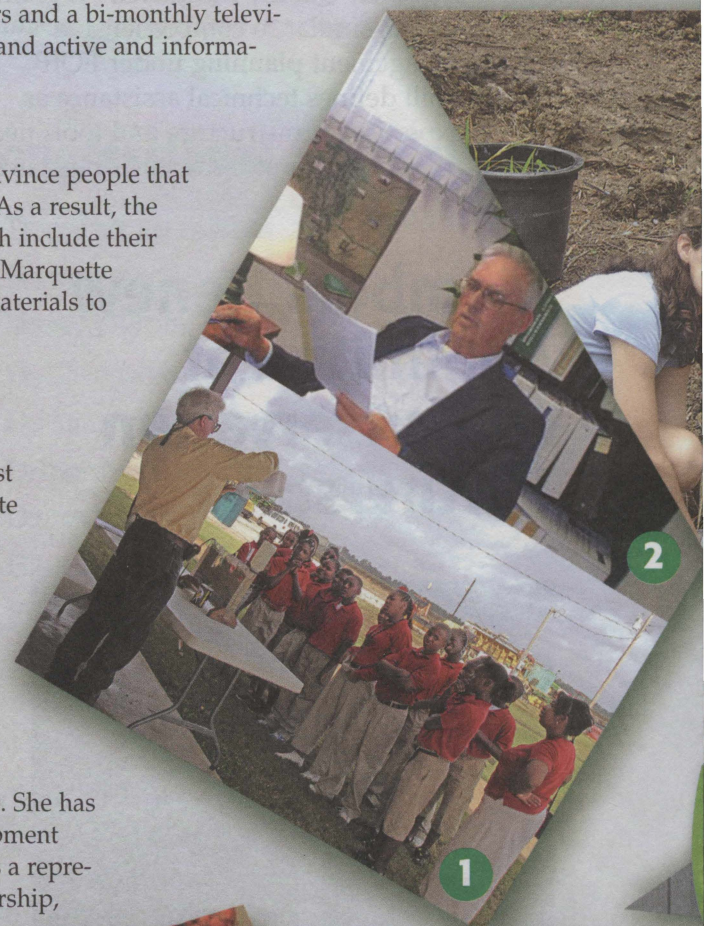
Broad River Soil and Water Conservation District - Georgia

Spanning seven counties in Georgia, the Broad River Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) successfully encourages landowner participation. To increase landowner participation, the District brings together local producers and other interested individuals to discuss natural resource concerns. Based on these discussions, the District then ranks necessary conservation practices. The District board focuses on establishing district policies and goals, as well as maintaining and securing substantial funding through various programs and grants. The Broad River SWCD leads the state in the amount EQIP funding, which has resulted in the use of best management practices (BMPs) on thousands of acres. These agricultural BMPs will improve the water quality in their watershed, which, in turn, benefits the whole region.

District Operations

Benton County Conservation District - Arkansas

The Benton County Conservation District (CD) conducts a variety of successful programs and events. The Benton County Illinois River Watershed Cost Share Program 319(h) ended this past July after three strong years of providing technical assistance while implementing Best Management Practices and Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans on agricultural land within the Illinois River watershed. Benton County CD also emphasizes informational and educational programs, hosting Annual Study Days and Legislative Conservation Picnics. The District also sponsors two students per year to attend the Youth Conservation Workshop and gives a scholarship through the Conservation District's AACD essay contest. Technical services provided by the District include Conservation Applications, Contract Follow-Up, Program Maintenance and Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning.



vation Awards

Forestry Resources

Washington County Soil Conservation District – Maryland

The Washington County Soil Conservation District works cooperatively through a Memorandum of Understanding with the county to implement certain aspects of the State of Maryland's Forest Conservation Act. They work with developers to preserve existing forests and plant new forest areas as outlined in the Act. From marketing the program and identifying landowners, to facilitating the bidding process with qualified tree planting companies, the Washington County Soil Conservation District is intricately involved in maintaining and conserving Maryland's forest resource base. (7)

Grazing Lands and Public Lands Resources

Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District – New York

With a strong commitment and diverse partnerships, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has been able to bring resources and equipment into the five watersheds of Madison County. Since 2005, they have seen major growth in the number of acres put into managed grazing as well as in the number of farm family participants. One unique way the District gets their message to the community is through pasture walks held at twilight. Madison County SWCD has also made a concerted effort to work with the media at least once a month to increase public awareness of conservation and the benefits of good conservation practices. (9)

