



USDA – NRCS Cooperative Agreement - Overview

Nevada Association of Conservation Districts

September 2023 to September 2027

The purpose of this agreement, between the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Nevada Association of Conservation Districts (NvACD), is to build collaborative working relationships between NRCS, NvACD, external partners and producers in Nevada to increase and promote conservation projects and practices.

- Build the capacity of the NvACD and the 28 conservation districts through training and network opportunities.
- Reinvigorate long-range and annual planning with all willing conservation districts in Nevada.
- Enhance communication networks between NRCS, FSA and other USDA agencies, local governments, local partners, and other partners and agencies.
- Develop natural resource priorities with all willing conservation districts and other local partners in Nevada.
- Assist and help coordinate project lists based off the natural resource priority lists with all willing conservation districts.
- Assist conservation districts in writing and submitting grants, proposals, and completing NRCS applications with producers for projects based on the priority lists.
- Assist each willing conservation district in re-establishing the authority to administer an annual natural resource priority local working group that will identify local resource priorities and concerns for submission to the NRCS State Technical Committee.

The five-year agreement provides funding for NvACD and Conservation Districts to assess needs and build capacity including additional staff, to develop opportunities at the local level to implement programs and projects, expand NRCS/Conservation District partnerships, and build a sustainable program that will allow work to continue beyond the influx of funding being provided by the Inflation Reduction Act. The funding will be used to support positions and cover other associated costs like supplies and travel.

NRCS Responsibilities:

- Provide funding as indicated on the Notice of Award and in the Budget Narrative Section of the Statement of work.
- Assist with identification of local resource concerns through local working group process.
- Provide guidance and access to appropriate staff as necessary to carry out the Expected Accomplishments and Deliverables.

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- Be responsible for all administrative expenses necessary to carry out NRCS responsibilities under this agreement.
- Designate an individual to serve as liaison between NRCS and NvACD, who will be jointly responsible for the development and management of the parties' joint efforts.
- For NvACD employees or contractors working on Farm Bill or Inflation Reduction Act work, the NRCS will provide necessary resources including a computer and lincpass and training.

NvACD Responsibilities:

- The NvACD will carry out activities identified in this agreement. The NvACD will serve as a bridge between the Conservation Districts, NvACD Board of Directors, the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, local branches of governments and other respective partners. The NvACD will coordinate locally led conservation efforts to align with the NRCS mission and goals.
- Assign qualified staff to complete the work, tasks and duties described in the agreement and the attachments. Provide supervision of qualified staff necessary to achieve the goals of this agreement. Priorities for projects will be established by NvACD.
- Serve as the pass-through entity for subawards to individual conservation districts.
- Provide necessary resources (e.g., office space, computer, equipment, supplies, references and other incidental items) to carry out the agreement.
- Liaison with NRCS for the development and management of the parties' joint efforts.

Accomplishments and Deliverables:

- Facilitate Annual Planning Meetings with each willing Conservation District in Nevada. Establishing local resource concerns, local priorities, local conservation partnership to assist NRCS with locally led conservation efforts and programs.
- Assist each willing conservation district in establishing an annual natural resource priority working group (if not already in place) and assist working group with identifying local resource priorities and concerns as required by the NRCS State Technical Committee.
- Assist with identifying NRCS funded projects, or other partner funded projects, for conservation districts.
- Assist with updating Range/Annual Plans and bring new partners, as practicable, to each willing districts' planning meeting.
- Collaborate with NRCS to increase and promote conservation programs within local workgroups.
- Complete outreach and education programming effort each year.
- Attend and participate in partnership meetings, conferences, and trainings each year.
- Attend meetings of as many Conservation Districts in Nevada as possible and practicable.
- Attend regional and National Association of Conservation Districts Conferences or meetings and other aligned organization meetings as needed and practicable.
- Coordinate NvACD's board meetings.

Milestones:

- Establish internal communication and processes regarding this agreement between Board and Executive Director or Coordinator – October/November 2023.

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- Training for Executive Director or Coordinator performed from November/December 2023.
- Attend Board meetings for each Conservation District from October 2023 September 2024.
- Contact list of local, county, state governments and local conservation partners in order to deliver outreach and information by November 2024.
- Outreach and Education events completed by September 2024.
- Attend each NvACD meeting and NvACD Executive Board meetings as directed and other meetings (i.e., National Association of Conservation Districts National and Regional Conference) as needed or useful.
- Assist in establishing local natural resource working groups for conservation districts that currently do not have a working group by the end of CY 2024.
- Assist conservation districts with NRCS funded (or partially funded) projects by the end of 2024.

For further information and/or assistance please go to the NvACD website: www.nvacd.org