

NRCS-District Partnership

NRCS was established in 1935 as the Soil Conservation Service in response to the Dust Bowl. There were folks that knew that the best way to help local people choose conservation and reduce soil erosion was to involve and empower them.

In 1937, the first county Conservation District was formed to link federal agency resources with the local farmers. This partnership between NRCS and the Conservation Districts is one that was carefully designed. This unique and productive relationship continues to be a model for providing Federal resources at the local level.

The formation of NRCS (previously SCS) and the Conservation Districts recognized that conservation was a problem shared by society. Solving conservation problems was often beyond the means of a single landowner and, therefore, needs cooperation and public support. The partnership of Conservation Districts and NRCS is a way to help.

Conservation Districts are the medium by which cooperation can take place through landowners, state agencies, Federal agencies, programs, grants, and a variety of other partners. Districts provide help to landowners and others on resource management, land-use planning, and detailed soils information. Districts set the local priorities, administer grants, facilitate fund leveraging, and provide a variety of outreach services.

Through the legal powers given to the Districts, they are in a position to seek funding from public and private sources. The Districts are independent, non-profit, semi-governmental entities.

NRCS provides technical standards and guidance on conservation problems. NRCS has soil conservationists, soil scientists, biologists, foresters, and engineers to assist with conservation planning and implementation. As an agency within USDA, NRCS can also provide Federal funding for many projects. With the Districts providing the guidance on conservation priorities, this funding can be allocated to those resource needs that are most pressing.

Excerpts from "NRCS-District Partnership --Our Local Partners - The Conservation Districts"

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/about/?cid=nrcs144p2_015750