Stewardship and Education

Kay County Conservation District – Oklahoma

For the Kay County Conservation District, conservation education is not just for kids! The District crafts its messages to address audiences of all ages through unique and innovative ways. Over the past two years, puppet shows on conservation topics have been performed for over 2,100 children. For the older students, fiberglass models of communities illustrate conservation issues and provide hands-on learning opportunities. Other programs used to engage the students include workshops and student contests, as well as a Career Extravaganza for eighth graders. To reach the adult segment of the community, this past year the District has published 230 news articles, recorded five television segments and held various events to share the conservation message and educate the entire community. (5)

Urban, Community, and Coastal Resources

Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District – Iowa

Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is home to Iowa's finest surface water resources—the natural glacial lakes. The community economy depends on tourism and tourism is dependent on good water quality. Dickinson County SWCD makes a concentrated effort to protect the water quality of the glacial lakes. In 2003, the District created a strategy aimed at complementing the conservation efforts already implemented in the watershed's agricultural community. The strategy included intense educational efforts, installation of urban best management practice demonstrations and ultimately a review of local codes/ordinances to institutionalize storm water management strategies that protect water quality. The Dickinson County SWCD has continued to build on that foundation and work towards its end. (11)

Water Resources

Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District – Mississippi

Washington County is the second largest cropland in Mississippi. Its entire 447,000 acres drain into the Mississippi River. Because of its close proximity to the nation's largest watershed, Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has focused its efforts on protecting water resources. They helped create the Delta Conservation Demonstration Center, impacting local and national conservation education. Their restoration and beautification projects, conducted primarily in minority communities, have involved more than 500 individuals, businesses, civic groups and local, state and federal agencies. Through their outreach, dedication to water resources and outstanding 319 funding, Washington County SWCD has a tremendous impact on conservation in the Mississippi River watershed and surrounding community. (1)

Wildlife and Environment

Fulton County Conservation District – Arkansas

The Fulton County Conservation District focuses wildlife conservation efforts on quail restoration. Their Bobwhite Quail Focal Area, one of only three in Arkansas, showcases conservation practices to audiences from around the state. The District collaborates with others to significantly impact quail restoration efforts. In 2007, over 500 people attended the District's Annual Fish Derby, enjoying its outdoor and conservation activities. The District communicates with the community about conservation in their area through weekly radio programs, newspaper articles, television interviews, landowner and minority newsletters and numerous field days. To date, the field staff oversees 115 active EQIP contracts with \$760,902.36 obligated for cost share assistance, most of which include conservation practices that benefit wildlife. (6)



DISTRICTS AT WORK...

Broadening Conservation Education

Mills County Soil and Water Conservation District—Goldthwaite, Texas

For many years, producers have looked to diversify operations to increase productivity and profitability. This is exactly what the Mills County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in Texas has done with their education program.

Mills County is located in the heart of the Texas Hill Country, an area that is known for its hunting and outdoor recreation activities. In addition to the big bucks, you will also find a lot of sheep and goat production in the area.

The District works with a wide array of businesses, educational groups and many others from the community to host a sixth grade field day. However, the students learn about more than just conservation, they learn about farm safety, wildlife, animal husbandry, aquaculture and more. Kids leave not only with a new understanding of conservation but of many other issues that agriculture producers must face.

"We have fewer people in the area involved in ranching and more people moving to the area from the city. Many of the students do not know about agriculture or rural issues. We think this opportunity to teach them is important," Said W.J. Hopper, Mills County SWCD Chairman.

Focusing on all aspects of agriculture, the District brings in experts from the Texas Farm Bureau to discuss the state's agriculture produc-



Students identify several types of fish provided by local fish producer Harrell Arms at the Mills County Soil and Water Conservation District's Sixth-Grade Field Day.

tion, as well as ways the industry touches the students' lives beyond the dinner table.

Local FFA members teach the students about leadership development and animal care. There is also a strong focus on safety; the Texas Youth Hunting Association gives a lesson in hunting safety, the electric coop on electrical safety and the local John Deere dealership on tractor safety.

There is no shortage of creepy crawlies at the field day. A college professor brings snakes to teach the students about habitat and identification. They get a hands-on lesson in fish identification and pond management and the local bee expert covers the very important role bees play in agriculture production.

Officials with Texas Parks and Wildlife department cover wildlife habitat and former NRCS employees cover brush and range management, with the Extension Service rounding out the topics with the rainfall simulator and grazing management.

The day is a huge hit and one of the highlights of the year for the district. Teachers love the event and use the information for students to enter the local essay contest. The students use the essays as a practice test for the state mandated TAKS test.

While the field day is a big success, the Mills County SWCD does not stop with youth education.

They reach out to county clergy

during Stewardship Week, hosting a ranch tour and lunch to talk about stewardship and conservation. The District focuses on education for all ages and relies on all area experts to bring students and adults the best information possible.

For more information about the District's education efforts, you can contact them at (325) 643-3118.

