



National Association of Conservation Districts

Memo

To: NACD Officers, Executive Board, Board Members, Presidents and Executive Directors of State/Territory Associations, Members

From: Jeremy Peters, NACD CEO

Date: March 30, 2026

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Peters'.

Re: NACD Update on Recent Congressional and Executive Actions

All NACD updates are accessible on the [members only page](#) of the NACD website.

Headlines and Deadlines

- NACD Annual Spring Fly-In
 - Signed MOU with BLM
 - Leadership met with Agency partners
 - Farm Bill discussion
- Staffing shortages
- Farm Aid
- President's Budget
- Thank you for joining us at NACD's Spring Fly-In in Washington DC!

Action Items:

- EPA Public Comment request – Clean Water Act Financial Capability Assessment
- Let NACD know how you use State Revolving Funds

Current Events

Annual Spring Fly-In

NACD held a [successful fly-in event](#) on March 25, 2026. We had nearly 200 people from across the country join us for a briefing breakfast and listen to updates from Senate Ag Committee Chairman Boozman (AR) and Ranking Member Klobuchar (MN), and NACD President Gary Blair. Folks were encouraged to discuss the need for a bipartisan farm bill and the importance of conservation operations funding, watershed protection and rehabilitation programs, and forest stewardship programs in FY27 appropriations.

Nearly 200 NACD members from across the country spent their day on the hill meeting with congressional representatives and staff to share the story of conservation and emphasize the importance of continuing to fund conservation practices and technical assistance to most effectively get conservation on the ground.



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The day was capped off by a reception in the Kennedy Caucus Room where district managers, partners, agency staff, and congressional staff gathered to debrief on the day and unwind. Thank you to all who were able to join us and for those who weren't, you were well represented by your peers.

Please share any insights from your meetings or follow-up advocacy activities with NACD.

If you have outstanding action items from congressional or agency meetings, or need support with follow-up materials or messaging, please contact Libby Wawro at libby-wawro@nacdn.net

Memorandum of Understanding with Bureau of Land Management

On March 25, 2026, NACD President Gary Blair and Acting Director of the BLM Bill Groffy [signed a memorandum of understanding](#) to encourage local coordination and partnership when making management decisions and enacting changes or regulations that will impact local communities. This signing is the culmination of years of effort by the NACD Public Lands subcommittee led by Jake Tibbitts of Nevada.

Meetings with agency partners

NACD officers and Executive Board members met with agency partners from US Army Corps of Engineers, EPA Office of Water leadership and 319 and State Revolving Funds staff, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife, and the new consolidated US Wildland Fire Service to discuss new, ongoing, or expanded partnership opportunities and creative ways to continue conservation delivery in our local communities.

Additionally, members from the SW region took this opportunity to meet with agency partners at FSA, EPA, and BLM to address regional considerations around wildfire, management of silty runoff, drought and funding concerns. This is the second year they have met as a region and have expressed their pleasure at the willingness of agency personnel to meet and the overall tenor of these conversations.

Farm Bill

One of the major priorities for NACD is the passage of a bipartisan farm bill. Earlier this month, the House Ag Committee passed a bipartisan bill out of Committee and it now waits for a vote on the full House floor. The President has indicated his support for quick passage of a farm bill and members of the Senate Ag Committee have floated the possibility of having a draft in Committee by late spring. Both Senate Ag Committee Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar spoke to policy or changes that might be included in the Senate version, including the possibility of E15 and reforms to the Conservation Reserve Program, but emphasized that the majority of the bill, particularly the conservation title has bipartisan support.



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NACD will continue to keep you apprised of any movement through Congress. For more information about what is in the current house bill awaiting vote, please see GA Updates from March 9, 2026.

In The News

Staffing

The Farm Service Agency is working to hire new employees for county offices to address staffing shortfalls resulting in part from the deferred resignation program. Though the federal administration is still under a hiring freeze, Undersecretary for Farm Production and Conservation Richard Fordyce has been working to bring on temporary hires and reviewing staff numbers to ensure coverage in counties most affected by the changes in staffing levels. According to federal workforce data, FSA and NRCS have lost nearly a quarter of staff over the past year and 144 counties remain with no NRCS staff.

Farm Aid

Senator John Hoeven (ND) is working with both Chairman Thompson (PA) of the House Ag Committee and Chairman Boozman (AR) of the Senate Ag Committee to develop a farm aid package that could potentially be included in a supplemental spending bill for the war in Iran. This aid package would provide anywhere from \$10-22 billion for economic aid and disaster assistance.

The President's Budget

The White House has indicated plans to send the President's budget request to Congress on April 3, 2026. Though this is a non-binding budget proposal, it provides insight to lawmakers on administrative priorities and potential changes to policy. Congress has until September 30 to draft, propose, and pass twelve annual funding bills to keep the federal government running. If they are unsuccessful, we could see a continuing resolution or another October shutdown.

ACTION ITEMS:

EPA seeks feedback on Financial Capability Assessment

EPA is seeking [public input](#) on its Clean Water Act Financial Capability Assessment guidance. The FCA Guidance provides information on how to assess a community's financial capability as part of negotiating implementation schedules under both permits and enforcement agreements. In addition, the FCA Guidance identifies specific methodologies, supplementing the [Interim Economic Guidance for Water Quality Standards](#), that can be used to consider economic impacts to public entities when determining water quality standards (WQS) variances and antidegradation reviews. Comments are due by May 26, 2026.

State Revolving Funds (Drinking Water and Clean Water) (SRF – DW, CW)



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NACD leadership met with EPA staff from the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds to discuss ways to better utilize those funds at a local level. NACD is putting together a resource for use in outreach and advocacy, highlighting project funding and project development using funds designated for watersheds (see recent request for 319 stories). Please share your stories of projects your district has engaged in using DWSRF or CWSRF. Please send to Libby Wawro at libby-wawro@nacdnet.org

Conservation District Position Data Collection Tool

NRCS has launched a data collection effort to better understand conservation district capacity and their use of federal office space and IT. Conservation districts can expect to hear from their state associations soon with a request to complete a brief workbook capturing information on federally funded positions, office collocation, and equipment. We encourage conservation districts to respond promptly and to share the broader story of their partnership contributions beyond what the workbook captures. More information will be provided this week by your state or territory association.