America's Voice for Conservation Speaks Out

Some referred to NACD President Olin Sims as America's Voice for Conservation. That tagline was the theme of his monthly audio clip and the man loved a microphone. The National Association of Farm Broadcasting's annual Trade Talk event was no different.

Staffed by NACD Director of Legislative Affairs Keira Franz and Director of Communications Lisa Lerwick, Sims took the floor at the event and conducted radio and television interviews from start to finish at the five-hour event. Participating in interviews with broadcasters from across the nation, Sims' key messages focused on the Farm Bill, the importance of technical assistance and the changing face of rural America.

Audio collected during the interview is used for several months following the event. Relationships built with the broadcasters also serve NACD well as we work to convey district priorities and extend the reach of our message.



America's Voice for Conservation was heard loud and clear in November at the National Association of Farm Broadcasting Trade Talk event in Kansas City, Missouri. NACD President Olin Sims is interviewed above by NAFB President Randy Koenen.

Get an Underground Peek at Soils

Did you know there are more than 70,000 types of soil in the United States? Or that nearly all antibiotics used to fight infection are obtained from soil organisms? You probably did not, nor will the majority of the estimated 10 million expected visitors to the upcoming "Dig It! The Secrets of Soil" exhibit opening at Washington D.C.'s Smithsonian Institution in July 2008.

Thanks to over 150 conservation districts and many other donors, visitors to the most visited museum in the world will have the opportunity to see a soil monolith and learn the importance of soil in their everyday life. Without soil, life on land would not exist as we know it. The soils under our feet are a vast reservoir for life and play a part in almost every aspect of human existence—food, housing, clothing, medicine, ecosystems and much more.

The Soils Exhibition is being developed under the Forces of Change Program at the National Museum of Natural History. The exhibit will be at the museum until January 2010 and then will travel for four years to 10 different cities.

NACD has been participating as a member of the education committee of the Soil Science Society of America and is collaborating with the committee and others to provide soil student booklets as an exhibit resource.

Soil is also the theme for NACD's 2009 Stewardship materials. The new NACD soils education materials are targeted for release in July 2008 to coincide with the opening of the Smithsonian exhibit.

Visit www.soils.org/smithsonian/learn.html to learn more about the exhibit. Additional information about NACD's Stewardship program and materials is available at www.nacdnet.org/stewardship&education/.



NACD Stewardship and Education Coordinator Susan Schultz participated in a preview of the upcoming Smithsonian Soils exhibit during work on the K-12 education committee of the Soil Science Society of America. Schultz is pictured above with SSSA Development Officer Paul Kamps.

2007 Annual Report

National Association of Conservation Districts

Letter from the President

Dear Fellow Conservationists,

The past year held much progress for your national association. Unfortunately, the man who deserves a lot of the credit is no longer with us. Olin Sims was serving his first year as President when his young life was taken in December.

It is important to give credit where credit is due, and looking back at 2007, we thrived under Olin's leadership. We focused on our top three goals of public relations and awareness, member services and grassroots advocacy. Our vision—America's Voice for Natural Resource Conservation—was evident in everything we accomplished.

We refocused communications efforts to better reach our members and the general public. NACD launched a new website, Olin began a monthly audio address highlighting current issues and we expanded media outreach and involvement.

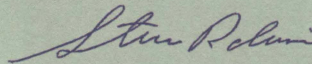
Member services received a boost with renewed emphasis on providing tools for district use through our website, an improved membership data tracking system, a leaner, meaner meeting schedule and efforts to achieve increased opportunities for districts.

It was a future-shaping year in the policy arena. We carried districts' Farm Bill priorities repeatedly to the Hill, emphasizing the need for a strong conservation title. Conservation districts were the only group to testify at *all* conservation-related Farm Bill hearings held by the U.S. Congress.

Often we referred to Olin personally as "America's Voice for Conservation." He took his role as President very seriously and was proud of the work of conservation districts and the national association.

You can be proud too. You can be confident NACD leaders will ensure NACD continues to be a well-run association that is *your* national voice. Make sure you are engaged too. Every conservation district must be involved for our collective voice to be strong.

Sincerely,



Steve Robinson, NACD Acting President

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McFadden, Wyoming

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Bill Wilson, Oklahoma

Tim Healey, Missouri



NACD President Olin Sims, a rancher from McFadden, Wyoming, was a strong leader, a good friend, and a true conservationist. While we deeply mourn the loss of Olin, his legacy will remain as a man who was passionate about conservation districts, someone who loved conservation policy and a cowboy who left a lasting impression on everyone he met.



NACD leaders join local conservation leaders on Hugh Hammond Bennett's North Carolina farm in August to help America's first conservation district celebrate their 70th anniversary.



NACD Stewardship and Education Coordinator Susan Schultz makes herself at home with one group of the hundreds of students she met with this year, teaching conservation basics and encouraging good stewardship.



NACD Second Vice President Bob Cordova listens to a student natural resource presentation as he serves as a judge at the 2007 Envirothon in Geneva, New York.



NACD President Olin Sims testified on conservation programs in the farm bill before the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee. He is pictured above with his fellow NACD officers and Agriculture Committee Chairman Senator Tom Harkin.



Farm Broadcaster Kristi Pettis interviews NACD President Olin Sims, FSA Administrator Theresa Lasseter and USDA Deputy Undersecretary Gary Mast at NACD's 2007 Annual Meeting in Los Angeles.

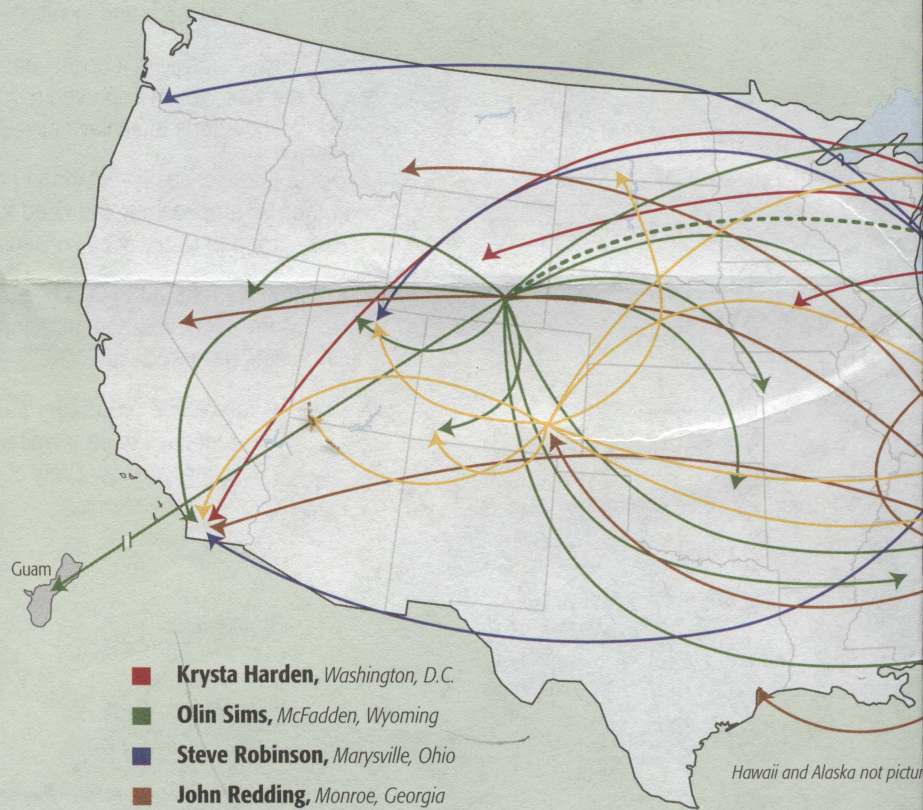
America's Voice for Conservation

The National Association of Conservation Districts represents nearly 3,000 conservation districts and the 17,000 district officials on their governing boards. NACD's mission is to serve conservation districts by providing national leadership and a unified voice for natural resource conservation.

Just as conservation districts are an invaluable resource to the communities they serve, NACD is a resource for member districts, state associations, members of Congress and a long list of partners. It is imperative that the association's voice is unified and credible.

NACD's consistent message in 2007 focused on the basic principles of conservation districts; the need to address the challenges and opportunities of a changing landscape and customer base; and the importance of communicating with customers, lawmakers, partners, the public and each other.

Working together, speaking with one voice, NACD is America's Voice for Natural Resource Conservation.



- **Krysta Harden**, Washington, D.C.
- **Olin Sims**, McFadden, Wyoming
- **Steve Robinson**, Marysville, Ohio
- **John Redding**, Monroe, Georgia
- **Bob Cordova**, Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Multiple trips

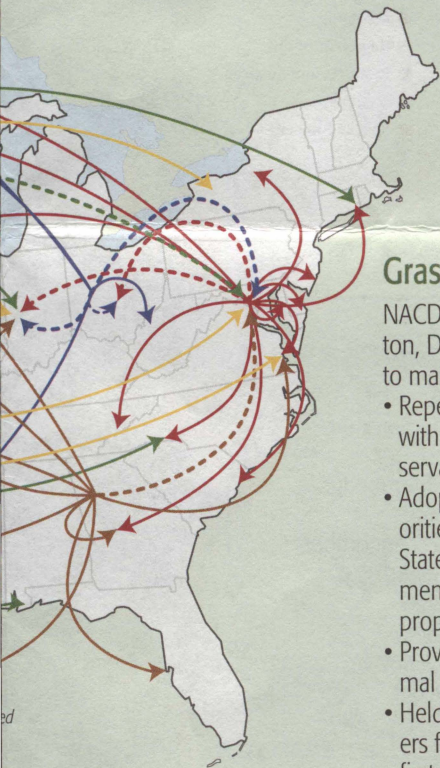
NACD leaders made it a priority to come to you whenever possible. The map above depicts travel by the 2007 Officer Team. It does not include the significant amount of travel by staff and Executive Board members. NACD representatives came to your region, state or town to learn your issues, understand the challenges you face and recognize your successes. In doing so, they became better equipped to serve you and speak on your behalf at a national level.

National Association of
conservation
natural resources
for our future

Communications and Public Relations

NACD used various tools to inform our members and the public about conservation issues, association priorities and successes. In 2007, NACD:

- Launched a new resource-packed association website at www.nacdnet.org, and re-focused staff resources to manage the site;
- Conveyed current NACD and conservation news through *NACD News & Views*, eNotes and frequent media releases;
- Implemented new outreach strategies, including a monthly audio clip titled "America's Voice for Conservation" for use by local boards and media;
- Participated in K-12 soils education committee in preparation for the upcoming Smithsonian Institution soils exhibit set to open in July 2008; and
- Fostered relationships with media, resulting in improved media attendance at NACD events, additional media coverage and increased awareness of conservation districts.



Conservation Districts
Serving
resources
future

Member Services

Everything NACD does is for its members. In 2007, the association placed a renewed emphasis on serving our diverse member base through new tools, redirected staff and improved financial management. This year, the association:

- Expanded focus on providing training opportunities, tools and services to our members;
- Updated Stewardship and Education efforts, incorporating federal standards and requirements into resources for schools, enhancing partner involvement and creating more timeless materials;
- Reviewed and adapted organizational structure and committee system to increase board involvement and investment in association policies and programs;
- Conducted a survey of member districts' work in urban and community areas to advocate needs, increase visibility and provide support;
- Launched a district official accreditation pilot program in seven states to better equip district officials to serve their respective communities;
- Hosted an Urban and Community Conservation workshop to brief state leaders on federal resources and engage them in targeting services;
- Provided guidance for tribal conservation districts through a workshop designed to address their unique needs; and
- Stretched every dollar further by moving to a more efficient and cost-effective store fulfillment center, downsizing and moving offices and discontinuing unprofitable lines in our store.

Grassroots Advocacy

NACD worked this year to ensure that Federal policy written in Washington, D.C., gave America's landowners and communities the tools they need to make wise use of our natural resources. Key efforts this year included:

- Repeatedly carried NACD's Farm Bill recommendations to Capitol Hill, with conservation district representatives testifying at every farm bill conservation hearing;
- Adopted a targeted appropriations strategy, focusing efforts on three priorities: Conservation Technical Assistance, Nonpoint Source (319) and State and Private Forestry. The strategy also allows for year-round involvement, including development of the federal budget and the annual appropriations process;
- Provided testimony on conservation district work with Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, Wildfire and Forestry;
- Held a successful Legislative Conference in July with key agricultural leaders from Congress and the Administration, including the association's first-ever Congressional Reception, held at the U.S. Capitol;
- Maintained credibility and visibility in Washington, providing a consistent message on how best to deliver conservation programs across the country;
- Improved legislative and policy communication with State Association Executive Directors and NACD Principle Legislative Contacts, strengthening our grassroots base;
- Provided advocacy training through a Washington expert to help members become better advocates at home and in Washington, D.C.; and
- Joined forces with other conservation, agriculture and industry groups to define sustainable opportunities for agriculture in a time of increased production demands and more varied land-use options.



U.S. Forest Service Chief Abigail Kimbell highlighted the agency's long-standing partnership with districts at NACD's Legislative Conference. She is pictured above with Charles Holmes, NACD CEO Krysta Harden and Johnny Sundstrom.



NACD Executive Board Member Joe Lomax and Secretary/Treasurer John Redding jokingly reach for coins in a fountain to emphasize the need to support NACD's 509 Capitol Court Campaign, a campaign launched in July to remodel and maintain NACD's headquarters.



NACD First Vice President Steve Robinson and other agriculture leaders met with EPA Administrator Steven Johnson to discuss environmental issues facing agriculture and ways to improve the agency's relationship with producers.



Conservation districts continue to work with many partners to ensure effective conservation program delivery. Pictured with NACD President Olin Sims are NRCS Chief Arlen Lancaster, NCDEA President Cindy Moon, NARC&D President Sharon Ruggi and NASCA President Pete Jarhaus.

Statement of Activity

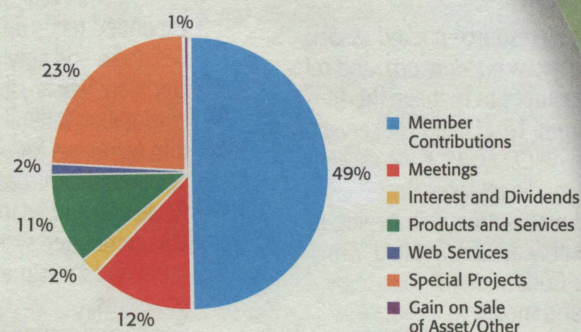
For the year ended September 30, 2007.

REVENUE	2007	2006
Member Contributions	\$1,647,662	\$1,652,888
Meetings	400,953	419,422
Interest and Dividends	79,565	59,004
Products and Services	377,158	439,493
Web Services	49,044	48,539
Special Projects	767,345	910,256
Gain on Sale of Asset/Other	14,615	479,440
TOTAL REVENUE	\$3,336,342	\$4,009,043

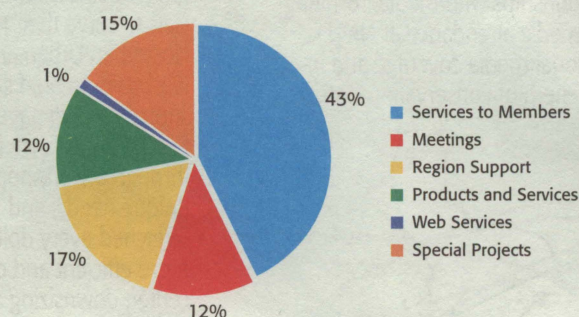
EXPENSES	2007	2006
Services to Members	\$1,394,118	\$1,429,048
Meetings	395,937	518,999
Region Support	549,352	564,636
Products and Services	383,977	471,304
Web Services	45,595	41,881
Special Projects	493,673	558,800
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,262,652	\$3,584,667
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$73,690	\$424,376

Copies of NACD's complete audited financial statements may be obtained by writing to:
NACD, 509 Capitol Ct, NE, Washington, D.C. 20002.

2007 REVENUE



2007 EXPENSES



Top 10 Contributing States

Ohio	\$ 98,337.12
Indiana	\$ 69,273.02
North Carolina	\$ 66,999.50
Minnesota	\$ 61,199.94
Illinois	\$ 60,888.78
Arkansas	\$ 58,900.00
Texas	\$ 54,295.59
Alabama	\$ 53,475.00
Kentucky	\$ 50,263.50
Pennsylvania	\$ 48,612.44

100% District Participation

Alabama
Delaware
District of Columbia
Louisiana
Maryland
Nebraska
New Jersey
Ohio
Rhode Island
Virginia
West Virginia

Associate Member Partners (individuals contributing \$100 or more)

Robert Abell	Bryan Harang
David Allen	Krysta Harden
Jennifer Ares	Kyle Hawley
Warren Baird	Raymond Hughbanks
Edward Baker	Larry Jacobs
Jeffrey Bohr	Larry Johnson
Ray Brownfield	Kenneth Kaneshiro
Sherman Bryant	Irvin Kear
Steve Cauthen	Arlen Lancaster
Darlene Corns	William Lange
Edgar Corns	John Majeres
David DeGeus	Wilson Murray
Walter Douglas	Thomas Nix
Richard Dueterhaus	Tonya Norwood-Pearson
Dean Edson	Richard Parker
Fred Feldmann	Thomas Quink
Loyal Fisher	Roger Rayburn
J.R. Flores	Connie Richmeier
Keira Franz	Kenneth Riedlinger
Arthur Ganta	Timothy Riley
Jonathan Gerken	Ronald Rohall
Joe Glassmeyer	Mark Rose
Ken Hale	Brad Ross
John Handly	Gene Schmidt
Charles Hanley	Jerry Snodgrass
Roger Hansen	Bradley Spicer

Donald Spickler
Mary Jane Spickler
Phil Stago
Wendell Stembridge
Neil Strong
Joyce Swartzendruber
Gerald Talbert
James Todd
Kalven Trice
Franklin Varley
Manly Wilder
Bill Wilson

Federal Partners

NACD currently has agreements with the following partners:

- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA Forest Service
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- DOI Bureau of Land Management

NACD CEO Krysta Harden shares with readers in this column her unique perspective on the national association that she oversees. Here she will attempt to make her thoughts...

Krysta Clear

Why do we still give awards?

As we wrestle with securing nominations for NACD awards, we often ask why we still give out awards. Aren't they old school? Does anyone still care about getting them?

These are good questions that we should ask and answer. Over the last couple of years, NACD has used a critical eye to review what type of awards and the number of awards we give out. This attention allowed the association to better focus its awards and to recognize those who deserve it the most.

Even if we limit awards, I feel it is important to recognize those doing the very best work within our communities. Corporations still give merit awards and bonuses for extra efforts and the federal government has a number of prestigious awards. There are movie awards, book awards, music awards and many more.

People should be honored for their achievements and they should be thanked for their commitment. So many of our true leaders never get the credit they deserve. They are not doing the work to be honored or thanked; they do the work because it needs doing and they feel they have the responsibility to make sure it is done.

I am pleased NACD still takes the time to honor our leaders both as individuals and as conservation districts. It is a small but meaningful way to say thank you for extra efforts and to make sure the work is not unnoticed by peers or the public.

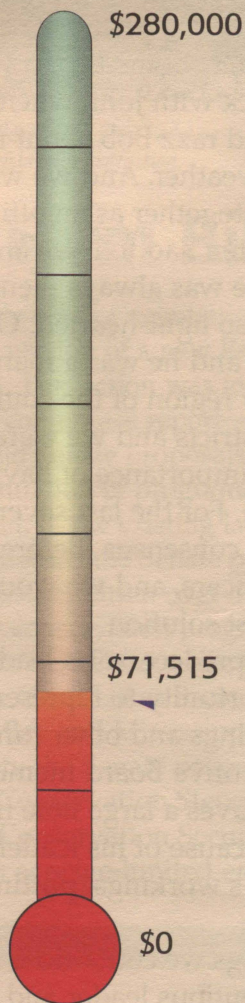
Enjoy the center section of this edition of *NACD News & Views*. It focuses on this year's award winners. Let's give them a pat on the back. They are getting results for all of us.

Help NACD Put Our Best Foot Forward!

As the saying goes, "You only get one chance at a first impression." NACD wants to make the best impression possible when hosting partner organizations and meeting with Congressional members and staff. To accomplish this, we need your help.

NACD's national office at 509 Capitol Court, NE in Washington D.C. needs a facelift. The building has gone 20 years with minimal maintenance. Torn carpet, energy inefficient windows, warped doors and plumbing problems are just a few of the challenges we are faced with on a daily basis. Renovations and repairs are necessary to make better use of the building for NACD operations in the 21st century.

The office building at 509 Capitol Court NE belongs to conservation districts and we want it to reflect your hard work and dedication to natural resource conservation. Go to www.nacd-net.org/events/509campaign/ to contribute to the 509 Capitol Court Campaign today.



Fresh paint for walls and doorframes:	\$5,500
Drywall and ceiling repairs:	\$17,500
Carpet replacement:	\$17,875
....	
Total fundraising target:	\$280,000
Continuing the legacy of conservation districts:	Priceless

NACD Conducts Tribal Conservation District Workshop



USDA Deputy Undersecretary Gary Mast presented recognition to newly-formed tribal conservation districts in Las Vegas at the Agricultural Symposium in December.

As tribal conservation districts increase in numbers and emerge into more active and viable entities, they are confronting many of the same issues other conservation districts encountered in the early days. NACD recently engaged tribal conservation district members in dialogue regarding these issues in an effort to help identify lessons learned in the past that can be transferred to current situations.

The discussion occurred at two NACD workshops conducted at a Symposium hosted by the Indian Nations Conservation Alliance and the Intertribal Agriculture Council. The conference was held in December 2007 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

NACD Past President Bill Wilson presided over the workshops and led the discussions. First the participants focused on the challenges and barriers they were facing in their local districts. Then they shared ideas for success including some that have been implemented.

Examples of challenges that were shared included:

- funding of programs, governance and management;
- government to government relationships;
- sensitivity to cultural issues;
- communications vertically and horizontally; and
- steps for identifying and planning short and long term sustainability.

Some ideas for success that were shared included:

- Creation of cultural awareness offices;
- Use of agreements, memoranda of understanding and letters of commitment;
- Establishing processes for formulating consensus ideas and positions;
- Calling on expert facilitation assistance;
- Seeking training and capacity building and development; and
- Clarifying language and technical terms.

The workshops were supported by NACD's agreement with NRCS. NACD will be providing a short report from the input received at the workshops. The information gathered will be used to assist all districts and state associations in finding ways to work together and strengthen the conservation delivery system.

NACD Launches New Online Store

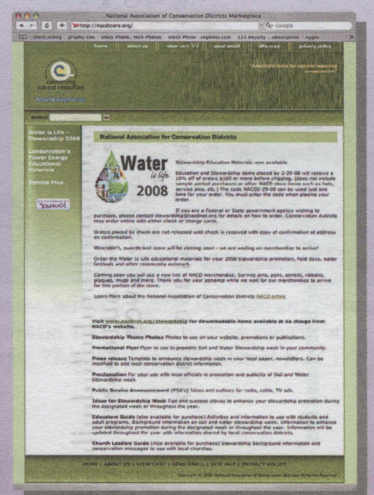
The newly launched NACD online store is hosted and distributed through a partnership with FFA. Customers will now be able to shop for all of their wearables and Stewardship materials at one store location.

The online store features old favorites as well as several new products. New merchandise is arriving daily and items will be added as merchandise arrives.

Go to www.nacdstore.org/ to place your order today! Education and Stewardship orders of \$150 or more placed by February 29, 2008 will receive a 10 percent discount.

Also, remember to stop by the NACD Store booth at the 2008 NACD Annual Meeting in Reno, Nevada! The booth will feature deeply discounted, discontinued products from our previous online store. Be sure to take advantage of these low prices and no shipping charges!

Thank you for your support of the NACD Marketplace.





How true it is! Just think about it. Each conservation district has boundaries, as does each county and state. Yet the actions of a landowner can have

For instance, runoff of nitrogen-based fertilizers from fields in the Midwest can make its way into the Mississippi River, adding to an ever-increasing “dead zone” in the Gulf of Mexico, creating a patch of water so depleted of oxygen that fish, shrimp and crabs cannot survive. On the other hand, a North Dakota rancher who institutes soil conservation measures won’t be the only one reaping the benefits. That rancher’s reward will be shared by every living creature downstream who might have suffered from buildup of sediment in nearby rivers and tributaries.

As members of the NACD, you work with millions of landowners across America, helping them manage and conserve their water and land resources on both private and

public land. At the USDA's Farm Service Agency, we share your commitment to those conservation values. In September 2007, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), a component of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), enrolled the one-millionth acre of land into the program.

That's one million acres of conservation targeted and focused on local environmental priorities. NACD and the conservation districts were there for every acre that we enrolled. That's right, that *we* enrolled.

For more than a decade, FSA has worked with states, state agencies, tribes and non-profit organizations like the NACD to enroll land in CREP nationwide. This highly-successful program promotes a cleaner, healthier and more robust environment, both for today and for generations to come.

As we enter a new year, a new planting season, a new opportunity to demonstrate our stewardship of our environment, FSA looks forward to a continued partnership with NACD. We understand that it's not dictates from Washington, but local people with local solutions to local problems that get the job done.

Working together, we'll achieve the goal of cost-effective conservation that benefits not only agricultural producers, but everyone who needs clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and wholesome foods to eat.

N · A · C · D
news & views

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NACD Officer Team

Remembering Our Leader

There are many things involved in serving as NACD officers that we never expected we would face. Olin Sims' death is one of those things. As we received the news and had the responsibility of spreading it to others, we each experienced deep sadness. In addition to losing an officer, we each lost a very good friend.

Olin would call us often. Some things were certain. He would call Steve "little buddy." He would check with John when he needed to know how things "had always been." He would razz Bob about needing to be more tech savvy. We would always talk about the weather. And we would always talk about NACD.

When we spent time together as an officer team, we would put in such long hours that Olin and Krysta often had to have another Mountain Dew. We teased one another relentlessly, and there was always plenty of laughter.

But it wasn't always so light-hearted. Olin took his responsibility to conservation districts very seriously, and he was a man of action. He loved to learn about issues and challenges in every region of the country and he inspired us to do the same. We were accountable to districts and we were accountable to each other.

Olin understood the importance of having a strong team. He didn't once act as if he was a one man team. For the last several years, including Olin's year as president, NACD has been led by consensus. Before making any major decisions, Olin consulted with us as fellow officers, and we would weigh all the options and work together to come up with the best solution.

He also followed his predecessor's lead in asking us as fellow officers to share the responsibility and opportunity to represent NACD across the country at various state and regional meetings and other functions. He was also taking it to the next level, encouraging Executive Board members to fill a similar role.

While Olin's death leaves a large hole in each of our hearts, it does not leave the association in chaos. Because of his leadership abilities, he kept us up to speed on all parts of the association's workings, putting us in a position today to carry out his vision.

One of the worst things we could do is let things begin to slip through the cracks. Olin was a very conscientious leader and would expect the same from us. We will continue to serve you, our members, with responsiveness and accountability.

Sincerely,

Steve Polunin

Steve Robinson
Acting President

Robert J. Condon

Bob Cordova
Second Vice President

John H. Bedding

John Redding
Secretary/Treasurer



Please don't trash me! - Pass me along, I'm recyclable and printed with soy-based inks.



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